

# EUCOR English

Second Tri-national Graduate Student Conference  
(Freiburg, Basel, Mulhouse, Strasbourg)

UHA Mulhouse, FLSH, Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2006

## Abstracts:

Alice BLUMENTHAL (Freiburg) <aliceblumenthal@hotmail.com>:

### **“From Whole to Part: English Constructions from Different Perspectives”**

This master thesis compares two recent and seemingly diametrically opposed approaches to lexico-grammar: *Radical Construction Grammar: Syntactic Theory in Typological Perspective* (RCxG) by William Croft and *Pattern Grammar: A Corpus-driven Approach to the Lexical Grammar of English* (PG) by Susan Hunston and Gill Francis.

I will show that once you look beyond the more or less superficial ‘ideological’ differences, unexpected and far-reaching similarities emerge – similarities which culminate in identical and revolutionary claims that pose a serious challenge to traditional formalist theories.

Crucially, the notions of *pattern* and *construction*, which lie at the heart of PG and RCxG respectively, represent a similar and systematic way of dealing with the interface between lexis and grammar. Moreover, still existing differences do not represent incompatibilities; they rather result from the fact that the monographs approach the same topics from different and, importantly, complementary perspectives.

I argue that the common core of PG and RCxG provides a solid basis for a broad synthesis and that the approaches could benefit from their differences to close each other’s argumentative gaps and to achieve an even more consistent, more theoretically informed and more widely applicable model of language.

Ursula CACI (Basle) <ursula.caci@stud.unibas.ch >:

### **“ ‘What is your substance, whereof are you made?’: The Body Concept in Shakespeare’s Sonnets”**

The paper explores the role of the body in Shakespeare’s Sonnets with the help of Renaissance medicine, according to which youth is a physical substance. Youth is a property of the blood. Over the years, as the body gradually loses its moisture, the blood dries out and youth is lost. The Sonnets emphasize the big age difference between the poet and the young man. The poet feels an immediate threat of death and urges the young man to reproduce in order to conserve his youth and beauty in his children. In contrast to the young man whose beauty is described in a platonic way, the woman, with whom the poet is sexually involved, is described as ugly and threatening and is reduced to her sexual organs.

This paper constructs a link between the poet, the young man and the woman, which is based on the exchange of bodily fluids. The thesis is that the young man’s body is a container of youth and that the poet wants to revitalize himself with the help of the young man.

According to Renaissance medicine, semen is a purer version of blood. Therefore, while having sex, the male loses some of his essence of life. The consequence is that he ages faster. This threat also explains the negative description of the woman and her sexual body parts, which swallow the poet's essence of life. In order to renew himself, the poet has to receive the young man's semen to refresh his blood.

The rhetoric of distillation in sonnet 79, the image of oil gained from olives in sonnet 130, and the metaphors of the botanical world and the phallic imagery in sonnet 84 suggest that an exchange of semen is indeed the poet's primary interest. Bodies, in the Sonnets, are described in terms of inwardness. It is the youth the young man contains and the threat to the poet's life the woman represents that are important, and not outer appearances.

Laura DENEKE (Freiburg) <Laura.deneke@gmail.com>:

**“The Internet: A Linguistic Revolution?”**

In the second half of the twentieth century, language began to appear in a new modality: computer-mediated communication (CMC). Today, more than half of all US Americans and Western Europeans use the Internet for verbal interaction on a daily basis, which is bound to leave some traces in the respective language systems.

The aim of this study is to investigate the nature and extent of the changes in the English language as brought about by the Internet and its interactive applications. It identifies characteristics of CMC that render it a likely force in linguistic change and discusses the conversational nature of typed CMC and its characterisation before the background of traditional distinctions between speech and writing. It goes on to analyze two levels of language in terms of Internet-induced changes, namely the lexicon and the graphic representation of language on the screen. The thesis closes with a linguistic characterization of the most widely used CMC application: e-mail. One hundred electronic messages of the Enron Corporation's e-mail corpus are examined for lexical, graphological, stylistic and syntactic features.

