PERSPECTIVES IN FICTION. *CHARACTER*-SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE SENTENCES

PERSPECTIVES DANS LA FICTION. PROPOSITIONS *PERSONNAGE*-SUBJECTIVES ET PROPOSITIONS OBJECTIVES

PERSPECTIVE ÎN FICŢIUNE. PROPOZIŢII *PERSONAJ*-SUBIECTIVE ŞI PROPOZIŢII OBIECTIVE

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Abstract

Our purpose in the present article is to define and exemplify objective and (CHARACTER) subjective sentences occurring in narrative fiction. These two categories find their roots in the poetic school of thought, which starts from the premise that a narrator viewed as SPEAKER is not necessarily at the origin of all textual instances. Our approach encompasses the idea that perspectives in fiction are either objective - if their purpose is to actually constitute the world of fiction, or subjective - if they are part of a character's personal world representation. We mainly focus on free indirect discourse for illustrating CHARACTER-subjective sentences, while presenting some objective sentences, as well, for a contrasting view.

Résumé

Le but de notre article est de spécifier et d'exemplifier des propositions objectives et PERSONNAGE-subjectives spécifiques à la fiction narrative. Ces deux catégories trouvent leur origine dans l'école de pensée poétique, qui a comme prémisse l'idée qu'un narrateur en tant que SUJET PARLANT n'est pas à postuler à l'origine du récit tout entier. Notre approche comprend l'idée que les perspectives narratives sont soit objectives - si leur finalité est de créer l'univers de la fiction, soit subjectives - si elles font partie de la représentation du monde d'un personnage. Notre analyse porte sur le discours indirect libre (des propositions PERSONNAGE-subjectives) et sur des propositions objectives pour offrir une perspective contrastée du sujet.

Rezumat

Scopul nostru în acest articol este definirea şi exemplificarea propoziţiilor obiective şi PERSONAJ-subiective specifice ficţiunii narative. Aceste două categorii îşi găsesc originea în şcoala de gândire poetică, care porneşte de la premisa că naratorul ca LOCUTOR nu trebuie postulat la originea tuturor enunţurilor textuale. Abordarea noastră cuprinde ideea că perspectivele ficţionale sunt fie obiective - dacă scopul lor este de a constitui lumea ficţiunii, fie subiective - dacă fac parte din reprezentarea lumii din perspectiva unui personaj. Analiza noastră se opreşte asupra discursului indirect liber pentru a ilustra propoziţiile PERSONAJ-subiective, prezentând totodată propoziţii obiective pentru o viziune contrastantă asupra subiectului.

Key words: *narrative fiction, narrator, perspective, subjective sentences, objective sentences*

Mots-clés: *fiction narrative, narrateur, perspective, propositions subjectives, propositions objectives*

Cuvinte-cheie: *naraţiune ficţională, narator, perspectivă, propoziţii subiective, propoziţii obiective*

1. Introduction:

Analysing fiction has led to numerous debates mainly revolving around the notions of *perspective*, *point of view*, *focalisation*, *viewpoint* and other connected notions (e.g. *narrator*). These terms hold a somewhat ambiguous nature, which can be partly explained by the fact that researchers have embraced one of the two main trends dealing with fiction interpretation[1]. The two traditions we are referring to are the *communicative* and the *poetic* approaches to narrative fiction. Briefly put, the former account derives its name from the fact that a *narrator* as speaker of the entire narration is posited in the deep structure of all fictional instances, whereas the latter interprets the text at surface level in terms of its showing or not signals of a fictional speaker (PATRON, 2006, FLUDERNIK, 1993).

Interpretations also vary in what concerns the *narrator*'s functions. According to some researchers[2], the interpretative function is what signals a narrator for those supporting the poetic view. However, some poetic supporters do not consider it a condition that necessarily applies only to a narrator. The interpretative function may embody the attitudes of social groups or characters at the story level etc.

"In addition, the ontologies represented by the existence of a novel are at least two: the historical world of the author and the fictional world of the characters. Attitudes expressed by the text that we may at first take to sincerely represent the author's own ideology may be at any time preempted by a superior level of knowledge that scoffs at these attitudes and places them figuratively or literally in quotation marks, distancing them from the author's own subjectivity. Bakhtin (1981) referred to this aspect of narrative as the degree of refraction of the author's intentionality. But this refraction is not dependent on the existence of a narrator; the languages used to capture characters' experience commonly reflect a hierarchy of evaluation, but this evaluation may be objective (i.e., absolutely true within fiction) or it may represent the attitudes of social groups or characters at the story level."[3]

(GALBRAITH, 1995, 43)

Taking into consideration that the proponents of the two approaches seem to agree at least on one point - that the first-person narrator-character truly deserves the name of *narrator*, we will take this idea as one of our basic postulations. Additionally, we start from the premise that fiction need not be 'guaranteed' by a narrator, because entering the fictional world is like being in a dream: one can fly at will (GALBRAITH, 1995). Laying the foundations of a reader-oriented linguistic approach to narrative fiction comes as a natural consequence of the idea that in order to posit a narrator as SPEAKER, we need to find the necessary linguistic signals in the text under analysis. In order to do that we have taken into consideration suggestions offered by several approaches: the Deictic Shift Theory (DST), Situation Theory (ST), Narratology, and Possible Worlds Semantics (PWS).

