Apposition and Affective Communication[1]

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This paper focuses on the rhetorical effects of structures which involve the apposition of two (or more) segments with similar, but not identical, interpretations – for example, *He felt depressed, flattened*. Building on existing relevance theoretic account of poetic effects (Sperber & Wilson 1995, Pilkington 2000), it aims to show how these structures can be used to communicate an impression of emphasis or intensification which can be compared with the effects achieved by repetitions. It argues that these effects are not achieved in the same way, and that three different cases can be distinguished. First, the use of this structure may lie in the way it encourages the reader to explore the differences between the interpretation of the second segment and the interpretation of the first. Second, it may encourage the reader to explore the total set of contextual assumptions made accessible by both (or all) segments for the derivation of an interpretation which cannot be derived from any one segment alone. Finally, the paper considers the use of these structures by authors who use free indirect style to represent a character's struggle to identify an emotion s/he is experiencing.

Keywords

apposition
emphasis
ineffability
free indirect thought/style
reformulation
repetition
weak communication

1. INTRODUCTION

Although the phenomena which are discussed in this paper have featured in the study of apposition (see, for example, Burton-Roberts 1993, Meyer 1992),[2] they have not been singled out for special attention. At first sight, they might seem to be examples of reformulation, since they involve the apposition of two segments with similar interpretations. Consider, for example, (1) – (5): [3]

(1) He felt *depressed, flattened*. (SEU w.1.16.6.239-40. Cited by Meyer 1992:67)

(2) He *made a complete mental retreat*; *went far away*. (Maurice Gee, *In My Father's Den*, p.171)

(3) I feel I stand accused, also, by your actions, of having loved you at all, *as though my love for you was an act of brutal forcing, as though I were a heartless ravisher out of some trumpery Romance, from whom you had to flee, despoiled and ruined*. (A.S. Byatt, *Posession*, p.456)

(4) In the beginning it was *a tension, an element of strain that grew and crept like a thin worm through the harmony of their embrace*. (Keri Hulme, *Bone People*, p.6)

(5) For in marriage *a little licence, a little independence* there must be between people living together. (Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway*, p.9)

However, when the second segment is introduced by a marker of reformulation such as *or*, *in other words*, or *that is*, the result is, if not unacceptable, different in interpretation. Consider, for example:

(6) He felt depressed, or, in other words, flattened.

(7) In the beginning it was a tension, that is, an element of strain that grew and crept like a thin worm through the harmony of their embrace

Moreover, it seems that in contrast with reformulations sequences which contain reformulation markers, the sequences I have in mind can consist of more than two apposed segments:

(8) She has a curious feeling as she stands there, as though something is out of place, *a wrongness somewhere, an uneasiness, an overwatching*. (Keri Hulme, *The Bone People*, p.16)

(9) That was the way to live – *carelessly*, *recklessly*, *spending oneself*. He got to his feet and began to wade towards the shore, pressing his toes into the firm, wrinkled sand. *To take things easy*, *not to fight against the ebb and flow of life*, but to give way to it – that was what was needed. To live – to live! (Katherine Mansfield, 'At the Bay', p. 209)

As I have argued elsewhere (Blakemore 2007), the classification of *or*, *in other words*, and *that is* as reformulation markers obscures the fact that utterances may achieve relevance as reformulations in different ways. Thus *or* is acceptable in so-called paraphrases (e.g. (10)) with or without *in other words*, and in corrections (e.g. (11)), where it may be used in combination with *rather*. But it is less acceptable than *that is* in utterances such as (12) and (13), and cannot be used in combination with *in other words* in (14):

(10) Today we will learn how to treat cuts, or, in other words, lacerations.

(11) I keep thinking of my uncle Arthur, or rather my great uncle Arthur, who …. (LLC s.1. 106 – 8), cited in Meyer 1992:82)

(12) What I think we need, you see, is rooms with a table, ?or in other words/ that is to say, a table which students could sit around. There's no sense in a seminar where

someone is sitting at one end of the room and all the students are looking down towards the person who's sort of chairing it. (Adapted from LLC s.3.4 47-57, cited by Meyer 1992:17)

(13) Ruby isn't coming with Scarlett now. She, ?or/ that is Scarlett, said she might be late, and so Ruby's getting a bus. (From Blakemore 2007)

(14) In the end, Harold, or (? in other words), Hayley, as he became known, ended up living with Roy above his greasy spoon café. (From Blakemore 2007)

If, as I have argued, there is no unitary notion of reformulation, the fact that expressions such as *or*, *in other words* and *that is* are inappropriate in (1) – (5) and (8) – (9) might be taken to mean that they are examples of a particular sub-type of reformulation. In unplanned discourse (or planned discourse which is mimicking unplanned discourse) saying something in one way and then in another could be the result of the sort of revision and correction which characterizes utterances which are produced 'on the trot'. However, in this paper, I shall be focussing on these sequences as they occur in planned (predominantly written) discourse, where their use can be said to be the result of a deliberate stylistic choice.[4]

In fact, I have argued that the classification and sub-classification of reformulation relations does not provide an explanatory account of the interpretation of utterances such as those in (10) – (14) (Blakemore 2007). In any case, the examples in (1) – (5) and (8) – (9) achieve effects which cannot be explained by classifying them as reformulations. In particular, it seems that in examples such as (1) – (3) and (9), the communicator may express the same thought in two (or more) different ways in order to

achieve an emphatic sort of effect which could be compared with the effect of repetitions such as (15) – (16):

(15) I'm depressed, depressed.

(16) He went far far away.

