Object and Accommodation – On Poetic Syntax in Contemporary Polish Poetry

(a case study of nominal function)

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na stole stoi woda w garnuszku

a może garnuszek z wodą

(garnuszek wody?)

[…]

(on the table stands water in a pot / or perhaps a pot with water / (a pot of water?))

Tadeusz Różewicz, "Woda w garnuszku, Niagara i autoironia"

(Water in a Pot, Niagara and Self-Irony)

(in *Zawsze fragment* [Always Fragment], Wrocław 1996, p. 65)

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This article will deal with studies of the problem of poetic syntax in free (non-numeric) verse. The specifics of this perspective result primarily from the possibilities presented by a verse form with a positive definition of the poem as a text composed of potentially free-standing lines (syntagmatic chains) entering into semantic and syntactic relations within the work as a whole.[1] Rhythmic, versificatory or structural regularity are additional parameters poten-

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[1] This question relates to how we formulate the category of a poem – if linearity is merely a feature implied by the act of reading, then the poem's spatiality is maximized. Some important points related to the specifics of free verse as formulated here can be found in works by Artur Grabowski (*Wiersz. Forma i sens* [Poem. Form and Sense], Kraków 1999) and Witold Sadowski (*Wiersz wolny jako tekst graficzny* [Free Verse as Graphic Text], Kraków 2004). Dorota Urbańska has made an acute analysis of the category, with emphasis on the relationship between graphic and syntagmatic parameters (*Wiersz wolny. Próba charakterystyki systemowej* [Free Verse, An Attempt at Systematic Description], Warszawa 1995; see also *Wiersz wolny: geneza i ewolucja do 1939 r.* [Free Verse: Genesis and Evolution up to 1939], ed. L. Pszczołowska and D. Urbańska, Warszawa 1998).

tially defining a text but which do not constitute obligatory features of a poem.[2] The relations that develop among the units of a text (its lines) result from the spatial structure of the text, whose constitutive elements include linear orders of syntagmatic units together with their syntactic relations as well as all types of connections between elements of the text's language in their actual relations in the text as linguistic functions. This means that in the analysis to follow, many factors that define the properties of linguistic elements of the poetic text (e.g. factors of textual cohesion, elements of style, the referential values of lexical units, and so on) will be considered. It is worthwhile to underscore that the approach proposed here is stylistic in nature, and therefore (in keeping with the tradition of such studies) is situated on the borderline between linguistics and literary studies.[3]

Elementary Assumptions – *table, water in a pot*

The essentials of grasping poetic syntax thus have their motivation in the method of treating a poem as a peculiar kind of textual structure in its reception. The maximal intensity of such phenomena is free verse, and therefore – let us remember – a text consisting of lines with a certain semantic and syntactic autonomy. Limiting this autonomy is closely tied conventional ways of building linear texts – to punctuation, spelling and the grammatical dependencies of accommodated conjunctions (in a certain sense, also to the phenomenon of connectivity, which is perhaps most clearly visible in the case of phraseological conjunctions as discontinuous units).

Poetic syntax differs from typical linear predicative orders in that lines, as definite syntactic and semantic modules, can create spatial and non-uniform relations with other (not necessarily consecutive) lines of text,[4] which does not impair the poem's cohesion and does not

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[2] The discussion of the essence of free verse has, from this perspective, its own tradition and dynamics in the study of versification in Poland, as reconstructed by Dorota Urbańska (*Wiersz wolny…*), and has been demonstrated in a broader perspective of the history of Polish poetry by Lucylla Pszczołowska in her book *Wiersz polski: zarys historyczny* (Polish Poetry: A Historical Outline), Wrocław 1997. See also: A. Okopień-Sławińska, *Wiersz nieregularny i wolny Mickiewicza, Słowackiego, Norwida* (Irregular and Free Verse of Mickiewicz, Słowacki,and Norwid), Warszaw 1964.