The overall impact of CMC is greatest at the lexical level. Hundreds of new or redefined terms have been coined, a significant amount of which has rapidly entered the standard vocabulary of many English speakers. The variation on the level of graphology is considerable, but seeming innovations are either side-effects of larger societal trends or are improbable to alter language used in offline contexts as they are direct consequences of medium-specific constraints. The most interesting –if not the most substantial– results derive from the analysis of syntactic features in e-mails, which uncovers patterns of omissions of subject pronouns, direct objects and determiners. Syntactical ellipses mirror the demand for speed and economy in online writing. The findings provide evidence that CMC differs from both speech and writing and is not, as often claimed, a mix of both.

Despite the numerous additions to the lexicon and graphological variations, as of now the Internet has not managed to revolutionize the English language. Its syntax remains largely unaffected, but due to the rapid technological advancement of online communication technologies, this conclusion cannot be final.

Hafid DJENKAL (Mulhouse) <hafid.djenkal@uha.fr>:

**“Presuppositions and Argumentative Strategies in Political Speech”**

Language in politics is a major tool at the disposal of politicians in order for them to transmit their ideas. However, not all the message is explicitly stated, this is why one needs to go below the surface of it to fully understand it. In my research I will try to see and show what hidden structures underlie political speeches, in particular their presuppositions and how these are used by politicians to convince their audience, to perhaps mislead, or ridicule their opponents. I aim to identify:

1/. Semantic presuppositions: presuppositions triggered by the use of a given word, or a grammatical structure. I will be using George Yule's classification/terminology to refer to this kind of presuppositions: factive presuppositions, lexical presuppositions, structural presuppositions, nonfactive presuppositions, counter-factual presuppositions.

2/. Pragmatic presuppositions: presuppositions which are triggered by the context. They are not linked to the lexicon, to the syntax or to prosodic facts (contrastive accent, intonation, stress, etc.) but to "the speech act." They are what the speaker activates through their utterance, what the speech act performs, namely its "illocutionary force," i.e., what the speaker is communicating with his utterance; is he making assertions, giving orders, promises ... ? Pragmatic presuppositions relate to knowledge which is not grammatical but encyclopaedic. A good interpretation (representation) of the different conditions of the production and reception of the speeches is a prerequisite to identify them. Such presuppositions involve not only the speaker and their topic, but the hearer as well. Hence they reflect a kind of tacit understanding between the two, what is assumed to be true and known by the two. I will aim to show how one can communicate through those assumptions, whether they are actually shared by both speaker and hearer or not, whether actually true or not, and what kind of message is being transmitted.

3/. I will also try to show how language is used by politicians in their various strategies, in other words, how they use certain lexical items, phrases or grammatical structures, and what inferences and/or "implicatures" can be drawn from such uses. "Implicatures" are analysed according to Paul Grice's "maxims" of the "the co-operative principle." According to Paul Grice, speakers co-operate with each other when they communicate. He broke down the principle into four maxims: Relevance: what one is saying is relevant to the context. Quality: not to say what we believe is false, or that for which we lack adequate evidence. Quantity: make one's contribution sufficiently informative, not to say what is more than or less than necessary. Clarity: one's contribution should not be obscure, ambiguous or difficult to understand. These maxims are not always respected, and when it is obvious for the hearer at the time of the utterance that the speaker flouted one of these maxims, an "implicature" can be drawn.

Thus I will be looking at the "speech act" being performed by the political speaker and at its "illocutionary" and "perlocutionary force."

Guillaume DUCOTTET (Mulhouse) <guillaume\_ducottet@hotmail.fr>:  
**"A History of Violence ... on Stage"**

There is a link between theatre and violence: the artistic aim of denouncing something that could annihilate human societies. But what about violence onstage before that assertion made by Edward Bond, who introduced the "epic theatre" on the British stage during the 1970's? What has been the evolution of the rituals of violence in European theatre, from Greek Ancient tragedies to naturalistic contemporary drama? In early Ancient plays, violence took place

offstage and was reported onstage; in the medieval era, and especially in Elizabethan drama, violence was overtly shown onstage, yet with an ironic distanciation: the audience knew that everything onstage was fake. Nowadays, violence is shown onstage too, but it seems more brutal and crude. Indeed, some playwrights, such as Edward Bond, Sarah Cane or Martin Crimp, have chosen to show it as it is: aggressive and terribly human.