As Sperber & Wilson (1995) have shown, the emphatic effects of repetition are non-propositional effects which are lost under paraphrase and are worked out differently in different examples. The effects of examples such as (1) – (3) and (9) are also difficult to paraphrase. Moreover, it is not clear that they are recovered in the same way in each case, or even that we would want to describe them all in terms of *emphasis*. Thus in (1) the effect is one of intensification or amplification which can be attributed to the fact that *flattened* can be understood to communicate a more serious form of depression than *depressed*. However, the words used in the second segment of (2) would not be said to communicate a greater degree of mental retreat from those used in the first segment. Here the effect is more an impression of heightened vividness which is somehow derived from the combination of the two segments. In this paper, I refer to the communication of such impressions, or non-propositional effects as 'affective communication'.

The fact that these sequences involve affective communication and communicate non-paraphraseable impressions rather than particular assumptions means that they raise a question raised by any stylistic device which is used for rhetorical effect (including repetition): how do we accommodate anything as vague as an impression in a theory of utterance interpretation which is based on a representational or computational theory of

the mind? In this paper, I show that the emphatic effects of utterances such as (1) - (3) and (9) can be explained in terms of the relevance theoretic notion of WEAK COMMUNICATION (Sperber & Wilson 1995:59 - 60). At the same time, I shall explain how utterances of this form may give rise either to an impression of intensification or to an impression of heightened vividness, and why both these types of effect are different from the effects yielded by repetitions

It will have been observed that whereas in (1) - (3) the communicator will be understood to be communicating one of his own thoughts about a state of affairs, in (9) Mansfield will be understood to be representing the thoughts of someone else (in this case, a fictional character) – it is an example of free indirect style or thought.[5] Following Sperber & Wilson (1995), I shall use the term *descriptive* to refer to those acts of communication in which communicators use an utterance to represent their own thoughts about a state of affairs, and the term *attributive* to refer to those cases in which communicators use an utterance to represent the thoughts of another person. [6]

This distinction brings an extra dimension to the discussion of the emphatic effects of these structures. For whereas in (1) – (3) the decision to produce two segments with closely related interpretations is the consequence of the communicator's belief that this is the best way of expressing his (own) thoughts about a state of affairs for the purpose of communicating them, in (9) it will be understood to reflect the way in which the person whose thoughts are being represented is thinking about a state of affairs. In other words, it seems that whatever is being represented by utterances of this form must itself be seen as part of what is being attributed to the character whose thoughts are being represented. But this raises the question of exactly what is being attributed. For it seems

that intensity or emphasis cannot be regarded as a conceptual constituent of a thought (in the way that the concept communicated by, say, *carelessly* is.

The same question is raised by the repetition *To live – to live!* in (9), or the use of emphatic stress in the following (constructed) example (from Blakemore 2002):

(17) John pointed out that they couldn't really afford a holiday. But no, she said that she NEEDED to get away.

Here, however, I shall focus on the question of what the italicized sequences in (8) and (9) are intended to represent.

According to the relevance theoretic framework of this paper, we should approach this question in exactly the same way as we approach the question of what they represent in examples of ordinary descriptive use. Even if Mansfield's character were not fictional, Mansfield would have no way of knowing what his thoughts look like or how closely her representations of those thoughts resemble them. In particular, there is no justification for thinking that the thoughts being represented actually contain a sequence of constituents corresponding to the ones I have italicized. By the same token, however, there is no way of knowing how closely the interpretation recovered resembles the thoughts represented. Not only is there a gap between utterances and their interpretations which is bridged by contextual inference, but also there can be no guarantee that the assumptions recovered by an audience are identical with the thoughts that the communicator wanted to communicate. Whether a communicator is communicating his own thoughts about a state of affairs or his representations of someone else's thoughts, the aim is not to duplicate

these thoughts but to provide an interpretation. In ordinary descriptive uses of language, this interpretation contributes to the sense of mutuality between the communicator and audience. In cases of free indirect style or attributive uses of language, it contributes to the sense of mutuality between a character and the audience. The point is that this is, as Sperber & Wilson (1995: 224) put it, '*affective*' rather than cognitive mutuality. And the question is how such affective mutuality is achieved. [7]

However, it is not clear that the apposition of alternative formulations is always used to communicate an impression of intensification or heightened vividness. In (8), it might seem that the author is simply aiming to capture the difficulty she is experiencing in expressing the concept she is trying to communicate, or in other words, that she is simply aiming to capture its very ineffability. However, what the author is representing here is not one of her own thoughts, but the thoughts of another person (in this case a fictional character). This means that she will not be understood to be communicating the difficulty she is having in expressing her own thought (in a public language), but rather the difficulty that someone else (a character) is having in representing the thought to herself (privately). It is not Keri Hulme who is represented as grappling with her feelings in (8), but the character whose feelings Hulme is representing. This raises the question of whether this character is actually having an imprecise thought, or whether the she is better described as not being able to conceptualize her experience under an existing concept. In this paper, I shall leave the question of what it would mean for someone to have a thought which they cannot represent to themselves, and focus on the question of whether the fact that Keri Hulme's character is represented as grappling with her feelings in (8) means that any attempt to represent them is self-defeating. If someone is struggling

to identify the emotion they are experiencing, how could anyone else hope to represent it?

In the following section, I shall outline the relevance theoretic framework which will underlie the discussion of the way in which the sequences I have identified are used in both the descriptive use of language and in free indirect style, focussing on the relevance theoretic approach to the relationship between language and thought, the difference between the descriptive and interpretive dimensions of language use, and the notion of weak implicature. In section 3, I consider the ways in which the apposition of alternative formulations give rise to emphatic effects, and in the final section I consider the possibility that a sequence of alternative formulations may be used to capture the difficulty of identifying the concept being communicated.