[3] The relevance of the stylistic scholarship of Teresa Dobrzyńska in this context cannot be overestimated (see e.g. *Od słowa do sensu. Studia o metaforze* [From Word to Sense. Studies in Metaphor], Warszawa 2012 and *Tekst poetycki i jego konteksty: zbiór studiów* [The Poetic Text and its Contexts: A Collection of Studies], Warszawa 2015), as well as related work by other scholars including Teresa Skubalanka (e.g. *Wprowadzenie do gramatyki stylistycznej języka polskiego* [Introduction to the Stylistic Grammar of Polish Language], Lublin 2000, *Język poezji Czesława Miłosza* [The Language of Czesław Miłosz'sPoetry], Lublin 2006, *Herbert, Szymborska, Różewicz: studia stylistyczne* [Herbert, Szymborska, Różewicz: Stylistic Studies], Lublin 2008), Aleksandra Okopień-Sławińska (2000), Anna Pajdzińska (e.g. *Frazeologizmy jako tworzywo poezji współczesnej* [Phraseologisms as Material of Contemporary Poetry], Lublin 1993, and many studies and essays contained in the series of volumes known as the Lublin red books), Elżbieta Dąbrowska (*Pejzaż stylowy nowej literatury polskiej* [The Stylistic Landscape of New Polish Literature], Opole 2012) and Barbara Greszczuk (*Polska poezja współczesna: studia stylistyczno-językowe* [Contemporary Polish Poetry: Stylistic-Linguistic Studies], Kielce 2015).

[4] This property of free verse was illuminated by Stanisław Balbus, who several decades ago demonstrated the phenomenon of syntactic simultaneity. In discussing cases of text which "cannot phonically be realized," Balbus explains that: "their systems are only seemingly linear, strictly speaking – only their spatial order of presentation is linear; the acoustic, temporal order, on the other hand, is to a certain extent vertical in nature. In other words, the situational structure of the utterance assumes a simultaneity of enunciation of individual segments which in the visual record occur consecutively." ("Graficzny inwariant tekstu literackiego" [The Graphic Invariant of the Literary Text], in: *O języku literatury* [On the Language of Literature], ed. J. Bubak, A. Wilkoń, Katowice 1981, p. 234). Among particular types of phenomena (which he illustrates with poetic examples) Balbus differentiated between multi- and uni-vocal syntactic simultaneity. This article will strive primarily to underscore multivocal simultaneity, though it differs from tabularity (see subsequent footnote) in its form of capturing the spatiality of the poetic text, and by the same token – in the syntagmatic functionality of the interlineal relations.

cause the invalidation of the interlinear syntactic relations indicated in a linear reading. There is thus an assumption that modular (tabular)[5] meaning-generation is an immanent feature of free verse – it represents a component of the positive definition of this type of textual form.

Syntactic accommodation is here understood according to the criteria of Saloni and Świdziński, and relates to every kind of dependent relation between syntactic syntagmas or formulations; at the same time, it may also refer to either components of a line's syntagma or lines in their entirety – as accommodated units.[6] This circumstance provides the basis for separating a group of poetic phenomena, i.e., phenomena strictly dependent on the specifics of the poetic utterance that renders the line functional as a category of meaning in the text.

Formulations of Accommodation – *a pot with water*

We can thus imagine a reflection on the subject of objects[7] and accommodations at the meta--level, i.e. a consideration of the relations among lines in terms of textual accommodation.[8] We would then be dealing with an analysis of dependencies arising among line-objects (themes[9]) in the text and the study of their possible coordination or subordination, forms of association (conjunctions, pronouns, punctuation marks) and an analysis of cohesion at the level of coherence. It is also possible, however – and it will in fact be the essential task of this article – to discuss the question of a certain group of nominal elements in the context of free verse, and thus examine relations with reference to the things (objects or categories) contained in a text. It is possible to adopt a premise, according to which lineal relationality can – in certain grammatical situations – be closely linked to the textual functions of nominal units: nouns, by virtue of their potential syntactic multifunctionality, can (depending on the construction of the poem) take on functions in the structure of a text beyond their syntactic role. If those roles are not mutually exclusive (as can happen as a result of a poem's particular order), such

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[5] The author has examined the question of tabularity and its influence on the reception of poetry (and thus, in this case, on the functioning of intratextual relations in free verse) in a separate article. Differences in the perception of interlineal relations with regard to simultaneity and tabularity could be formulated with reference to the space of the text. Drawing on the views expressed by Stanisław Balbus, we may educe the idea of tabularity, but only in a situation where we assume that the text of a free verse poem is primarily visual. Vocal interpretation in this case constitutes one of the components of the poem's semantic potency and results from the reader's interpretative adjudications (see K. Skibski, *Tabularność wiersza wolnego i jej konsekwencje lekturowe* [The Tabularity of Free Verse and its Consequences for Reading], *Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne. Seria Językoznawcza* [Poznań Polish Studies, Linguistics Series] vol. 20(40) 2013, pp. 75 –92).