Looking at the history of violence in the theatre raises the question of the use of showing violence: captivating, shocking an audience, denouncing, criticising or even mocking a society at a given time... Edward Bond affirms in his preface to *Lear* that "it would be immoral not to write about violence." It is possible to draw a parallel between such a speech and Aristotelian view of art and its role: teaching by imitating and showing. Isn't education a social ritual? What is more, can't we say that, having made violence a universal issue, theatre is a ritual in itself?

EL HASNI Najia (Strasbourg) <najia-elhasni@hotmail.com>:

**"The Meanings of Intimacy in Toni Morrison's Fiction"**

My interest in this subject emerged as a result of reading *Beloved*, *The Bluest Eye*, *Tar Baby* and *Song of Solomon*. I was captivated by Morrison's way to convey the intimate in her narrative. Using contemporary literary criticism and theories, my intention is to provide an analysis of her novels and show how multi-layered and subversive intimacy is. Intimacy, from the Latin word *intimus*, meaning "the most interior," refers to the most private and secretive parts of the self. It is the assertion that the self is made of an inalienable part. But intimacy also implies the access to this inalienable part, so that it is no longer forbidden and impenetrable.

This paper examines the way Toni Morrison's narrative fictionalizes and highlights intimate moments that are supposed to be kept silenced and how the sense of privacy is revealed to the reader without being broken. I intend to introduce several contemporary theoretical concepts of intimacy (Michel Tournier's notions of *intime* and *extime*, Michel Butor's *imploration* and *exploration*, Lacan's concept of intimacy, Philippe Lejeune's theories ...) and then discuss whether these concepts and theories can be connected to Toni Morrison's novels.

In a first part I will analyse the way Morrison makes her fictional world become a private world and how space, bodies and blackness operate within this process. In a second part I will focus on the interplay of reader / narrator / characters and the way this triangle-shaped relationship creates and sustains this particular intimacy without compromising it. Finally I intend to discuss the compromising of such an intimacy and its relation to the public.

Michaël FEDERSPIEL (Mulhouse) <michael.federspiel@tiscali.fr>:

**"Ethics in Polemical Narratives: How to Unveil the Unspeakable? The Example of Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita*"**

My presentation will focus on one part of a broader study that also includes analyses of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* and Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. All these works deal with longstanding taboos or with topics about which it has become difficult to talk. Nabokov's book was released in 1955 in Paris because it couldn't be published in English ... not a single American editor wanted to risk his reputation in a censorship trial. Even in France, the story of twelve-year

old Lolita and her perverse adult lover immediately triggered great agitation, was censored and withdrawn from the libraries almost overnight.

Proust describes this problem in his essay “Contre Sainte-Beuve”: “Le livre est le produit d’un autre moi que celui que nous manifestons dans nos habitudes, dans la société, dans nos vices” (“A book is the product of a self different from the one we display in our habits, social life and vices,” my translation). He was protesting against critics who tried to spot the author’s life in the author’s work, which was quite a simplistic reasoning. Yet systematically exonerating an author on Proust’s basis would be just as superficial. Hence the purpose of this study is to try and decide whether an author can write about anything without getting too much involved, and thus directly blameable. The focus is obviously on the ambiguity of the narrator, a medium between the author and his/her audience, but the thesis will also take into account the circumvolutions of narrative levels and other various textual strategies through which the author’s presence sometimes manifests itself. A prerequisite for such an analysis is the knowledge of different 20<sup>th</sup> century theories of literary criticism that deal with formal narratology, psychological readings, symbolism and other post-structural views relevant to this study.

In the first part of my presentation I will offer a quick description of Nabokov’s work from a narratological point of view, then I will give a few hints about the dubious and diluted character of Humbert, the narrator in *Lolita*. The last part will discuss textual strategies betraying an auctorial presence.

Johannes FEHRLE (Freiburg) <Johannes.Fehrle@pluto.uni-freiburg.de>:

### **“Postmodern Canadian Western Literature”**

The Canadian Western includes works like Michael Ondaatje’s *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid*, b.p. Nichol’s *The True Eventual Story of Billy the Kid*, as well as novels by George Bowering, Guy Vanderhaeghe and Fred Stenson. Despite the success of these works, three of which won Governor General’s Awards, a connection between them in the sense that they might constitute a Canadian Western genre has so far only been drawn by the late Arnold E. Davidson. The more recent works have never before been discussed in the framework of the Western genre.