2. RELEVANCE, INFERENCE AND INTERPRETATION

2.1. *Linguistic meaning and communicated meaning*

The relevance theoretic framework which underlies this paper makes three fundamental theoretical assumptions: First, verbal communication is a matter of producing a linguistic 'clue' from which the audience can construct a representation of the thought or thoughts the communicator is trying to communicate. Second, the construction of this representation involves inferential pragmatic processes which are constrained by the assumption that the communicator has aimed at OPTIMAL RELEVANCE (see Sperber & Wilson 1995).[8] Finally, the representation that the audience derives through these processes should not be seen as a copy or literal representation of the communicator's thought, but as an interpretation of it – that is, as a representation which resembles the

communicator's thought in virtue of sharing its logical and contextual implications. This thought, as Sperber & Wilson have shown, is itself relevant either in virtue of being a description of a state of affairs or in virtue of representing a further thought. I shall be looking at this distinction in more detail below. My concern in this sub-section is with the relationship between the linguistic clue provided by a communicator and the thought that it is used to communicate.

In order to satisfy the expectation of optimal relevance raised by an utterance, the audience must, on the one hand, use contextual assumptions to develop its encoded linguistic meaning into an appropriately explicit propositional content (an EXPLICATURE), and, on the other, use contextual assumptions which are made accessible by the conceptual content of this explicature for the derivation of COGNITIVE EFFECTS. These two operations do not take place in serially, but are, as Carston (2002) puts it 'mutual adjustment' processes with hypotheses about context, explicit content and cognitive effects being made, adjusted, and confirmed in parallel on-line (see Sperber & Wilson 1995, 1997/8; Carston 2002; Wilson & Sperber 2004).

The inferential mutual adjustment processes involved in the derivation of explicit content not only allow the audience to disambiguate any ambiguous material and to assign reference to referring expressions, but also allow him to enrich and modify the encoded meanings of expressions for the recovery of communicated concepts which may be either narrower or broader than the one from which they are is derived. For example, the concept encoded by a word such as *depressed* can be regarded as a very general concept, or concept schema, which will be interpreted in specific ways in order to meet

the expectations of relevance raised by particular utterances. Compare, for example, the different uses of *depressed* in the following:

(18) [Ruby, Bob and Sue have just watched the England football team lose a match]
Ruby: Is Sue coming for a drink?
Bob: She's depressed.

(19) Ruby: I didn't see Sam at the party.
Bob: He hasn't been able to get a job since he was made redundant last year and he's very depressed.

For example, in the interpretation of (18), Ruby will not only use contextual assumptions made accessible by her own utterance, but will also draw on her assumptions about the feelings that may be aroused about football in order to derive a specific *ad hoc* concept DEPRESSED* which has the sort of encyclopaedic content that will allow her to interpret Bob's utterance as an answer to her question. Similarly, in (19), Ruby will use the contextual assumptions made accessible by Bob's utterance together with her own assumptions about redundancy and unemployment to derive a different *ad hoc* concept DEPRESSED** which has the sort of encyclopaedic content that will allow her to interpret Bob's utterance as an explanation for Sam's absence at the party. [9]

In some cases, the linguistically encoded meaning of a word may undergo a process of concept broadening so that it communicates a concept which would be taken to depart from the literal meaning it encodes. Consider, for example, the loose use of

empty in (20) (from Wilson & Carston 2006) and the metaphorical use of *flattened* in (21):

(20) You should take your *empty* bottles for recycling.

(21) Being made redundant has been a terrible experience and I am totally *flattened*.

Although the word *empty* has a sense in which the bottles contain nothing at all, in (20) it will be understood to communicate a broadened concept (EMPTY*) whose extension includes bottles which contain small amounts of wine or the water in which they were washed. The concept recovered from *flattened* in (21) will be understood to have undergone a more radical process of broadening, for here it will be taken to communicate a concept (FLATTENED*) which includes properties which have nothing to do with the encoded concept at all: the implicatures which the audience recovers are not the sort of implicatures that one would derive from assumptions about the physical properties of a surface, but are derived from assumptions about being in need of rest, or being emotionally exhausted, which somehow emerge when the encoded meaning of *flattened* is interpreted in the context of the assumptions made accessible by the earlier part of the utterance.[10]

2.2 *Weak implicature and affective communication*

As we have seen, the audience's interpretation of *depressed* in (18) and (19) is constrained by the need to derive a concept which allows him to interpret the utterance as

a response to Ruby's utterance. In contrast, the responsibility for bringing contextual assumptions to bear on the interpretation of *depressed* in (22) is given to the audience:

(22) Ruby to Bob: I saw Sam today. He seemed rather depressed.

As in (18) and (19), the encoded meaning of *depressed* is too general to yield an interpretation which would make Ruby's utterance sufficiently relevant to Bob. On the other hand, it is not clear that the implicatures which Bob recovers are necessarily the ones that Ruby intended. For example, he might recover any of the implicatures in (23):

(23) Ruby is worried about Sam.
Ruby believes that I should go and see Sam.
Sam hasn't recovered from being made unemployed.
Ruby thinks that Sam needs help.
Sam was not very talkative.

Sperber & Wilson (1995) call these implicatures are WEAK IMPLICATURES, implicatures which the audience is encouraged to derive, but for which he has to take some of the responsibility (for further discussion, see Sperber & Wilson 1995, chapter 4). However, such implicatures have to be inferentially warranted, and it is clear that the derivation of the *ad hoc* concept from the encoded meaning of *depressed* plays an essential part in this. As Carston (2002) has pointed out, this means that an *ad hoc* concept may be weakly communicated in the same way as an implicature may be. The relationship between the

concept recovered by the audience and the one which the communicator has in mind is not one of identity but one of resemblance, where resemblance is determined by the extent to which the two concepts give rise to the same logical and contextual implications. Clearly, there is no way of *looking* at the two concepts and checking whether they resemble each other: the audience can only go ahead and recover the interpretation which satisfies his expectations of optimal relevance.