[6] See Z. Saloni, M. Świdziński, *Składnia współczesnego języka polskiego* (Syntax of Contemporary Polish Language), Warszawa 1998, pp. 108 –123.

[7] The synonymous nature of the terms "rzeczy – obiekty, przedmioty" (things, objects) in colloquial language has been noted by Teresa Dobrzyńska ("Rzeczy w poetyckich obrazach" [Things in Poetic Images], in *Tekst poetycki i jego konteksty: zbiór studiów*, Warszawa 2015, pp. 109-127), who adds: " […] though these objects exist as forms of physical existence and have in some measure guaranteed objective existence, at the same time many of them reveal a dependency on certain cultural practices and have distinct anthropological features: they are perceived from a typically human perspective" (p. 110). This dependency on cultural practices can here also be understood with reference to linguistic practice, thereby joining communicative standards (and therefore the syntax of a typical, repeatable utterance) to the space of the analysis of artistic language.

[8] In this formulation textual accommodation is understood as the mutual adaptation of extemporaneous lineal syntagmas to the syntactic demands of relational lines (i.e. those that coordinate with them to produce the poetic text). The phenomenon may also involve a change of syntactic functions or a modification of the hierarchy of component elements in hypotactic or paratactic constructions.

[9] This refers to themes in various relations with rhemes, as well as to the unstable roles of the parts of a poetic work in a thematic-rhematic structure undergoing repeated instances of reception.

an object can have a complicated referentiality from a reception perspective, and thus have a variety of properties at the level of meaning.[10]

Let us take the quoted passage from a poem by Tadeusz Różewicz, in which both problems, the specific relationality of accommodated lines and the multifaceted nature of the category of object expressed in a poem, feature as the inspiration for such an examination. The relative and in some sense accommodated function of the object shows that the reception task is strictly motivated by the grammar of the subject's utterance. The profile, image construction, and finally, the model of conceptualization are all effects dependent on the grammar of the text. All three images and relations that occur in the passage from Różewicz's poem relate to these same basic categories as the result of a socially approved categorization (*pot*, *water*), but they differ in terms of their dependency on syntagmatic relations, which become essentially a signal of interpretation (conceptualization). Such a conceptualization may also, as can be seen in the quoted text, refer to typicality, and it can (for example by confronting different thematic-rhematic formulations) bear the mark of poetic accommodation. In this case, however, syntax operates with the greatest force because the relations between the text's lexical elements also translate clearly into the relations between the objects to which the text refers. They are thus both simple constructions that activate standardized properties of lexical units and also hybrid metaphorical constructions, juxtaposing in new arrangements various objects, often ones belonging to different categories.

We shall concentrate on things, given the transparency of that type of example, the operational nature of nominal units as facts differentiated in description, and also due to the polysemic properties of the lexeme "accommodation."[11] This latter factor in fact means that a vessel in some kind of relationship with water (in Różewicz's poem) becomes a cognitive riddle and simultaneously a testament to the enormous interpretative potential contained in the individual utterance (regardless of whether it is half-full or half-empty).

Defined in such terms, the phenomenon also naturally represents a kind of limitation. That, however, gives us a chance to show the problem of poetic syntax by looking at some fairly simple formulations. Nouns defining objects or category-objects, due to their syntactic relations, construct a described space and are a point of reference for complicated processes of the subject's self-expression in a text.[12] We should therefore – if only by means of the

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[10]Elsewhere Dobrzyńska writes: "The creation of things should here be understood not only as the production of material objects, such as the manufacture of tools or decorations, but also as the differentiation, understood as broadly as possible, of separate existences, the endowment of them with separateness and inclusion in broader systems dependent on scenarios of human behaviours." ("Rzeczy...," p. 112).

[11]See http://sjp.pwn.pl/doroszewski/akomodacja, http://wsjp.pl/index.php?id_hasla=54735&ind=0&w_szukaj=akomodacja (accessed: 15.01.2016).