The Canadian Western is a fairly recent development and *per se* an oddity, since historically there was no frontier in the American “cowboy” sense. Earlier attempts to establish the North West Mounted Police and the Mountie as Canadian alternatives to the cowboy remained largely unsuccessful; a successful, non-mimetic, and distinctly Canadian Western could only develop in a postmodern environment.

Owing to their authors – a generation of academically trained writers, many of them professors at Canadian Universities, funded by the Canadian council – the Westerns produced north of the Medicine Line take an ironic, distinctively Canadian turn. Instead of simply adapting the Western formula, the Postmodern Canadian Western employs a highly complex, academic, and sometimes fractured style which critiques (and ridicules) the American invention in a typically Canadian way, linked by Walter Pache to Postcolonial strategies. Most Canadian Westerns at some point move north of the border, often juxtaposing the two countries, the violent US vs. the more peaceful and civilized Canada.

Trying to redefine the rules of the Western genre, the Canadian works subvert stereotypes, often reversing the power structures between traditionally

oppositional pairs like male vs. female and Anglo-Saxon vs. Native. By focusing on these different strategies of subversion and other defining trends, my presentation will look at the distinctively Canadian elements in these works, while also pointing out the similarities these works still share with their American 'target field'. This will, as I hope, provide a new perspective on a traditionally American genre.

Anna FORST (Freiburg) <annaforst@web.de>:

**“The Characters in Raja Rao’s *Kanthapura*”**

Raja Rao’s novel *Kanthapura* is characterized by a large number of minor narrative agents who vary significantly in their degree of representation and whose exact number is not determinable. The objective of this study is to investigate the representation and grouping of these narrative agents and to reveal regularities as well as inconsistencies in their representation.

A short outline of a number of different character theories of the twentieth century provides an overview of the different possibilities of approaching literary character. Special interest lies on Uri Margolin’s account of literary characters as non-actual individuals in possible worlds, as well as on Jannidis’ idea of characters as mental models which are generated and modified in an intentional narrative communication.

In a second step some problematic aspects with regard to the narrative situation in *Kanthapura* are outlined, since these aspects have an important impact on the listing, the analysis and the characterization of the narrative agents of the novel. The first-person narrative situation in *Kanthapura* and the different focalization techniques, including the frequent transgressions of the homodiegetic first person perspective, contribute to the unreliability of the narrator. Further problems emerge due to the frequent use of the first person plural pronoun ‘we’, and to the high number and the sometimes random application of proper names.

In view of Jannidis’ concept of the communicative intention of a text, it is likely that the reader is not requested to retain all these characters and their properties in mind but that the communicative intention of the text is to convey group actions. *Kanthapura* is hence not the story of specific individuals but of an entire village.

The last part of the study provides some figures about the quantitative distribution of the characters with regard to caste and gender. In the village, the largest group of narrative agents is the group of Brahmin women, while outside of *Kanthapura* the narrator mentions mainly men. In the village as well as in Karwar and the surrounding villages it is the Brahmin caste which is most extensively represented, but on the coffee estate the number of Brahmin individuals is significantly smaller. What is surprising is the comparatively high number of Pariah individuals, a fact which may be explained with the narrator’s focus on the social changes in her village, brought about by the freedom movement.

This study reveals the ontological differences between the different individuals, the inconsistencies in their representation as well as the shifts in their groupings throughout the novel. Aspects like religious and mythic elements, stylistic innovations and components of Indian folktale were therefore not taken into consideration.

Angélique KELLER (Basle) <angelique.keller@stud.unibas.ch>:

### **“Call-and-Response Patterns in Caribbean Calypsos as Bonds between Performer and Audience”**

Call-and-response patterns in Caribbean calypsos are part of a two-way communicative system that facilitates to close the gap between performer and audience. This paper looks, after an introduction of the term *antiphony* at the way of how this specific form of oral poetry is delivered and highlights the important roles of both performer and audience in this communication process. The performer becomes the *chantuelle*, the song leader, who addresses a specific congregation to evoke communal responses in both words and action. This highly skilled person applies rhetorical means such as *picong*, *extempore*, chorus, *double-entendre*, repetition of catchy phrases, oral delivery, asking for assent and specific music accompaniment to improve audience participation. The audience joins in this give-and take connection with verbal and physical responses. This special turn-taking system relies on a co-active process and by doing that helps the calypso to remain the voice of the Caribbean community.