Strength of communication is a matter of degree, and will vary according to the amount of responsibility the audience is given for the interpretation of the utterance in question. Thus even in cases such as (18) - (19), where the audience is constrained by his aim of recovering an interpretation which is optimally relevant in the context made accessible by the preceding utterance, he is given some degree of responsibility. For example, Bob's answer in (18) is neither equivalent to 'Sue is too depressed to go for a drink' nor to 'Sue is depressed about England losing the football'. Bob's concept of the sort of depression that results from seeing a football team beaten may not be the same as Ruby's. Moreover, they may not have the same concept of the sort of depression which rules out going for a drink. Accordingly, the implicatures derived by Ruby may not be identical to the ones that the communicator had in mind, and (18) has an indeterminacy not shared by utterances such as 'Sue is too depressed to go for a drink' or 'Sue is depressed about losing the football'.

Similarly, the strength of the implicatures derived from a metaphor will vary depending on the extent to which its interpretation calls upon the imagination of the audience. Thus the interpretation of the metaphor in (21), which is not a particularly creative one, will not require a great deal of imagination, and the communicator can be

regarded as providing some degree of endorsement for the implicatures recovered. In contrast, the interpretation of a creative or unusual metaphor will require a great deal of imagination on the part of an audience, and the communicator's endorsement of its implicated content will be considerably weaker. However, neither metaphor can be paraphrased without loss of meaning. That is, even in the mundane example, it will be assumed that the communicator has a specific thought in mind, and that the decision to produce a metaphorical utterance is constrained by the aim of finding the optimally relevant means of representing it.[11]

The picture of communication which is emerging here is not one in which communicative success depends on the duplication of thoughts, but is one in which communication results in what Sperber & Wilson (1995) describe as the enlargement of mutual cognitive environments (Sperber & Wilson 1995:193). On this view, an utterance is simply (public) evidence for a (private) thought, and the interpretation recovered by a hearer can only be an interpretation of the thought communicated. Communication will succeed to the extent that the optimally relevant interpretation of the utterance achieves the sort of 'loose' coordination which, as Sperber & Wilson say is 'best compared to the coordination between people taking a stroll together rather to that between people marching in step' (1997:123). Thus for example, in communicating the thought that Sam is depressed, the communicator in (22) can only assume that the audience's search for relevance will yield a concept which resembles it sufficiently for it to play a role in the (loose) co-ordination of their behaviour.

In fact, it is not always the case that what is recovered from an utterance corresponds to a conceptual constituent of the communicator's thought. Consider, for

example, the emphatic effects of repetitions such as the ones in (24) (from Sperber & Wilson 1995: 219):

(24) (a) We went for a long, long walk.

(b) I shall never, never smoke again.

(c) My childhood days are gone, gone.

As Sperber & Wilson (1995) have shown, the emphatic effects of repetition are not always achieved in the same way. Thus in (24a) the repetition achieves extra cognitive effects by modifying the propositional form of the utterance and the communicator will be understood to be communicating that the walk was longer than one might expect. In (24b) the effect is to strengthen the communicator's degree of commitment to the proposition expressed. However, the effect in (24c) cannot be analyzed in either of these ways: the communicator is not suggesting that his childhood days are more gone than one might have thought or that he is more strongly committed to the proposition that his childhood is gone than one might have thought.

According to Sperber & Wilson, the interpretation of (24c) can be accounted for by assuming that the repetition is an encouragement to expand the context which has been made accessible by the repeated word, and in this way to derive a range of cognitive effects that he would not have recovered otherwise. In this way, the communicator is able to suggest that the utterance is more relevant than the audience would have assumed otherwise. However, as they point out, the audience is not given any particular information about the way in which the context is to be expanded, or about the extent of

the expansion. The responsibility for exploring the encyclopaedic entries for GONE* is given to the audience so that the resulting interpretation consists of a very wide range of weakly communicated implicatures which the audience will assume provide a faithful interpretation of the communicator's feelings. In other words, while the form of the utterance suggests a line of processing, the responsibility for the recovery of its cognitive effects is given to the audience. The result as, Sperber & Wilson say, is 'a sense of apparently affective rather than cognitive mutuality' (1995:224).

2.3 *Attributed Thoughts*

As it is presented in 2.1, successful communication is achieved when a communicator produces a public representation of one of his thoughts about a state of affairs and the audience recovers a representation which is a sufficiently faithful interpretation of that thought. However, not all communication is like this. In some cases, a communicator may produce an utterance which communicates a thought which itself is a representation of someone else's thought – an attributed thought. In some cases, for example, (25) – (26), the fact that the communicator is communicating a representation of an attributed thought is indicated by the use of a particular linguistic form:

(25) Apparently, he has been made redundant.

(26) Bob said that the New Zealand team won

In other cases, the hearer will have to infer that an utterance is being used to communicate an attributed thought on the basis of the context and the principle of relevance.

The relevance of an utterance which is being used to represent an attributed thought does not necessarily lie in the information it gives about the content of the attributed thought. In some cases, for example, in ironic utterances, a communicator may echo someone's thought in order to convey his own attitude towards it. Here, however, we shall be concerned with cases in which the communicator's aim is to communicate the content of an attributed thought.

In the previous section, we saw that the successful communication of the communicator's thought does not involve the communication of an assumption which is identical to that thought. Similarly, the relationship between the thought which is communicated by the utterance produced and an attributed thought is not one of identity, but of resemblance, where this defined in terms of the extent to which the two thoughts share analytic and contextual implications in a given context.

This means that an utterance which is relevant as a representation of someone else's thought need not be regarded as a copy of that thought. In particular, this means that a communicator may represent a thought which cannot be paraphrased in propositional form by using a linguistic form to suggest a line of processing rather than to deliver a particular set of assumptions. Recall, for example, the repetition (italicized) in (9) (repeated below):

(9) That was the way to live – carelessly, recklessly, spending oneself. He got to his feet and began to wade towards the shore, pressing his toes into the firm, wrinkled sand. To take things easy, not to fight against the ebb and flow of life, but to give way to it – that was what was needed. *To live – to live!* (Katherine Mansfield, 'At the Bay', p. 209)

The implicatures recovered by following this line of processing are weakly communicated, and there can be no guarantee that there is any particular implicature which can be attributed to the person whose thoughts are being represented. The point is that in such cases, the author is creating a sense of affective mutuality not between the audience and himself, but between the audience and another (fictional) person.