[12]Anna Pajdzińska has drawn attention to some important aspects of profiling in language, with regard to poetic texts ("Profilowanie w tekście poetyckim" (Profiling in the Poetic Text), in: *Profilowanie w języku i w tekście* (Profiling in Language and Texts), ed. J. Bartmiński and R. Tokarski, Lublin 1998). She writes about the relationship of the writer to the language in which he expresses himself: "An artist often faces the necessity of finding a linguistic shape for content that has not yet been conventionalized, that cannot be expressed using existing linguistic units and their typical combinations. But he only has at his disposal – aside from some exceptional situations – the symbolic structures of his language. Like it or not, he must base his work on knowledge previously assimilated in the language, common to all users of that language, must start out from a culturally interpreted image of the world, provided in the meanings of lexical units, in the formation of (semi-) lexical groups, finally, in grammatical categories" (p. 343).

example of objects shown in poetry – examine the phenomenon of special accommodation. An object precisely defined by its functions and syntactic relations (dependencies) also acquires important traits that define it in context, though that results from a particular kind of implication.[13]

An object is here understood as a category differentiated by its name (in noun form), in relation to which the subject's utterance is constructed. The object is therefore grasped lexically, i.e. with the assumption of a typical, systematic referentiality. For example, "biurko" (writing-desk) is numbered among the group of objects, and as a noun is attributed certain possible syntactic functions (subject, object, predicate or noun in apposition). Those functions precisely are meaning-generating, because the construction of the poem assumes the possibility of disrupted linearity (or retardative linearity). In relation to that, the name of the object (for example in its dependent form) can be the only element of the line through which to refer to its lexical potentiality, while in relation it can become part of the group of subject, object or complex predicate. It can also invoke typical (and phraseological) connectivity, and create astonishing connections in relations – for example genitive connections, which often significantly modify the grammatical relations of components through the parallel status of mutual definition.[14]

In this context accommodation is a "figure of sense" – it does not constitute merely a possibility of grammar but is also a conceptual operation, whose meaning in terms of reception is close to another lexical meaning of accommodation, i.e., the adaptation of something to the perceptual possibilities of the receiver of the text. Such adaptation has the value of condensation, because the use of a word with, for example, a double, dynamic function motivated by an interlineal relation signifies its complicated reception, its interpretation in view of both functions in time, while at the same time none of the orders of reading is subject to nullification (in view of that retardative linearity).

The Illustration of Dependency – *a pot of water*

It is worth examining a few examples, which also have the purpose of illustrating the nuances of the process of building an interpretation in relation to an analysis of elements of poetic language. First, let us examine a work by Krzysztof Siwczyk:

[13]These implications relate mostly to untypical referentiality, which – where poetry is concerned – is an exceptionally complicated phenomenon (see e.g. E. Bińczyk, *Obraz, który nas zniewala. Współczesne ujęcia języka wobec esencjalizmu i problemu referencji* [The Image that Enslaves Us. Contemporary Analyses of Language in terms of Essentialism and the Problem of Referentiality], Kraków 2007). Poetic accommodation signifies the need to negotiate meanings, because it sanctions innovative relations, which often demand multiple readings – a change of function in the space of a text (instability of syntactic roles as well as categories) determines the need, in interpreted poetic worlds, the need for repeated confrontation of a reading with ordinary language. That language in this case is perceived through the prism of repeated expressions and of the kind of categorization that includes definition of predicative orders in typical utterances.
It becomes an intriguing question, when thinking of accommodation in these terms, what role pronouns and conjunctions play in poetry; those problems will, however, be developed in another article.

[14]On the topic of this view of equal status among parts in genitive metaphors, see, for instance, Piotr Wróblewski in his work *Struktura, typologia i frekwencja polskich metafor* (Structure, Typology and Frequency of Polish Metaphors; Białystok 1998).

Konkrety i idee (*Emil i my* [Emil and Us], Czarne 1999, p. 33)

Chociaż cytuje samo siebie i
rozumie się samo przez się,
<u>ciało</u>

<u>w rzeczy samej</u>, to przecie <u>rzecz jasna</u>,
że nie zgadza się gasnąć,
<u>za nic w świecie</u>.

(**Hard Facts and Ideas**. Though I quote myself myself and / understand myself through by myself, / the body / in itself, after all, clearly, / does not agree to be extinguished / not for anything in the world.)