The approaches which take into account the way readers comprehend fictional narrative texts have one point in common: the fact that readers are viewed to transpose themselves in the world(s) created by the written text. This idea has come up under different names - inferential and indexical perspective (in ST), deictic centering (in DST), recentering[4] (in PWS). This narrative involvement is realized by readers' shifting their deictic centre from their real-life whereabouts to "an image of themselves at a location within the story world [...]" (SEGAL, 1995, 15)[5]. Katagiri

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[1] Please see my previous published work (Mezei, (2008 (a)), cited at the end of this article), where I present an extended discussion regarding the main factors standing at the centre of this debate.

[2] cf. Jean-Michel Adam (1994[1981]), Genette (1972), and Lintvelt (1994).

[3] Our underlining.

[4] Ryan (1991) speaks of readers' *recentering*.

[5] Segal (1995) is a supporter of the Deictic Shift Theory.

(1991), within the framework of Situation Theory, explains that when we deal with an agent's own situatedness in an environment, i.e. an agent who takes his spatial, temporal or personal coordinates as the centre of the world, we speak of an *indexical perspective*. When he constructs his utterances based on other agents' reasoning processes, then an *inferential perspective* emerges.

Reading fiction is at its basis the inferential process in which the reader adopts the deictic centre displayed by the current fictional world. This deictic centre may be *objective*, that is, one which actually constructs parts of this world or *subjective*, in that it is the deictic centre of a fictional character. To clarify even more what we mean by "subjective" or "objective", we will refer to Banfield's 1982 study (poetic proponent; her linguistic study is sentence-based). She divides sentences into two types – those with a subject ("subjective") and those without a subject ("objective"). She includes in the latter category sentences of narration and sentences of represented speech and thought. Her idea is not that these sentences cannot express subjectivity, or rather expressivity, but that they are not necessarily linked to the narrator as the origin of that subjectivity.

> "We have in fact two radically different conceptions of the presentation of the point of view. In one [communicative accounts][6], all language is seen as paradigmatically spoken, and all other uses are derivative from spoken language. Hence, in all these derivative uses of language, a speaker appears whose presence gives language its characteristic structure. In the other [non-communicative approaches][7], point of view becomes a concept which can be independent of the speaker's role in communication. <u>Subjectivity is not dependent on the communicative act, even if it is *shown* through language</u>[8]. And if it is not subordinated to the communicative function, then language can contain speakerless sentences. "

(BANFIELD, 1982, 69-70)

2. Objective and Subjective Sentences. Definition and interpretative tools

We take ***objective sentences*** to be those sentences which do <u>not</u> originate in a fictional subject of consciousness. This subject of consciousness may be a SPEAKER (i.e. a narrator) or a SELF[9] (i.e. a character whose viewpoint is taken as <u>the origin</u> of certain spatial, temporal or personal represented expressions, but who does not 'speak'[10]). In the case of objective sentences the author intends his readers to make-believe that what is said is true, so, these statements should be regarded as creating the reality of the fictional world. In the example (1) below the reader accepts that Shea Stadium is in Chicago in that fictional story world, although he knows that in our reality it is in New York.

(1) Shea Stadium is a large stadium in Chicago[11].

Subjective sentences are representations of a subjective deictic centre, either a SPEAKER's or a SELF's. We will name the former, representing the perspective of the narrating WHO[12], SPEAKER-subjective sentences. The latter are called CHARACTER-subjective sentences[13]. The term ***subjectivity*** refers to the existence of a fictional subject as the <u>epistemological</u> origin of a perspective. *Subjective* sentences may be either character/SELF-oriented or SPEAKER-oriented, and they are interpreted by readers as possibly true in the actual story world[14], i.e. their

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[6] Our insertion.

[7] Our insertion.

[8] Our underlining.

[9] Terminology of Banfieldian inspiration (Banfield, 1982).

[10] cf. Wiebe, 1995, 269.

[11] cf. Wiebe, 1995, 268; his example.

[12] cf. Rapaport *et al.*, 1994, for the usage of the term *narrating WHO*.

[13] We depart here from Banfield's terminology (1982). She considered sentences of represented speech and thought as being objective sentences. See Wiebe (1995, 269) for a definition of subjective and objective sentences (our starting point).

[14] We are speaking in semantic terms here (Possible Worlds Semantics). We maintain the term <u>story world</u> for the world relative to which a first truth-value is to be established. This story world has the same status for the characters in the fiction considered, as the *actual world* has for us, but we cannot access such a world except by using the written text

truth-value is viewed as either <u>1</u> (true) or <u>0</u> (false), depending on the fulfilment of certain conditions. By ***expressivity*** we mean syntactic and lexical 'subjectivity' signalling.