3. APPOSITION AND THE COMMUNICATION OF EMPHATIC EFFECTS

In this section I shall return to the sequences in (1) – (3) (repeated below):

(1) He felt *depressed, flattened*. (SEU w.1.16.6.239-40. Cited by Meyer 1992:67)

(2) He *made a complete mental retreat*; *went far away*. (Maurice Gee, *In My Father's Den*, p.171).

(3) I feel I stand accused, also, by your actions, of having loved you at all, *as though my love for you was an act of brutal forcing, as though I were a heartless ravisher out of some trumpery Romance, from whom you had to flee, despoiled and ruined*. (A.S. Byatt, *Posession*, p. 456).

I have suggested that although the appositions in these sequences can all be said to give rise to an impression of amplification or heightened vividness, the effects achieved are not necessarily the same in each case. In particular, while there does seem to be a sense in which the second segment in (1) and (3) can be said to intensify or amplify what is communicated by the first, this does not seem to be the case in (2). Here it seems that we have to say that it is the *apposition* of the two segments which is more 'intense' than either segment taken individually. Notice that while the emphatic effects of (1) and (3) are lost when the order of the segments are reversed, reversing the order of the segments in (2) seems to have little or no effect on its interpretation.[12] Compare (1), (3) and (2) with (1'), (3') and (2') respectively:

(1') He was flattened, depressed.

(3') I feel I stand accused, also, by your actions, of having loved you at all, *as though I were a heartless ravisher out of some trumpery Romance, from whom you had to flee, despoiled and ruined, as though my love for you was an act of brutal forcing*.

(2') He went far away, made a complete mental retreat.

As in (2), the emphatic effects of the free indirect thought example in (9) do not derive from the order in which they are presented:

(9) That was the way to live – *carelessly, recklessly, spending oneself*. He got to his feet and began to wade towards the shore, pressing his toes into the firm, wrinkled

sand. *To take things easy, not to fight against the ebb and flow of life, but to give way to it* – that was what was needed. To live – to live! (Katherine Mansfield, 'At the Bay', p. 209)

(9') That was the way to live – *recklessly, carelessly, spending oneself*. He got to his feet and began to wade towards the shore, pressing his toes into the firm, wrinkled sand. *Not to fight against the ebb and flow of life, to take things easy* – that was what was needed.

In the following, I shall refer to examples such as (1) and (3) as cases of INTENSIFICATION, and examples such as (2) and (9) as examples of HYBRID REPRERESENTATION.

However we account for the difference between cases of intensification and cases of hybrid representation, it seems that the emphatic effect in both types of case contrasts with the effects achieved by repetition. The effect of (1) is not the same as the one achieved in (15), and the effect of (2) must be contrasted with the one achieved in (16):

(15) I'm depressed, depressed.

(16) He went far far away.

This suggests that an account of how the apposition of expressions with closely related interpretations contributes to the impression of emphasis must contain an explanation of this contrast. Let us consider each type of case in turn before addressing the question of why the effects they yield are different from the ones associated with repetition.

3.1 *Intensification*

I have described the forms which are the focus of this paper in terms of the apposition of segments which have similar interpretations. At the same time, however, I have described the interpretation of the second segment in each of (1) and (3) in terms of an amplification or intensification of the interpretation derived from the first. The question, then, is how two segments may be similar in interpretation but different in 'intensity'.

Let us begin with the (constructed) example in (27), where, in contrast with the examples in (1) and (3), each of the two segments involves what would normally be thought of as a non-figurative use of language:

(27) I'm leaving. You've *spoilt the while evening, ruined it.*

The word *spoil* is consistent with interpretations ranging from very slight damage (a faint ink-mark on a book) to damage of a more serious sort (the loss of cover and half the pages). Moreover, whether such damage is so serious that it qualifies as ruin is a subjective matter. Nevertheless, it can be said that ruining something entails but is not entailed by spoiling it, and hence that *ruin* is informationally stronger than *spoil*. Thus we might say that the impression of intensification in (27) is created by the use of a word whose meaning is informationally stronger than the one in the first segment. And, indeed, this impression cannot be recovered from the (comparatively unacceptable) (27'):

(27') I'm leaving. You've *ruined the whole evening, spoilt it.*

However, if the communicator had wanted to communicate the stronger concept in (27), then why did he not simply produce the second segment in the first place? The fact that he produced both may, of course, be the result of the sort of revision and correction that takes place in unplanned discourse. However, here we are interested in cases in which a communicator's decision to produce both segments is deliberate.

As we have seen, the concept which the audience recovers derives from *spoil* on a particular occasion of its use will not be the very general concept it encodes, but an *ad hoc* concept SPOIL* which will give him access to a range of contextual assumptions which allow the derivation of contextual implications – for example, the ones in (28):

(28) The speaker of (27) believes that the evening was not as successful as he would have liked.

The speaker of (27) believes that the hearer is responsible for the way the evening has turned out.

The speaker of (27) is willing to continue the outing.

The speaker of (27) is disappointed with the hearer.

However, the use of *ruin* will encourage the audience to access a different range of contextual assumptions, for example, the ones in (29):

(29) The speaker of (27) believes that the evening cannot be salvaged.

The speaker of (27) is furious with the hearer.