The semantic consequences of the poem are immediately apparent at the lexical level. This happens due to the typical exposition of the object (*ciało* [the body]), which becomes a factor modifying the relational lines placed between the others, composed of phraseological units. The concentration of the text's structure on the noun "ciało" has the primary effect of creating a two-track interpretation of the fixed combinations of words, as well as endowing them with a completely new shared semantic feature. "Ciało w rzeczy samej" (the body / in itself) – thus not a human being, only part of it, perhaps deprived of life, here represents therefore a way of formulating both the peculiar nature of matter considered discretely (tissues, organs, appearance, function), and a certain regularity, principle or rule (in the phraseological sense). What happens with the next phraseologism, which in addition enters into a relation with the two-tracked aspect of the first combination, is similar. "Ciało – rzecz jasna" constitutes, on the one hand, the consequence of formulating the object as an unquestioned phenomenon – a paradoxically autotelic and simultaneously dependent one ("oczywiście – w rzeczy samej"), corresponding to the relational (in the context of the body) previous line "rozumie się samo przez się"; while on the other hand, "rzecz jasna" (clearly; literally: a clear thing) means this is positive, good, wonderful. It is worth noticing that both interpretations of "rzecz jasna" have their own characteristic reference. The first, signifying obviousness, is, in a literal reading, a combination of a noun and a defining adjective placed after it. This order has a generic function. The second interpretation, however, is linked to the archaic form "przecie" (here translated as "after all"), which aside from typical meanings (clear/bright, ergo good, cheerful, joyful, clean) allows us to refer as well to an older meaning of the Polish word "jasny," i.e., a term of servile deference equivalent to "honored" (e.g. "my honoured master"), referring to aristocratic birth, but there is also the meaning as in "clear as a bell" (obvious).[15] All of these partial meanings represent an intensification of a special way of precisely defining bodies. The metonyic implications (once we include the older iteration of the phraseologism, i.e. clear as a bell) cause, first of all, a change in the scope of accommodation at the level of the internal syntax of the lines, and thus the semantic double-tracking of the phraseologisms; and secondly, motivate the multifaceted understanding of looking at the body – as the object and subject of an utterance. A characteristic feature of this formulation, as well, is the conclusion of the text, where we see the body (not

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[15]See the note on the word in the *Słownik języka polskiego* (Dictionary of Polish Language) edited by W. Doroszewskiego (1958-1969): http://sjp.pwn.pl/doroszewski/jasny;5435899.html (accessed: 15.01.2017).

agreeing to expire) "za nic w świecie" (not for anything in the world). Also, the final line submits to a two-track reading as a result of the exposition of the many different roles of the category of the body in the text. "Za nic w świecie" is a unit that signifies "under no circumstances, never" but here also conveys "za nic" (for nothing), i.e., not receiving anything in this world or (not agreeing to expire – and lose clarity) without any reward or compensation in this world.

In Siwczyk's poem, the body is a separate object that deceptively implies the human being (not vice versa). This special change of roles is reflected in the functioning of phraseological combinations. We should, however, underscore that the typical readings have not been invalidated by this one – they function by virtue of the pre-existing context. Similarly, the lexical meaning of the body here represents an integral semantic value of all constructed metonymies, and thus of the entire textual metaphor.

From the point of view of poetic syntax, we are dealing here with a change in function – an integral part of the phraseologism becomes (as a result of play with the meanings of its lexical components) a synonym or meronym of the noun. Because of that, a peculiar kind of discussion goes on throughout the whole text between the concrete (image) and the idea, from which there emerges the image of the body-thing – an object that does not submit to easy categorization (due to the implied human being).

Another type of procedure built on lineal relationality, in which accommodation can be investigated at both of the levels mentioned above, is the recontextualization of the noun in the form of a genitive metaphor. The category of noun exhibited at the end of the line acquires (by force of the syntagmatic relationship within the line) a certain potential semantic value (resulting from typical referentiality motivated additionally by lineal cohesiveness, and thus at the level of cohesion), which is next further defined in a process of interlineal accommodation. Let us look now at two examples from a poem by Mariusz Grzebalski:

> **Radość** (*Pocałunek na wstecznym* [A Kiss in Reverse], Wrocław 2007, p. 20)

> Raptem życie zmienia się w radość,
> dni płyną <u>bezszelestnie jak kursywa</u>
> <u>chmur w pogodną noc</u>, choć
> za oknami kwitnie już pierwsze
> graffiti chłodu i miasto zbroi się
> w popiele i ugry. [...]

> [...]