Objective sentences (i.e. mainly narrative sentences) are taken <u>not</u> to have at their origin a narrating WHO, i.e. not to be referentially linked to a SPEAKER, but to be part of the story world perspective and to 'automatically' receive the <u>1</u> truth-value in the story world, in a reader-oriented interpretation[15]. Because all language is situated, such sentences are taken to have a SOURCE at their origin, not a speaker[16].

In her (1990) study, Ehrlich endeavours to find some useful tools for differentiating sentences belonging to the direct discourse from represented speech and thought. She proposes to divide these sentences in two main categories according to their surface structure:

- sentences containing parentheticals (<u>SCP</u>)
- sentences not containing parentheticals (<u>non-SCP</u>).

Ehrlich's argumentation runs as follows:

(2) He would be late for her party, John told Mary.

This is a parenthetical subject-oriented SCP (RST sentence); an actual speech event in which John addresses Mary is understood here.

Truth condition: it is necessary that the parenthetical subject (John) said or believed something very similar to the main clause.

(3) John will be late for Mary's party, he told her.

This is a speaker-oriented SCP; the assertion of the speaker does not imply that there has been an actual speech event in which John addresses Mary.

Truth condition: it is necessary that the speaker has a certain belief; it is not necessary that the subject parenthetical said or believed the content of the clause.

So, this distinction may be operative in the case of CHARACTER-subjective sentences on condition that they contain a parenthetical. The question is which sentences render a SELF-perspective (i.e. our CHARACTER-subjective sentences) and which sentences are objective, especially if the analysed sentences contain expressive elements.

Ehrlich's (1990) study introduces other devices which show how cohesion is obtained within a given paragraph, or discourse unit. The underlying idea is that sequences of sentences conveyed from a single "point of view" belong to the same *discourse unit/episode*. Put differently, this means that her study tries to provide methods which help understand why a certain unit is the content of one (origin-)perspective.

Referential linking is mainly at work in a context where one can find various possible referents in immediate contexts. The rule is as follows (EHRLICH, 1990, 37):

"Two sentences, S1, S2 are referentially linked if <u>topic or scene-setting expression of S2 is referentially controlled by a referent mentioned in S1</u> and <u>the controlling referent is contained within a dominant clause</u>[17]."

The *topic* of a sentence is defined as the element that the sentence is about. Ehrlich proposes guiding rules, which take into consideration the criterion of *dominance* – defined as "that part of a sentence to which a speaker/writer intends to direct the hearer/reader's attention." (EHRLICH, 1990, 37). Being dominant means that:

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and our imaginative power. The story world can be determined by taking into account the following: <u>the explicit text</u>: what is presented as objective by the "fictional teller"; <u>part of the implicit text</u>: the linguistic presuppositions operated by readers; (c) "<u>prevalent beliefs</u>": as explained by Oltean (1997: 183); (d) <u>reader's inclinations</u>: readers' preference for one or the other interpretation in ambiguous texts. Additionally, there are what we will call *possible-story worlds*, which account for the *subjective* characters' visions, dreams, counterfactual claims, *de re/de dicto* claims and so on. Between the different worlds evoked, the relation of *accessibility* needs to be posited as Ryan (1991) suggests.

[15] With regard to the last statement, the question may arise whether or not the same condition should apply in the case of reliable narrators.

[16] Please see a more detailed explanation in Mezei, (2008 (b)).

[17] Our underlining.

- the clause can become the topic of new discourse,
- the dominant clause can experience root transformations.

Ehrlich's notion of *topic* is pretty ambiguous, as she herself admits. In simple sentences topic usually assumes subject position, which makes us infer that topic is here equivalent to the focal WHO (DST term[18]).

(4.1) <u>George</u>ᵢ watched an old woman crossing the street. [a] Then <u>he</u>ᵢ watched some birds landing on the roof of the bank. [b]

(4.2) George watched an old woman crossing the street. [a] Why was she striding so purposefully, looking neither to left or right[19]? [b]

George in examples (4.1, (a) and (b)) and (4.2, a) is *the focal WHO*. It is the psychological entity who "captures" the DC, in the sense that the subsequent context "tracks the spatial, temporal and psychological coordinates of that character" (RAPAPORT *et al.*, 1994, 4). The reader <u>may or may not</u> be given information about the character's internal states. "The old woman" is the *non-focal character* of (4.1, a) and (4.1, b) because the DC does not shift to her, it is only mentioned. George becomes the focalising WHO in (4.2, b).

George is the *focalising WHO* of sentence (4.2, b) because the sentence represents a <u>subjective epistemological perspective</u> as 'lived' by the character himself: "This living may be perceptual, cognitive or kinaesthetic: the text may represent thoughts, feelings, sounds, sights, or unconscious desires as lived by the focalizing WHO." (RAPAPORT *et al.*, 1994, 4). The old woman is the focal WHO of the sentence (2, b), embedded within George's perspective as the focalising WHO. In all these sentences the full NP "George" is the controlling referent of the subsequent instance of the pronoun "he", and both "he" and "George" are the topic.