In this way, the audience is encouraged to compare the contextual effects derived on the basis of the interpretation of the second segment with those derived on the basis of the first, and to attend to the properties which would justify the use of *ruin* rather than *spoil*. In other words, the relevance of the apposition lies in the properties which distinguish ruining an evening from spoiling it. The responsibility for deciding what these properties are is the audience's, and the result is a range of weak implicatures which would not have been communicated by the second segment alone. In this way, by producing both segments the communicator is able to communicate a greater strength of feeling than he would have communicated by producing the second segment alone.

The same sort of account can be given for (1), except that here the difference between the two segments can be attributed to the figurative use of language in the second segment. This yields a more vivid impression of the state of mind being described than is yielded by the general concept encoded by the word *depressed* in the first segment. The states of mind which may be described by the word *depressed* range from temporary states to more permanent debilitating conditions. In the absence of any specific direction from the communicator, the audience will recover a concept on the basis of whatever contextual assumptions are accessible, and hence there is no guarantee that this concept corresponds to the one that the communicator has in mind. However, as we have seen, the *ad hoc* concept recovered from the metaphorical use of *flattened* will be understood to have undergone a process of broadening so that its encyclopaedic entry includes representations of a state of mind (rather than information about someone's physical appearance). Thus by encouraging the audience to bring the encyclopaedic entry

for a person together with the encyclopaedic entry for the concept encoded by *flat* (which will include assumptions about the surface of a solid object or a liquid) the speaker is providing the basis for the derivation of a concept which yields a wide range of weak implicatures. This provides a more faithful, more vivid representation of the extent and type of depression he has in mind. For example, the communicator may be understood to be communicating that this person's life is destroyed; that he is finding it impossible to resume his normal pattern of life; he is without energy, etc. Moreover, by using both words, the communicator is able to encourage the audience to compare the cognitive effects derived on the basis of the second (broadened) concept with those which might have been derived on the basis of the first, thus drawing attention to the properties which distinguish the sort of state of mind the speaker has in mind from other conditions which are described as depression. Hence the impression of emphasis.

Similarly, in (3) the second segment (repeated here as (30b)) encourages the reader to explore his own contextual assumptions about the villains depicted in 'trumpery Romances' for the derivation a much wider range of (weakly communicated) cognitive effects than are yielded by the first in (30a). In this way it provides a more vivid representation of the sense of brutal forcing which the writer intended and the sort of accusation which he feels is being levelled at him:

(30a) as though my love for you was an act of brutal forcing

(30b) as though I were a heartless ravisher out of some trumpery Romance, from whom you had to flee, despoiled and ruined

In other words, whereas the first segment (30a) may yield cognitive effects, the utterance of the second segment suggests that these should not be considered an adequate representation of the writer's feelings. These can only be captured by using the conceptual content of (30b) to trigger a further search for a range of weakly communicated implications. At the same time, the use of both segments provides a means of drawing attention to the difference between the sort of effects that are yielded by the second and the ones that are yielded by the first.

3.2 *'Hybrid' representations*

Now let us turn to the sequences in (2) and (9), where the emphatic effect does not hinge on the order in which the segments are presented:

(2) He *made a complete mental retreat*; *went far away*. (Maurice Gee, *In My Father's Den*, p.171).

(9) That was the way to live – *carelessly*, *recklessly*, *spending oneself*. He got to his feet and began to wade towards the shore, pressing his toes into the firm, wrinkled sand. *To take things easy*, *not to fight against the ebb and flow of life*, *but to give way to it* – that was what was needed. To live – to live! (Katherine Mansfield, 'At the Bay', p. 209)

As we have seen, there is no suggestion here that the conceptual content of the second segment is stronger or more emphatic than the content of the first. Rather the point seems to be that the two segments combine for the communication of a concept which is more

intense than the one communicated by either segment taken individually. For example, in (2), the writer is indicating that the thought which he has in mind is neither the one which is communicated by (31a) nor the one communicated by (31b):

(31a) He made a complete mental retreat.

(31b) He went far away.

The sequence in (2) is intended as a description of someone who has been accused of a terrible crime by the narrator. The interpretation of the metaphor *a complete mental retreat* will lead the reader to derive a similarly metaphorical interpretation of *went far away* so that the character will be understood to go far away mentally rather than physically. The point is that while the reader will not derive an interpretation of physical retreat from (31a), he will derive a concept which will give him access to concepts such as WITHDRAW, RETIRE, REFUGE, GO BACK which, when brought together with the concepts made accessible by MENTAL, will give access to contextual assumptions about taking refuge in one's thoughts or memories about the past. The exploration of these assumptions will result in a range of weakly communicated assumptions which in other circumstances would be taken as an interpretation of the thought which the writer wanted to communicate. However, the fact that the writer produces the second sequence (30b) suggests that that the reader is expected to extend this context by exploring contextual assumptions made accessible by the content of *far away* – assumptions about the distance created between himself and the narrator. The result is a wider array of implicatures and a more vivid understanding of the narrator's thoughts. The expression HYBRID

REPRESENTATION is intended to reflect the fact that this range of implicatures cannot be recovered from the contextual assumptions made accessible by either one of the two segments alone, but only from the contextual assumptions made accessible by both segments taken together.

A similar kind of analysis can be given for the sequence in (32) which is extracted from the passage in (9):

(32) That was the way to live – *carelessly*, *recklessly*, *spending oneself*.

While the content of *carelessly* gives the reader access to contextual assumptions about the sort of behaviour which results from a lack of concern, attention or planning (the spontaneous behaviour which may result in (happy) accidents and co-incidences), the content of *recklessly* will give him access to a rather different set of assumptions (about taking risks, endangering oneself) and hence a different range of implicatures. The content of *spending* will be inferentially adjusted so that does not give access to assumptions about money, but rather provides the basis for accessing contextual assumptions whose exploration yields implicatures about being lavish with one's physical and mental resources. The use of all three of these words indicates that the range of implicatures that the reader derives through the exploration of the encyclopaedic entry for any one of the concepts they communicate is not a faithful representation of the thought the author wishes to represent. Thus the reader is encouraged to explore the contextual assumptions made accessible by *carelessly*, extend this context further by exploring the contextual assumptions made accessible by *recklessly*, and then extend it further by

exploring the contextual assumptions made accessible by *spending oneself*. The result is a wide array of weakly communicated implicatures which can only derived through the exploration of the contextual assumptions which are made accessible by all three segments taken together – a hybrid representation.