> W tej podróży czekają nas wyłącznie
> niespodzianki, choć będzie krótka
> jak błysk flesza w zatoce oka.
> <u>Tymczasem usta przyjmują podarunek</u>
> <u>ust</u>, śmiech płynie rynną ulicy
> jak wiosenny deszcz.

(**Joy.** Suddenly life turns to joy, / days flow noiselessly like the cursive / of clouds on a night of fine weather, though / through the windows there already blooms the first / graffiti of cold and the city arms itself / in ashes and ochres. [...] [...] On this journey await us only / surprises, though it will be short / like the glimmer of a flash-bulb in a gulf of the eye. / At the same time the mouth accepts the gift / of a mouth, laughter flows in the gutter of the street / like a spring rain.)

The description of the abrupt change of life into joy occurs in the second line – "dni płyną bezszelestnie" like writing in a hurry[16] – like cursive, written in a flowing hand. The deployment of this noun enables the intensification of unitary referentiality, which – in terms of local cohesiveness – evokes the Latin *cursiva littera* (in Polish, "kursywa" also means "italics"). The lack of punctuation shows this line's openness to interlineal relations – the next line begins with a noun in genitive plural form (*chmur*) connected to the previous word in the form of a genitive expression with metaphorical value – *kursywa chmur*. The comparison thus developed – the days flow noiselessly like the cursive of clouds in a night of fine weather – creates an utterly new way of constructing an image in terms of a semantically interdependent construction (the clouds are writing hurriedly in the sky, the clouds are cursive in the sky), and also a bracket in between the contrasting categories ("dni płyną jak [...] w pogodną noc").

A relationship occurs in a similar fashion in another passage of the text – "Tymczasem usta przyjmują podarunek / ust." The positioning of the noun "podarunek" attracts the reader's attention with its formal similarity to and therefore implication of the word "pocałunek" (a kiss, which intuitively suggests itself as the offering accepted by the mouth). Through this implication, the grammatical cohesiveness of the line, which nonetheless is not closed by a punctuation mark, is reinforced. The relationship with the noun that begins the next line indicates another combination using the genitive case, "podarunek ust." The implication mentioned above remains active, though in this case the strong metonymy capable of simply implying identification, the relationship of two individuals who are each other's equals, cannot be overlooked (mouth 1 and mouth 2: the mouth is a gift for the mouth or the mouth conveys a gift to the mouth); it may also evoke the virtual phraseologism[17] "z ust do ust" (from mouth to mouth).[18]

Both of the textual situations presented here relate to the special duality that results from the two ways of examining accommodation in a poem. The first (following the order of their presentation in this article) concerns interlineal relations (and thus cohesiveness in the global sense), while the second involves functionalization of nouns in variable textual situations (local

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[16]See http://sjp.pwn.pl/doroszewski/kursywa;5445196.html (accessed: 15.01.2016).

[17]The term "virtual phraseologism" refers to the works of Wojciech Chlebda on phrasematics (see *Elementy frazematyki. Wprowadzenie do frazeologii nadawcy* (Elements of Phrasematics. Introduction to thePhraseology of the Sender; Opole 1991). This problem has been addressed in the course of studies of the category of the phraseological trace in such works as J. Studzińska and K. Skibski's "Frazeologizmy Wisławy Szymborskiej w przekładzie. Propozycja kategorii śladu frazeologicznego" (Wisława Szymborska's Phraseologisms in Translation. A Proposal for the Category of the Phraseological Trace; *Przestrzenie Teorii* [The Space of Theory] 25, 2016, pp. 149 –175). A virtual phraseologism is a unit evoked in reading a literary text under the influence of the signals of the phraseological – elements in the text which refer to a socially stabilized form of permanent phrasal union (in the normative or descriptive sense).

[18]"Z ust do ust" – "being directly transmitted to many consecutive individuals" http://wsjp.pl/index.php?id_hasla=20118&ind=0&w_szukaj=ust. (accessed: 15.01.2016).

in relation to grammatical cohesiveness). It should here be underscored that all semantic values which are activated in the course of such readings enrich an interpretation of the text aimed (as the task of the reader) at constructing an interpretative project. It is then dependent on the linguistic phenomena which determine meanings at various levels of the text's organization. They can designate stylistic dominants in the text, but in any case do not render invalid the multiplicity which – as we could have demonstrated earlier with a basic analysis – constitutes a peculiar feature of non-numeric poetry. Each aspect of spatiality in the structure of a poem has consequences in the semantics of a poetic work, the operations of which are connected with the various possible forms of accommodation (in relation to the category of nouns) only as basic evidence.