The following example stands in contrast (EHRLICH, 1990, 32):

(5) Max saw Rosa yesterday.

In DST terms, Max is the focal WHO and Rosa is the non-focal WHO of the sentence. However, Ehrlich views the situation in a discourse[20] situation. She explains that if the sentence represents the answer to question (5.1) below, then "Max" is the topic, while if question (5.2) is taken into consideration, then "Rosa" is the topic.

(5.1) Who did Max see yesterday?

(5.2) Did anybody see Rosa yesterday?

We need to keep this in mind because sometimes categories overlap. There is some confusion which is also due to the fact that the focal WHO has been defined as "the psychological entity who is topicalized by the text"; this is why we prefer the second part of the definition, which says that the focal WHO is the psychological entity who "captures" the DC, in the sense that the subsequent context "tracks the spatial, temporal and psychological coordinates of that character" (RAPAPORT *et al.*, 1994, 4).

Semantic linking is defined in terms of semantic connectors and semantic content. Ehrlich specifies that sentences which are not referentially linked can still be cohesive if they are <u>connected by semantic sentence connectors</u>. The sentences under discussion must again be linked to a <u>preceding sentence's dominant clause</u>. Semantic content may be linked to some referent if it is <u>not semantically inconsistent</u> with what is known by the character (available knowledge).

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[18] "Whereas the focal WHO is the psychological entity who is topicalized by the text, the focalizing WHO is a psychological entity whose experiential process topicalizes other entities and events in the story world. When a character reflects on his or her own experience as s/he is living it, the focal WHO and the focalizing WHO are co-referential. " (Rapaport *et al.*, 1994, 4)

[19] The examples are borrowed from Rapaport *et al.*, *Deictic Centres and the Cognitive Structure of Narrative Comprehension*, 1994, p. 4.

[20] We make the difference between text, the written text on page and discourse, a real/imaginary communicative situation.

(**6**) **The antibiotic which was discovered by Sir Alexander Fleming caused a great disturbance in the medical community. [a] In addition, chaos resulted in universities across the country. [b]**

(**7**) **The antibiotic which was discovered by Sir Alexander Fleming caused a great disturbance in the medical community. [a] *In addition, a new species of germ was discovered. [b]**

In e.g. (7, b) is linked by the semantic connector "in addition" to a non-dominant part of [a], i.e. a relative clause: "which was discovered by Sir Alexander Fleming". This leads to incoherence.

Temporal linking may apply when the other do not. Ehrlich refers here to the distinction between **speech time** (ST) – time at which a particular sentence is uttered, **reference time** (RT) – the time indicated by the sentences, and **event time** (ET) - the time at which the sentence's event or state occurred. These notions help explain how a sentence achieves its temporal value.

Ehrlich also discusses sentences that depend on others in order to establish a temporal interpretation, that is which are incomplete in a sense, such as:

1. <u>Sentences that demand capture</u> – with no time adverbials/with dependent adverbials which need information from another sentence in order to establish the RT.

(**8**) **Something unusual is scheduled for tomorrow. [a] <u>Albert is playing tennis.</u> [b]**

(**9**) **We can't discuss the problem now. [a] <u>Albert is playing tennis.</u> [b]**

Sentences (8, b) and (9, b) are incomplete relative to temporal anchoring, not having an adverbial, which is why they take as their RT the one established by the previous sentences (8, a) and (9, a), respectively.

2. <u>Sentences protected from capture</u> – with *deictics*; they are oriented to ST, so they cannot be anchored to times established in other sentences.

(**10**) **He is speaking now.**

3. <u>Sentences available for capture</u> – with unanchored/flexible adverbials, e.g. "on Tuesday"; they can be captured, but will anchor to the ST (speech time) if they lack temporal information (e.g. (11)).

(**11**) **John leaves on Tuesday**[21].

Based on Ehrlich's suppositions, Oltean (1995) develops a model of interpretation for free indirect discourse (FID) sentences[22] within the framework of Model-Theoretic Semantics. He suggests treating FID sentences as "complements" of parentheticals; these verbs would act as controlling verbs to which the predicates of FID sentences are anchored. The *deictics* of FID are an exception relative to Ehrlich's proposal: <u>they do not refer to the speech time but demand capture</u>. The RT for them is established by controlling predicates. And, as Oltean points out, when "such predicates are not explicit, they are supplied by the verbal events or mental states rendered by FID."[23] (OLTEAN, 1995, 30).

He gives the following example and explanations:

(**12**) **She sat at the window watching the evening invade the avenue… [1] Few people passed. [2] The man out of the last house passed on his way home. [3]**

(OLTEAN, 1995, 25)

Sentences (12, 2) and (12, 3) are temporally linked across paragraph boundaries to "sat", verb which designates the character's physical activity and perception, thus reflecting the character's perspective. They behave like a "semantic complement" of the controlling verb "sat". In other words, the verb "sat" is anchored to an agent represented by "she" (Eveline); thus, a deictic centre (DC) anchored to an agent (Eveline) gives rise to a focalising perspective. The focalising perspective is that of Eveline as the SELF.