Brian KESSLER (Freiburg) <cobaltkg@yahoo.com>:

### **“Evaluating Evolutionary Models of Language Change”**

Since the time of Darwin and the Neogrammarians, Evolutionary and Historical Linguistic Theory have influenced and interacted with one another, to differing degrees of success. While evolutionary terminology has been unconsciously employed by historical linguists throughout the intervening century, the overt comparisons, and in fact historical linguistics itself, had fallen from favor - until the publication of Richard Dawkin’s ‘The Selfish Gene.’

While promoting a radical, gene-centric view of evolution in the biological field, the book also appealed beyond by suggesting that the framework of “evolution” can be applied to many different kinds of historical systems, including language. I will attempt to introduce two such proposed Evolutionary models of language change, and discuss what such a model has to offer to our understanding of historical linguistics

Benjamin KOHLMANN (Freiburg) <benjamin.kohlmann@neptun.uni-freiburg.de>:

### **“Crises of Authority and the Politics of Form. Henry Green’s Fiction of the 1920s and 1930s”**

I argue that the novels of English author Henry Green (1905-1973), starting with *Blindness* (1926) seek to collapse the category of symbolic form prevalent in high-modernist texts, pointing instead to cases where modernist attempts to contain contingency and violence aesthetically wear thin or break. In lieu of an aesthetic agenda of meaningful form, Green’s novels offer a kaleidoscopic interplay of voices and images resistant to interpretation. Green’s work thus enacts a “blindness” to its own meanings that stands in stark contrast to the more ‘visionary’ writing of authors like T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, and Virginia Woolf. It could be argued, for instance, that *Blindness*, while sharing some of the aesthetic concerns of Virginia Woolf’s 1922 novel *Jacob’s Room* offers a bleaker outlook on the capacity of literature to generate meaning by way of self-reflexivity. Instead, Green’s works evince a loss of consistency and conclusiveness; they center programmatically around gratuitous acts and/or empty signs.

Simultaneously, Green’s novels inquire into the functions and costs of mimesis, both social and artistic. As *Pack My Bag* makes clear, Green was

suspicious of what Tyrus Miller has called “generalized social mimeticism [...], role-playing, contagious imitation, ritualized behavior”. In his autobiography, Green identifies those forms of social mimesis that serve to transform the violence performed by the teachers toward the students into violence among the students themselves, pointing out that social mimesis serves not only to contain, but also to recreate and perpetuate violence; violence is sublimated by being encoded in a set of social conventions or, in the more specific case of *Pack My Bag*, school rules. In their Bakhtinian multiplication of voices and points of view, Green’s works explode the stasis of such self-contained sign systems. By contrast, *Pack My Bag* and *Party Going* show a conspicuous interest not only in the losses involved in representation, but in unrepresentability and uncontainability as such.

Henry Green’s novels seek to loosen the modernist dominance of form through their engagement with accident and contingency. At the same time, his writings propagate literary language (or *écriture*) as an alternative mode of language not complicit with the purposes of representation and/or communication. This double allegiance puts Green’s novels in the vicinity of Virginia Woolf’s *Between the Acts* and of some of the writing Tyrus Miller (following Charles Jencks and Frederic Jameson) has classified as “late modernist”. I wish to suggest, however, that the *désœuvrement* performed in Green’s novels – as well as, memorably, in his short stories – is more deeply connected to the issues of his time (Auden’s and the leftist poets’ realist predilection for typologies and categories; the “generalized mimeticism”, the proliferation of technical and threateningly non-artistic representations in photography and film as addressed e.g. in the writings of Walter Benjamin; etc.), than Orwell’s somewhat disparaging view of writing “inside the whale” seems to allow for.