As I have already observed, in contrast with (2), this is not a hybrid representation of the writer's own thoughts, but a hybrid representation of someone else's thoughts (the thoughts of a fictional character). However, this does not affect the analysis I have presented. The point is that the interpretation recovered as an interpretation of the writer's thought is itself is an interpretation of another person's thought. This means that the resulting sense of mutuality will be between the reader and the person whose thoughts are being represented.

The analyses of the examples in (2) and (9) (the hybrid representations) and the analyses of the examples in the previous section (the examples of intensification) provide the key to the explanation of why the emphatic effects they achieve are different from the emphatic effects achieved by repetitions. As we have seen (section 2.2), a repetition such as the one in (24c) (repeated below) achieves an effect of emphasis by encouraging the audience to expand the context which is made accessible by the content of the repeated word:

(24) (c) My childhood days are gone, gone.

Thus the audience is encouraged to explore his contextual assumptions about what happens when one childhood has gone still further – by drawing on his own experience or

his observation of the experience of others and his imagination – and expand the context in order to derive a wider array of weakly communicated implicatures than he would have otherwise.

In contrast, the impression of emphasis that an audience derives from an example such as (1) is achieved as a result of accessing the contextual assumptions made accessible by two *distinct* concepts – concepts which are may be similar but are in fact crucially different. As we have seen, in encouraging the audience to identify the *difference* between the implicatures derived from each of these two concepts the communicator is able to draw attention to, and thus emphasize, the stronger concept.

The impression of emphasis that is achieved in examples such as (2) and (9) is also the result of accessing the contextual assumptions made accessible by two (or more) distinct concepts. However, in contrast with (1), the impression of emphasis derives from the fact that the context built by *combining* the contextual assumptions made accessible by each one of the concepts yields a more vivid, striking interpretation of the thought being communicated than the context made accessible by any one of them.

4. Apposition and ineffability

Finally, in this paper I would like to turn to the example in (8), where the apposition of phrases with closely related meanings seems to capture the difficulty which someone is experiencing in identifying the feeling they are having:

(8) She has a curious feeling as she stands there, as though something is out of place, *a wrongness somewhere, an uneasiness, an overwatching* (Keri Hulme, *The Bone People*, 16).

Feelings are regarded as intrinsically private and unshareable, and it is not surprising that they are difficult to express. However, as we have seen, the difficulty that is being represented here is not the difficulty of representing an intrinsically private experience in a public language. Hulme is representing the difficulty that her character is having representing a feeling to herself rather than the difficulty of representing this feeling in a public language. It seems that this difficulty derives from the fact that the character is experiencing a feeling which she does not recognize: it does not fall under any one existing concept.

However, if this is the case, then isn't there something self-defeating about Hume's attempt to represent this character's thoughts? If someone is having difficulty identifying a feeling, then how could anyone else hope to identify it? The point is, of course, that Hulme has not identified it. She has simply represented her character's ambivalence towards the identification of this feeling. Thus the feeling is not just a feeling of uneasiness, or a feeling of wrongness, or a feeling of 'overwatching' (whatever this is). [13] It is something which is in some sense like each one of these.

More particularly, the author's assumption in producing this sequence is that the concept encoded by each of the three apposed phrases will be inferentially enriched for the recovery of an *ad hoc* concept which gives the reader access to a distinct range of encyclopaedic assumptions. These three contexts are taken together to yield a range of

weakly communicated implicatures which could not have been derived from any one segment alone. These implicatures will not be assumed to be *identical* to the ones which are derived from the concept which the author is trying to represent: they simply amount to an *interpretation* of this concept. At the same time, the fact that the author has attempted to communicate this concept through a series of alternative linguistic clues can be taken as evidence that the character herself is finding it difficult to identify what she is experiencing. In this way, the author increases the sense of intimacy between reader and character – the sort of intimacy that derives from the belief that one is sharing essentially private experiences and feelings.

CONCLUSION

The structures which have featured in this paper are ubiquitous in both literary and non-literary texts. Yet they are rarely discussed. As I have shown, the effects they achieve are similar, but not identical to those achieved by repetitions. Like repetitions, they do not always achieve these effects in the same way. I have distinguished three different types of case. First, there are the cases in which the use of the structure encourages the audience to explore the *differences* between the interpretation of the second segment and the interpretation of the first. This results in an impression of intensification. Second, there the cases in which the structure is used to encourage the audience to explore the total set of contextual assumptions made accessible by both (or all) segments for the derivation of an interpretation which could not be derived from any one segment alone - a 'hybrid' concept. Finally, there are those cases in which this structure is used in free indirect thought to represent a character's struggle to identify an emotion s/he is experiencing. In

none of these cases can it be assumed that the interpretation recovered is identical to the one intended. As we have seen, even in cases where the audience has relatively little responsibility for the interpretation he recovers, there can be no guarantee that it is identical to the one intended. Words are simply bits of evidence provided by the communicator for the identification of his intention. Since the use of these structures leaves so much of the responsibility for interpretation to the audience, the idea that they result in an interpretation which duplicates the one intended is even more difficult to maintain. However, as Sperber & Wilson (1995) have shown, this does not mean that the level of understanding that is achieved is not sufficient for successful communication. On the contrary, as the last section demonstrates, the fact that the use of these structures does leave the audience so much latitude in the interpretation process can result in an increased sense of empathy.