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[21] Ehrlich's examples (5-11).

[22] That is, Ehrlich's RST sentences.

[23] That is, in the case of non-SCPs.

3. Analysis

The novel that we extract some samples from is "The Life and Love of a She-Devil" by Fay Weldon (1989[1983]). It is made up of a combination of what can simply be called first- and third-person texts. The first-person parts are autonomous in the sense that they are not framed by third-person parts, at least not in their immediate environment (the criterion being the chapter/section boundary). The third-person parts use the Past Tense Simple as the narrative present[24]. Here we will have a look at several sentences extracted from the third-person excerpts. They represent the most debated cases in the specialist literature because it is where FID[25] occurs, although we will not look only at such examples here (but also at some cases of objective sentences). The main selection criterion is their possibly being RST, especially for determining CHARACTER-subjective sentences and distinguishing them from objective ones. Additionally, we'll give examples of both SCPs and non-SCPs in the former case.

(13) [...] (The more often sex with a particular person happened [a], Bobbo believed[26] [b], the less it was worth [c]) [d].

(WELDON, 1989 [1983], 18)

(13, d) (i.e. the proposition 'Bobbo believes (a) and (c)'), is a SCP which readers take to be absolutely true in the fictional real world in the sense that follows:

Truth condition: it is necessary that the parenthetical subject (Bobbo) has a belief very similar to [a] and [c] in the story world (i.e. the actual world of the story). The embedded clauses [a] and [c] are not interpreted with respect to the story world but to possible worlds compatible to the character's belief.

[d] is associated to an actual story world which is tracked by the NOW (i.e. the current deictic centre in its temporal aspect) of the story. We believe that the choice of the past tense as the narrative present may either represent a true past value (when a SPEAKER's narrative timeline is very clearly and repeatedly signalled in the third-person text[27]) or it may be used to render another kind of NOW, the 'now' of the fictional story world upon which the focus is placed at that point in the story. Using the past in this latter instance (as it seems to be the case here) has a fictionalizing effect[28].

The proposition $\underline{p}$ ((a) and (c) taken together) is a CHARACTER-subjective sentence (FID, SCP); its controlling verb is "to believe" (verb anchored to Bobbo as the origin of the perspective). Being a non-factive verb[29], it finds its truth-value in a set of possible-story worlds compatible with what Bobbo thinks, and relative to t_i, a set of times which are included in an interval made up of an initial moment t_{i1} and a final moment t_{in}. The final moment t_{in} helps capture the "eternal truth" value of the sentence. The set of times t_i is referentially linked to t_{00}, i.e. t_{00} is the RT to which the ETs rendered by t_i are anchored. The "eternal truth" value in such examples is subordinated to the belief

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[24] cf. Ehrlich, 1990 for the usage of the term *narrative present*.

[25] For us RST contains direct discourse, indirect discourse, free indirect discourse. In order to maintain the distinction, I name here FID as a separate category.

[26] A SCP, the parenthetical of which occurs in middle position.

[27] We say "repeatedly" because we believe that appealing to the second interpretation may also happen in situations where a narrator is signalled, but it moves to the background to a significant extent.

[28] Hamburger's idea is that one can only think in terms of past, present or future in connection with a statement-subject, i.e. in reality statements (e.g. historical 'documents'). Temporality is relevant only when the addresser and the addressee are actually placed in the same unique reality. In fiction the past tense undergoes a semantic mutation: it no longer designates the past (this means that it is not related to the present of a narrator), i.e. temporality, but the fictional nature of the novel. The proof for that is the conjunction of past verbs with deictics which refer to a character's subjectivity, not a narrator's. (Hamburger, 1986)

[29] Factive verbs (*realise, notice, remember*) presuppose that their complements are true, while the obverse applies for non-factive verbs (*decide, think, reflect*). Their semantic status can be checked with the help of the *Negation test*:
(a) John *believes* that he is wrong.
(b) John *does not believe* that he is wrong.
→ "Believe" is a non-factive verb because both in (a) and (b) the fact that "he is wrong" is not presupposed to be true. (cf. Oltean, 1995).

of a character, which means that <u>the content of the belief is not to be attributed to the actual story world.</u>

(14) […] She [Brenda][30] <u>looked</u> through the open French windows into the dining room, where the table was laid for four and the candles were in their sticks, the silver dishes polished and the sideboard dusted, [a] and <u>sighed her admiration</u>. [b] <u>Ruth was good at polishing</u>. [c] One rub of the powerful fingers and stains disappeared [d].