Let us examine one other example, which to some extent joins the problems relating to phraseological units[19] and those relating to independent noun categories. This type of combination can be found in, for example, the following text by Krzysztof Karask:

> **Wyznanie** (*Święty związek* [Holy Union], Wrocław 1997, p. 51)
>
> Wylewny język mojej młodości
> i suchy klekot języka moich lat dojrzałych
> stają przede mną jak dwie strony ciała
> które ryba miecza
> przecięła na pół; <u>dwie połowy jabłka</u>
> <u>które uwięzło w gardle; dwa końce kija</u>
> <u>który bije w ustach</u>; kołatka trędowatego
> która śpiewa: tak-nie
> nie-tak
>
> *
>
> Z kijem w ustach
> z niebem w twarzy
> podpiera ten kostur krajobrazu
> który otwiera we mnie coraz to nową ranę.
>
> 9 XII 1989
>
> (**Confession.** The effusive language of my youth / and the dry rattle of the language of my mature years / stand before me like two sides of a body / which a swordfish / has cut in two; two halves

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[19]Here we could cite the thesis that claims phraseologisms to be a kind of syntactic condensations, i.e., constructions containing in themselves (as lexical units) defined relations among components (described in the theory of phraseology using the phenomenon of inner syntax). Condensation in this case would refer to semantic-syntagmatic relations, as a result of which what is connoted is the total meaning of the union. The grammatical structure of that union is not, however, resistant to relations with contexts (in varous formal and significative formulations), in relation to which such a union can (as a cluster of meanings with a definite complex form) function as a part of an utterance in which it is included (by virtue of external syntax). Syntactic condensation thus here expresses itself in the presence of the internal phraseological syntactic-semantic structure, which can also define relations of this type in the broader context of the poem. Mixed relations and stabilized connotations of meaning are then possible, but also actualized.

of an apple / that got stuck in a throat / two ends of a stick / that hits in the mouth; the knock of a leper / who sings: yes-no / no-yes/ * / with a stick in the mouth / with heaven in the face / it bolsters that stick of a landscape / that opens up in me an ever new wound.)

In the text the dissimilarity of the language of youth and the language of mature years has created, in the text, a basis for dichotomous representation. The duality thus also organizes the presentation of categories of nouns, whose description is revealed to be the tension between the whole (two halves) and the split in two. Here the duality also has, however, a formal value, because it is connected with the relationality of lines, and with the double-tracking in fixed word combinations (of two types). In the first designated line that is the lexicalized metaphor of the two halves of an apple, which constitutes a definition of an ideal relationship between two people, individuals joined together in a lasting, harmonious bond. The next line, preceded by a comma, begins with a relative pronoun indicating the precise definition of the noun category from the previous line ("jabłko, które..."). The image thus introduced of an apple stuck in the throat significantly complicates the semantics of duality presented at the beginning of the poem. The whole (language-apple) is harmonized in spite of the dissimilarity of parts, it becomes completed; but that completeness causes someone to stop being able to draw a voice out of themselves. This result is indicated by the hypotactic definition represented by the invocation of the phraseologism "*coś więźnie w gardle komuś*" (his or her voice is gone).[20] The duality in the next construction functions in a similar way – in the second part of the line we find the expression "dwa końce kija" (two ends of a stick), which also evokes a phraseologism, "*każdy kij ma dwa końce*" (meaning every coin has two sides, every situation has its good and bad side).[21] This is thus an extension of the decription of language's dual nature, whose peculiarity was presented by the speaking subject at the beginning of the poem. Here again, the subsequent line begins with a relative pronoun, which – again, after a line ending with a comma – allows the construction to be interpreted as a hypotactic definition of the noun category ("kij, który "). This second defining expression in particular should be examined, because it constitutes a reference to the image being built from the beginning of language's duality. This happens if for no other reason because of the invocation of the fairyland motif of the magic stick (or the stick in a sack)[22] which invariably reveals the difficult unity of the language of youth and the language of mature years. The consistently maintained duality – the ardor and naïveté of the first language and the scepticism and severity (but also detachment) of the second – suggests, in the text, a difficult indissolubility, which is not only shown at the level of simple referentiality of particular words, but also at the level of the construction of the text and the relations between its parts. Accommodation in both senses only intensifies the effect of doubling, creating simultaneously a complicated image of cohesiveness (of image and text). Regardless of whether the object is the object indicated in the text (the noun and its functions) or the line as a unit of meaning in the text, this richness of poetic syntax gives us solid foundations for further interpretative steps.