Sonja KRETZSCHMAR (Freiburg) <sonja\_kretzschmar@web.de>:  
**“Women and Madness: *Maria, or The Wrongs of Woman, The Woman in White* and ‘The Yellow Wallpaper’ ”**

I examine the fascinating correlation between women and madness as represented in Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Maria, or The Wrongs of Woman* (1798), Wilkie Collins’s *The Woman in White* (1860), and Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s short story “The Yellow Wallpaper” (1892). These three works contain numerous images of madness in confinement, both in the form of madhouse settings and as metaphorical madhouses. Interestingly enough, only female characters seem to qualify for forms of madness warranting confinement. As there were great changes in the definition of madness, the view of the insane and their treatment between the eighteenth and the nineteenth century, the paper discusses possible reflections of these developments in Wollstonecraft’s, Collins’s and Perkins Gilman’s works. The examination of the correlation between women and madness focuses on three major points: the definition of female insanity, the correlation between women’s madness and marriage, and the treatment and effect of madness. With regard to the first point of focus, the paper considers why the female characters are considered mad and, in particular, whether there is a correlation between the women’s communication patterns and their being regarded as madwomen. Within the scope of the examination of the second point, it tries to answer the following questions: to what extent is there a correlation between the wives’ madness and their adaptation to, or deviation from, the traditional role of the wife? To what extent do their marriages, and in



particular the couple's communication patterns, madden the women? With regard to the third point of focus, the paper examines how the women are treated and shows what effects these treatments have. It furthermore consider at which point women are regarded as being cured from mental illness and whether women who are considered cured are actually also depicted as sane.

Elodie LABBE (Mulhouse) <elodie.labbe@uha.fr>:

**“Aborigines and Australians Facing Their Past: two different quests for identity”**

On 15th March, 2006 Queen Elizabeth II went to Australia to open the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne. Two days before the inauguration, thousands of Aborigines threatened to sue Her Majesty for genocide. This event highlights the discrepancy existing between European Australians and Aborigines. Why such a gap between these two populations?

The different studies on this subject show a direct relationship existing contemporary race relations in Australia, and the way Aborigines have been seen and treated by the British colonizers in the past. This insight has lead me to study the evolution of the image of the Aborigines from the discovery of Australia in 1788 to the present. The first settlers, who declared Australia a *Terra Nullis*, totally neglected Aborigines, who were considered savage animals and excluded from Australian society and political life. Aborigines were only granted Australian citizenship in 1967.

In my presentation I will concentrate on the consequences this new status of citizenship has had not only on the Aborigines' civil rights, but also on the consciousness of the white Australians. Even if both cultures seem to be totally opposed—*Dreamtime* vs. consumption society—Australians now want to reintegrate Indigenous history into their own culture. Throughout my research I noted that the Aborigines did not only have to use their past in order to understand their present but also to organize their future.

White Australians, too, have had to deal with a difficult inheritance: Australia as a penal colony! When considering the many waves of immigration which have impacted upon Australia, it seems quite problematic for Australians to build their own identity. Hence I intend to concentrate on the future prospects of a possible reconciliation between Aborigines and other Australians. Even if a part of the Australian population want to integrate Aborigines into their everyday life, the government still refuses to apologize for the Assimilation Policy and the Stolen Generations, i.e., the Aboriginal Children who were stolen from their families in the name of assimilation.

The current questions are: What are the possibilities that will allow both Australians and Aborigines to evolve in a relationship of mutual respect? Will this mainly be a quest for identity or rather a battle to have their respective identity accepted?

Marie LIDIN (Mulhouse) <marie.lidin@uha.fr>:

**“Adult Learner of English, Child Learner of English: a comparison of the learning process of two kinds of native French speakers”**

The acquisition of a language is a very complex cognitive process. Whatever the country in which the child is born—how can we explain that as long as he is exposed to an oral system of communication he succeeds in its acquisition? Is the faculty of acquiring a language an innate property of human beings? It has been scientifically proved that the younger a person is when exposed to a second

language, the quicker she will master it. I wonder if it is a real necessity to learn a language as a young child or if it is possible to learn and master a second language when starting to learn it as an adult.

I would find it interesting to observe an adult in his process of English acquisition and, at the same time, a very young child in the same process. Then I could draw a parallel and compare the two ways of learning a second language. But can I really talk of language acquisition, as my observations won't be based on learners emerged in a foreign context, but on pupils sitting in a classroom and influenced by a teacher in a native language speaking context? The need of the second language is not at all the same, and therefore the reactions of the learners won't be comparable. It would maybe be more exact to use the terms 'learning processes' and 'learning strategies.'