<div align="right">(WELDON, 1989 [1983], 15)</div>

Sentences (14, a) and (14, b) are narrative sentences, which describe what happens in the world of the story. Readers take them to constitute the actual fictional world, thus they are <u>objective</u> sentences to be assigned a <u>1</u> truth-value in the story world by default. Sentences (14, c) and (14, d) are temporally and semantically linked to "sighed her admiration". They express the content of Brenda's *origin*-perspective, more precisely, her attitude towards Ruth's way of polishing. Thus, sentence (14, c) is not interpreted by readers as constructing the actual story world, in which it would have been taken that "Ruth is good at polishing" is absolutely true. It is taken to be a sentence complement to a controlling verb[31] existent only in the deep structure of the sentence. The interpretation of (c) as representing part of Ruth's thinking process in the NOW is the result of semantic linking in terms of semantic content.

Truth condition: it is necessary that Ruth holds a belief similar to (14, c) <u>in the story world</u> . It may or not be true in the actual story world (it has either a <u>1/0</u> truth-value in this world). Semantically speaking, it finds its extension in a possible-story world compatible with Brenda's thought about Ruth's polishing, world which may or may not coincide with the actual story world.

Sentence (14, d) is semantically linked to (14, c): polishing involves the action of fingers. This means that it is to be interpreted as part of Brenda's perspective, as well. Both (14, c) and (14, d) are examples of <u>non-SCPs, which render a SELF-perspective, the SELF being Brenda</u>. They are <u>CHARACTER-subjective sentences (FID)</u> expressing <u>a character's thought</u>.

(15) His [Bobbo's][32] wife seemed to him to be immeasurably large, [a] and to have grown larger since he told her of his love for Mary Fisher. [b] He asked her if she was putting on weight, and she said no, and stood on the scales to prove it. Fourteen stone, three pounds. A pound or so less, even, than usual! It could be only in his mind, then, that she loomed larger.

<div align="right">(WELDON, 1989 [1983], 20)</div>

Sentence (15, a) is a narrative, objective sentence, which also represents a character's thought in a certain NOW ; it contains a verb, "seemed to him", which actually signals the viewpoint of a focal WHO (by virtue of its semantic meaning presupposing subjectivity). Semantically speaking, this is a non-factive verb, so it does not presuppose that its complement ("to be immeasurably large") is true in the actual story world.

Truth condition: it is necessary that Bobbo believes that his wife is "immeasurably large" <u>in the actual story world</u>. Readers interpret this sentence as constituting the actual story world (i.e. it has a <u>1</u> truth-value from this point of view). Bobbo here is the focal WHO, which means that the sentence tracks his viewpoint, as shown by the occurrence of the following expressives: "<u>his</u> wife"[33], "seemed <u>to him</u>", "[his wife][34] to be immeasurably large". But is is not necessary that Ruth is actually "immeasurably large" in the fictional real world.

So, we are dealing with <u>an objective sentence which contains the perspective of a focal WHO</u>. Put differently, the sentence is not objective in the sense that it is devoid of expressives, which also means that readers understand that it is true in the actual story world that Bobbo has a

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[30] Our insertion.

[31] This controlling verb reflects the belief of the character Brenda as the *origin*-perspective.

[32] Our insertion.

[33] His wife refers to Ruth, but the sentence tracks Bobbo's personal coordinate by mentioning Ruth in terms of his personal relationship to her.

[34] Our insertion.

belief about his wife, but the content of this belief may or not be true in the actual story world (because of the non-factive verb used)[35].

(16) 'He doesn't care whether I'm tired or not,' Ruth said. 'He only ever thinks about Mary Fisher; you know, the writer. She's his mistress.'

Bobbo was shocked by this indiscretion, this disloyalty, but also gratified. [a] Ruth was not to be trusted. [b] He'd always known it. [c]

(WELDON, 1989 [1983], 38)

The two occurrences of the deictic "this" in (16, a) anaphorically refer back to a situation: Ruth's saying "He doesn't care whether I'm tired or not," "He only ever thinks about Mary Fisher; you know, the writer. She's his mistress." "This" can be interpreted as an expressive which renders Bobbo's viewpoint (on the same line of interpretation as "his wife" in e.g. (15) here). The repetition of "this" also supports this idea. We are dealing with a story world perspective which displays the DC of a character. The sentence (16, a) could be 'translated' as 'Bobbo is shocked by what he considers Ruth's indiscretion and Ruth's disloyalty, but also gratified'. Our proposal is to check if we are dealing or not with a character's DC by seeing if readers would interpret that Ruth is indeed indiscreet or disloyal in the actual story world. We believe that readers would assign this wording to Bobbo's viewpoint. They would interpret the sentence as displaying only a SOURCE's perspective if instead of "this" the writer would have used "Ruth's" or "her" as in "Ruth's indiscretion" or "her disloyalty". So, (16, a) is <u>an objective sentence, which displays a FOCAL character's DC in terms of personal coordinate (we would reserve the term *viewpoint* instead of *perspective* for such cases)</u>. The following sentence, (16, b) is a sentence which at first sight (or taken out of context) might also appear to be an objective sentence. If it were, then readers would think that in that story world it is absolutely true that Ruth is not to be trusted. However, they interpret the sentence as illustrating Bobbo's thought about Ruth. The repetition of "this" sustains this interpretation (the DC moves from Bobbo as focal WHO in (16, a) to Bobbo as a focalising WHO in (16, b)). In other words, (16, b) is <u>a CHARACTER-subjective sentence (non-SCP) representing Bobbo's thought about Ruth</u> in that NOW. It is linked to the controlling verb "think", existent in the deep structure of the sentence.