Notes

1. This paper is based on research which was supported by the British Academy. The ideas it contains were first aired at the workshop, 'The Pragmatics of Poetic Communication' held at the University of London Institute in Paris, and I am grateful to the participants of the workshop for their comments. I would also like to thank an anonymous reviewer for comments on an earlier version of the paper. Clearly, I remain responsible for all errors and infelicities it contains.

2. Apposition is generally treated as a grammatical category, rather than a stylistic or functional one. However, as Quirk *et al*.(1985) point out, grammarians have not applied the term consistently, and definitions vary from the very conservative to the very liberal.

Thus while conservative definitions restrict the category to the juxtaposition of co-referential noun phrases, more liberal definitions have extended it so that includes the juxtaposition of a range of constructions, including parenthetical glosses, elucidations, reformulations, and corrections of the first segment. As Burton-Roberts (1993) points out, such cases would seem to suggest that apposition is a very loose type of relation, and arguably not a syntactic relation at all. Indeed, Burton-Roberts has demonstrated that the category has even been extended to include the juxtaposition of complete sentences in a discourse, in which case it would seem to become a type of coherence or textual relation. The use of the term in the present paper should not be taken to suggest that I am able to offer a definition which is more precise than any found in the literature. I adopt the term simply because it has been widely adopted to refer to the juxtaposition (rather than co-ordination) of sub-sentential phrases 'each of which can be understood to have the same syntactic category with respect to the same other elements in the sentence structure' (Burton-Roberts, 1993:185).

3. The phenomenon I have in mind is exemplified here by examples from actual (mainly literary) texts or discourse. However, this is not intended to suggest that the evidence which I use in support of the arguments which follow is restricted to naturally occurring examples, or, more fundamentally, that the constructed examples which are cited in these arguments are any less 'real' than naturally occurring data. Indeed, since arguments about the semantics and pragmatics of constructions depend on negative evidence (sentences which are not acceptable or which are not acceptable under a particular interpretation), constructed examples play an essential role in semantic and pragmatic argumentation. Accordingly, the arguments which follow will be based on a mixture of acceptable

examples from actual discourse, acceptable constructed examples, and unacceptable constructed examples.

As Schutz (1996) has shown, the way in which linguists obtain judgement data is not without problems, and it has become clear that readily available clear-cut data are no longer sufficient to resolve deeper questions about the structure of language. However, this does not affect my point here.

4. (a) It could, of course, be argued that a writer who uses one of these structures in a text which is intended to represent spontaneous, unplanned conversation has made a conscious stylistic choice. However, in such a text the use of such a structure may be regarded as a means of reflecting the way in which speakers in spontaneous discourse revise and correct their utterances as they search for the optimally relevant means of expression in conditions which are rather different from the conditions in which planned communication takes place.

(b) Because my examples will include both written and spoken utterances I shall (for the most part) use the terms *communicator* and *audience* rather than *speaker* and *hearer*, or *writer* and *reader*.

5. Indeed, it could be said that these structures are one of the linguistic hall-marks of free indirect style, along with repetitions and exclamations, for example (see Banfield 1982, Ehrlich 1990 for further discussion). However, ultimately, whether or not an utterance is a case of free indirect thought will depend on the context and the assumption that it is consistent with the principle of relevance (see Sperber & Wilson 1995: chapter 5). As Barbara McMahon (personal communication) points out, if these structures are indeed characteristic of free indirect style, then one has to ask why this should be: why is this

style so often concerned with the representation of the thoughts of characters who are struggling to represent the ineffable to themselves? This question is outside the scope of the present paper.

6. In relevance theory, attributive use is analyzed in terms of the notion of *interpretive representation* (to be discussed in section 2.3). See Sperber & Wilson (1995: chapter 5).

7. For further discussion of the notion of affective mutuality, see Pilkington (2000).

8. Optimal relevance is defined by Sperber & Wilson (1995) in the following way:

An utterance is optimally relevant iff:

(a) it is relevant enough for it to be worth the addressee's effort to process it;

(b) it is the most relevant one compatible with the communicator's abilities and preferences.

The relevance of an utterance increases with the number of the cognitive effects it yields in a given context, and decreases with the amount of processing effort required for the derivation of those effects. For introductions to relevance theory, see Blakemore (1995), Wilson (1999).

9. The notion of an *ad hoc* concept has its roots in Barsalou's (1983) notion of an *ad hoc* category. For Barsalou, an *ad hoc* category is distinguished from a common category by the fact that it is not well-established in memory.

10. This sort of example raises the question of how a hearer gets from the encoded concept to the one which is communicated. This question, which has been termed 'the emergent property question' has been approached in a variety of ways. At the one extreme, there are writers such as Grice (1989) and Lewis (1975, 1979) who have argued that there is a cut off point between literal and metaphorical interpretations. At the other,

there are writers, including relevance theorists, who argue for a continuity view in which there is no cut off point between the literal and the metaphorical, and that metaphorical utterances are interpreted by the same inferential mechanisms that are involved in the interpretation of non-metaphorical utterances. For further discussion, see Wilson & Carston (2006).

11. For further discussion, Pilkington (2000), Sperber & Wilson (1995).

12. This is not to say that the reversed versions of (1) and (3) are unacceptable. The point is that they will not be interpreted as conveying an impression of strengthening or amplification. For example, in (1') and (3'), the second segment could be interpreted as a clarification of the first. At the same time, I do not want to suggest that the order in which the author chose to present these segments in (2) and 9) was arbitrary. There is a range of factors which may have influenced the author's decision, e.g. syntax, the relative weight or length of the segments. The point is that such a decision does not affect the contribution made by the use of the apposition.

13. This assumes that *overwatching* does encode a concept, which is debatable. It is more likely that the reader is expected to infer a concept from the encoded meanings of each of its component parts (*over* and *watching*). Indeed, it seems that the fact the audience is given responsibility for the derivation of this concept contributes an increased sense of struggle or ambivalence.

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