Because of their wider cultural and sociological background, adults won't react the same way as young children when confronted with the same linguistic issue. For example, both the adult and the child are aware of their mistakes when writing or speaking in the target language. But will their reactions be the same? Which strategy will be used to tackle the difficulty? I would like to focus on many linguistic issues such as morphology, syntax, semantics, pronunciation, grammar, etc. I could observe in which order they appear in the learning process and how either the older or the younger learner takes advantage of the lessons and how they put what they have understood into practice.

I will mainly rely on existing theories of well known linguists such as Noam Chomsky and Dick Hudson and use them as study and researches guidelines and to strengthen my observations.

Barbara MULLER (Strasbourg) <bacracra@hotmail.com>:

**“Experience and the Senses in A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Twelfth Night, and As You Like It”**

In his *Essais*, Montaigne expresses the quest for truth by means of fantasies or oblique sight: « je propose des fantaisies informes et irrésolues, comme font ceux qui publient des questions douteuses à débattre aux écoles; non pour établir la vérité, mais pour la chercher ». *A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It* clearly belong to the same line of devolution. I will devote my presentation to the following issue: how do experience and the senses partake in the quest for truth in our three comedies?

From this angle, I will go through three types of experiences: the body-mind experience, the metaphorical experience, and the metatheatrical experience. The body-mind experience follows a rule of mirroring effects: the senses are the threshold of experience, the imagination constitutes the mediator between the senses and the three seats of the human being, and these three seats interact (the liver is the seat of feelings, the heart is the seat of passions and the brain is the seat of judgment (cognition and recognition, or *anagnorisis*)). Eventually, language fits in with the body. This system of mirrors has an impact on the plot and creates all kinds of entanglements. The metaphorical experience contributes to the quest for truth in its peculiar way of adding sense. I will base my analysis on the Aristotelian notion of *metaphora* and will refer to authors such as Umberto Eco, Irène Tamba-Mecz and Paul Veyne. The notion of *metaphora* encompasses all rhetorical figures. We will essentially concentrate on metaphor, simile, conceit, and analogy. The *metaphora* is a superimposition. And the nature of this superimposition depends on the type of *metaphora*. The metaphor, as a *metaphora*, functions on a superimposition between two

elements (for instance, between ‘Malvolio’ and ‘the trout’ in *Twelfth Night*). This specific superimposition creates a strong assimilation between the two elements. The simile, as a *metaphora*, is also based on a superimposition (for instance, between ‘Hermia and Helena’ and ‘a double cherry,’ in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*). This superimposition highlights similarities between two elements rather than assimilates them. Above all, the *metaphora*, no matter what kind of superimposition is involved, appeals to reason. It paves the way to truth. Indeed, when considering a metaphora, the reader learns something new about an object, an idea, or an action. Like the metaphorical experience, the metatheatrical experience reveals the functioning of things. I will more specifically dwell on the play within the play in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* entitled ‘a tedious brief scene of young Pyramus and his love Thisby; very tragical mirth.’ Metatheatricality is defined by a play embedded in another play, by the conversion of at least one actor into a spectator within the play, but also by the fact that the main subject of the play becomes the play itself. It engenders a reflection on the criteria of theatre (rhythm and rhymes, *catharsis*, verisimilitude, representation, etc.). Above all, it is based on the concept of a *theatrum mundi* (life as a stage).

The workings of these three types of experience underlie both an aesthetics and a philosophy. They are under the aegis of the mannerist tradition, and specifically under the aegis of the process of *anamorphosis*. And this aesthetics brings to light a particular conception of the real ...

Caroline ORBANN (Mulhouse) <orbanncaroline@yahoo.fr>:

**“Peter and Pan: reflections on the mythic status of Peter Pan”**

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Greek god Pan appeared in many children’s novels. James Matthew Barrie’s story of Peter Pan, first published in 1901, is no exception to this. Even if Pan himself does not appear as a character in the story, his name and his attributes are present.