(17) One Tuesday evening, when Ruth felt that she had sufficiently mastered the basics of accountancy and bookkeeping, she took the bus into the city. […] Opposite this building was a fast-food restaurant, and here Ruth sat, taking care to be in a dark corner, eating baked potatoes, sour cream and chopped chives at her leisure. She had not seen her husband since the day she took her children to the High Tower.

Bobbo came out with a young blonde girl, clearly not Mary Fisher but of the same type […] Bobbo seemed confident, prosperous and well, able to inspire love. […] [a] But he failed to recognise her. [b] Ruth thought that after all that was not strange: [c] they now inhabited different worlds. [d] Hers was unknown to him: [e] those on the right side of everything take care to know as little as possible about those on the wrong side. [f] The poor, exploited and oppressed, however, love to know about their masters, to gaze at their faces in the paper, to marvel at their love affairs, to discover their foibles. [g]

(WELDON, 1989 [1983], 115-116)

Sentence (17, c) is again an <u>objective sentence which displays something from a character's personal coordinate, more exactly the expressive "after all"</u>. The following sentences (d-g) are taken as representing the content of Ruth's thoughts. They are referentially linked to the controlling verb "thought" from (c).

By anaphor to (a-c) and the previous context, "they" refers to Bobbo and Ruth. "Now" (t_1) is the time of Ruth's consciousness, simultaneous to t_{00}, the time of <u>the actual story world</u>; it <u>is a</u>

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[35] The actual story world is the fictional equivalent of our (i.e. the readers) real world. Similar to this, one person's subjective belief may or may not be true in reality, but what is true is that this person has this certain belief in his NOW.

signal for a SELF-perspective, not a SPEAKER-perspective In order to better understand this, let's compare the given situation with a similar one, but in which we use "then" instead of "now":

If we had *they **then** inhabited different worlds*, the perspective would be a SPEAKER's:

fig. 1

```
                    then                      NOW
_____x_____x_____
   "inhabiting of different worlds"          SPEAKER
```
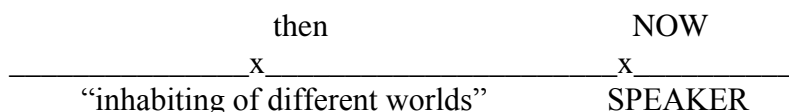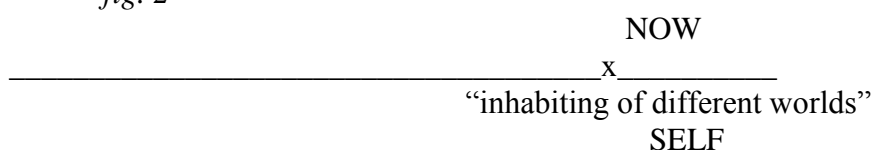
"Then" would be a past from the SPEAKER's point of view: a distance would be placed between the SPEAKER's temporal 'position' and the story's.

In the case of *they **now** inhabited different worlds*, the perspective is that of Ruth.

fig. 2

```
                                              NOW
_____x_____
            "inhabiting of different worlds"
                        SELF
```

In this case, $t_1 = t_{00}$, interpretation which renders the simultaneity between the world of the story in this particular instantiation and Ruth's thoughts. Sentence [d] here is a CHARACTER-subjective sentence, non-SCP, an example of how "now" can be a signal for a SELF-perspective.
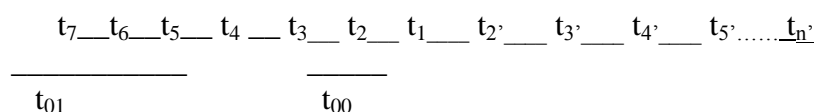
(18) Presently Ruth came down, smiling and served the soup. [a]

Twelve years now since Bobbo first met Ruth. [b] She was one of the girls working in Angus's typing pool. Angus was in the stationery business, working up to his second million, which the introduction of Value Added Tax was later to whittle away to nothing. […]

(WELDON, 1989 [1983], 26)

"Now" in (18, b) is the current NOW of the story world represented by t_{00}. t_2 is the time when Ruth comes down, smiling, t_1 is the time when Ruth serves the soup, and $t_7 - t_4$ represents the period of time when Ruth was one of the girls working in Angus's typing pool (it includes the time t_5 when Ruth met Bobbo).

fig. 3

```
   t_7__t_6__t_5__ t_4 __ t_3__ t_2__ t_1___ t_2'___ t_3'____ t_4'____ t_5'......t_n'

   _____          _____
       t_01                 t_00
```

A NOW can be viewed as either a NOW-point, e.g. t_2 or t_1, each of them a NOW in itself, or as an interval containing several such NOW-points (e.g. t_{01}), and which may constitute a narrative timeline (i.e. a NOW-timeline).