My paper will focus on the reasons why Barrie named his protagonist after the Greek god, which attributes a quasi-divine status to Peter Pan. Analyzing such mythic aspects may reveal interesting elements concerning Peter Pan’s ambiguous essence. Neither really human nor really immortal, he presents paradoxical aspects that raise important questions about death—and especially Peter’s death—and about sexuality, reality or nature. A discussion of these points will show that Peter Pan is not like other characters in traditional children’s books.

This issue will allow me to introduce more general concepts dealing with myths, tales and children’s stories, and especially the problems of definition they set, namely: What is a myth? What are the differences between tales and myths? Are their purposes the same? Do they contain the same message? Do their protagonists share common characteristics? And focusing on *Peter Pan*, which is a children’s story: to what extent can we consider that it has evolved towards a myth?

The corpus analysed will include *The Little White Bird* (a novel published in 1901 in which Peter Pan appeared as a minor character), the play *Peter Pan or the Boy who never grew up*, and the novel *Peter Pan*, published in 1911. In addition, covering Pan’s legends, I will focus on Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, *Homeric Hymns* and excerpts from Plutarch’s *Moralia*.

Delphine SCHNEIDER (Strasbourg) <delphine\_deferols@yahoo.fr>:

**“The Role of Cardinal Edward Manning, Archbishop of Westminster, in the Definition of Papal Infallibility at the First Vatican Council”**

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Esther SCHNEIDER (Basle) <esther.schneider@stud.unibas.ch>:

**“Derek Walcott and Caribbean Identity”**

Derek Walcott, one of the most eminent Caribbean poets, has been struggling with a split heritage: on one hand, his English heritage, mainly forged by his education, on the other, his African roots, deriving from his black ancestors. Traces of this struggle can be found in almost all his works. This paper explores his search for a Caribbean identity in a number of his works: from the “Divided Child” that he felt himself to be in his youth to the mature, self-asserted West Indian poet who detaches himself from his former literary models and develops his own distinctly Caribbean voice.

Petra Schultheiss (Basle) <Schultheiss\_p@yahoo.com >:

**“The American Leonardo: Leonardo da Vinci in American popular culture”**

Leonardo da Vinci is a figure deeply ingrained in American culture and especially in American popular culture on which this paper focuses. Leonardo is present in a wide range of media such as novels, self-help books or films. But the Leonardo of American popular culture is not a 16th century figure. Rather, America has appropriated Leonardo and made him its own by reinventing him as an American figure who reflects some of the central values and ideas of American culture such as individualism and the ideal of the self-made man as well as the American dream.

Nishanti SRITHARAN (Mulhouse) <nishajeya@hotmail.com>:

**“Representing the Irish Dream: Frank McCourt”**

The twentieth century has witnessed a huge growth of personal memoirs. It has become fashionable to write about one’s self and to share intimate confessions with unknown readers. Famous people such as the former American President Bill Clinton or the footballer David Beckham are willing to share the secrets of their lives with a larger public beyond the realm of their family and friends. Be it brags about victories or scandalous confessions—these recollections of personal memories captivate a large number of readers.

Frank McCourt is an Irish-American retired English teacher. *Angela’s Ashes*, his first memoir—about his childhood period in Ireland—was an international success both in literature and cinema (the film was made by Alan Parker). The two following memoirs, *‘Tis* and *Teacher Man*, though not as popular as the first one, remain uncontested with regard to the author’s narrative talent.

My research, centred on these memoirs, focuses on the analysis of the genre and style of these remarkable memoirs, rich in both humour and pathos. Some of my questions are: What kind of narrative strategy is McCourt adopting in his three memoirs? How is he making readers laugh at the poverty-stricken life of a young boy struggling to achieve his American Dream? The author’s language reflects his former experiences: a childish language when narrating his childhood, an immigrant perspective when narrating his struggles in his dreamland America ...

This raises the question of the reliability of the narrator. If the narrator is so precise concerning his childhood memories, is he then reliable? A critical comparison with other Irish memoirs that deal with similar issues seems useful to answer to that question. Moreover, some reactions to McCourt's memoirs in his hometown of Limerick make us doubt the veracity of McCourt's version. This has further lead me to do research on the historical and social context of McCourt's Ireland and his vision of the American Dream.