The NOW in sentence (b) may be interpreted as an interval containing at least t_2 and t_1. The purpose of the NOW represented by the expression "now" in (b) is to function as the reference time to which the new NOW-timeline, 12 years before, anchors: t_{00} is the RT (see the figure above) for shifting the story from the *NOW_1-timeline* (t_{00}) to another NOW; the story will continue to unfold as part of this new narrative timeline (i.e. *NOW_2-timeline* or t_{01}).

fig. 4

NOW_1
___ t_2___ t_1___
NOW_1-timeline

NOW_2
__x___t_5__x__
12 years before
NOW_2-timeline
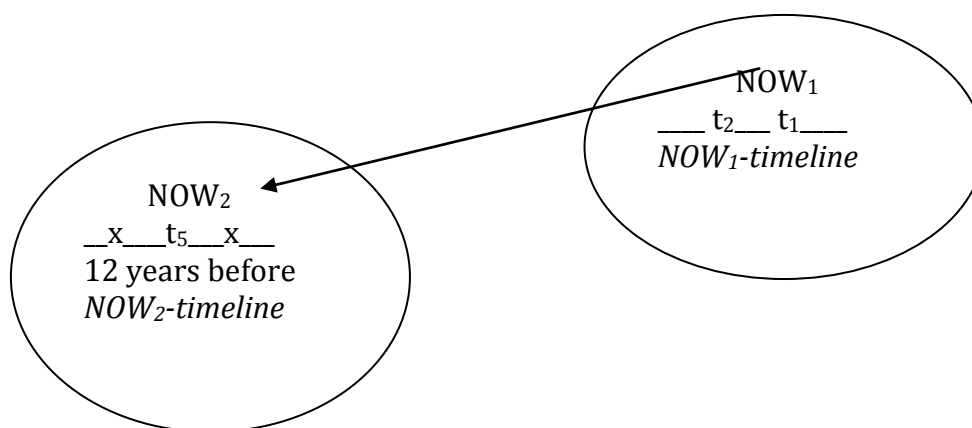
The RT can be regarded as a means for the *accessibility* relation we mentioned in footnote 13. In other words, the accessibility relation can be established in terms of time. The "now" here serves to mark the current narrative timeline so that another timeline can anchor to it. It allows the reader to move from one world to another. So, sentence (18, b) is <u>an OBJECTIVE sentence</u> in which "<u>now</u>" occurs not to mark the time of a SELF consciousness as in (17, d), but to serve as a reference time allowing the shift from a NOW-timeline to another.

4. Conclusion
We have considered that in Weldon's third-person parts[36] the past tense used is neither a marker of a past value, nor of 'a-temporality', but a tense which gives birth to a new timeline, i.e. a series of NOWs (formally represented by $\underline{t_{00}}$). The past tense has been interpreted here as a series of NOWs which are not linked to the present tense as the reference tense, because the SPEAKER figure is not marked explicitly or present in close proximity. Additionally, as our approach is a reader-oriented one, we consider that here readers interpret the past tense as the tense of the story, the NOW of the story; they do not see the past tense as a past time in contrast to a present speech time.

CHARACTER-subjective sentences (FID) represent the *content*-perspective of a focalising WHO. They may be either SCPs or non-SCPs. They are not attributed a <u>1</u> truth-value in the actual story world by default. What is necessary is that the character has a certain belief/thought etc. in the actual story world, while the content of this belief/thought will find its extension in possible-story worlds which are compatible with the character's/the focalising WHO's thinking act, etc. CHARACTER-subjective sentences are dependent on a controlling verb, which may exist on the surface structure or, which is triggered by the context from the deep structure of the sentence.

Objective sentences, as seen here, may contain expressive elements. By their objectivity we mean that they are anchored to the actual story world, which echoes the interpretation by which we say that readers tend to interpret such sentences as having the <u>1</u> truth value, i.e. they are sentences which constitute the story. Their expressivity is given by the fact that sometimes a character's viewpoint is adopted (the character is then a focal WHO, not a focalising WHO). And, in such cases, this type of sentence may ease the way to move towards adopting that character's focalising perspective.

We have also dealt with time deictics occurring in a CHARACTER-subjective sentence and in an objective one. We have established that the NOW may be either a NOW-point, or an interval containing several NOW-points, which may constitute a NOW-timeline. One such type of "now" may serve as the reference time to which a new NOW-timeline may anchor. Also, the "now" may signal a SELF-perspective, i.e. it occurs in CHARACTER-subjective sentences. In this case, we believe that it has been shown that a SPEAKER interpretation is not available without changing the meaning.

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[36] And in third-person texts, in general.

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