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[20]See. http://www.wsjp.pl/index.php?id_hasla=37761 (accessed: 20.11.2016).

[21]http://wsjp.pl/index.php?id_hasla=4461&ind=0&w_szukaj=kij (accessed: 20.11.2016).

[22]See the Grimm brothers' "Table-Be-Set, Gold-Donkey, and Cudgel-out-of-the-Sack" or Ewa Szelburg-Zarembina's "Kije samobije" (The Magic Stick).

Syntactic relations in a poem are also clearly a problem of coordinate relations – both at the level of individual words and cohesiveness within lines, and also at the textual level. The text by Jacek Gutorow shown below can serve as a basic illustration of such phenomena; in it, parataxis becomes the constructive dominant of the perspective of the subject. The equivalence of categories or phenomena often produces an effect of simultaneity, causing the typical categories of description of reality to be recontextualized and create chains of objects whose intratextual relations imply a peculiar kind of image of the world:

Parataksa (*Inne tempo* [Another Tempo], Wrocław 2008, p. 28)

właśnie w tej chwili siedzę <u>przy biurku na placu teatralnym</u> i zapisuję
te słowa, które mają mnie uratować

właśnie w tej chwili zrobiłem kawę, a ty rozpuściłaś włosy takim gestem,
jakby miały opaść do samej ziemi

właśnie w tej chwili <u>miasta obwodnice jezdnie ciągi neonów zestrzelone
obłoki niosące resztki ech nad miastem piękne miasto</u>
[...]

właśnie w tej chwili kropla deszczu spływa po szybie i nie ma w tym
nic ale to nic poetyckiego
[...]

(**Parataxis.** at this exact moment i'm sitting by an office in the theatre square and writing down / these words that are supposed to save me // at this exact moment i made coffee, and you let your hair down with a gesture, / as if it was supposed to reach the ground // at this exact moment cities districts roadways rows of neon signs concentrated / clouds carrying remains of echoes over the city beautiful city / [...] // at this exact moment a drop of rain flows across the pane and in that there is / nothing but nothing poetic / [...])

The first line introduces the condensed image "przy biurku na placu," whose grammatical structure can constitute a kind of foreshadowing of later lines in the text. It is also, however, an example of the functioning of implications motivated by colloquial expressions. As a result, there arises a synthetic description of the place from two perspectives – internal and external – with a simultaneous display of the object as a point of reference. That nonetheless does not invalidate the image of a place – a possible thought abbreviation allows for such an implication. This results from the typical sequence of words used in the line (and thus not so much from the lexemes as in fact from their relations). "Przy biurku na placu" is also an effect of hierarchization motivated by the perspective of the subject; the sequence of definitions is typical for a participant in an activity who describes it, rather than for an observer of it. Prepositional expressions are here typical for a change of sequence ("na placu przy biurku") – the reader then would face the challenge in the form of the relayer of information about subject-object relations. The terms "przy" and "na" designate the basic parameters of the phenomenon being described. The innovative nature of this procedure boils down to the figure

of a chain of two equal expressions; it is possible, however, to imagine a much more difficult version, defying standard mechanisms of conceptualization.

The parallelism visible in the next two lines of Gutorow's work constitutes an example of yet another use of syntax to precisely define the object, and is simultaneously an illustration of a different semasiological mechanism. "Zrobiłem kawę, a ty rozpuściłaś włosy." The equivalence of these two activities in the line is the basis for an expansion of the semantics of the line syntagma. The parallel between the activities involving coffee and hair juxtaposes the two categories of objects and actions performed on them as singular in terms of the situation presented. One factor that justifies such an interpretation is the disruption of (or rather, innovative approach to) continuity in this text. It is not the logic of sequentiality, or chains of cause and effect or categoricality that determines the exposition of objects and phenomena but rather syntax, or, more precisely – syntagmatic relations between elements in a line. A clear example of this is another passage:

> właśnie w tej <u>chwili miasta obwodnice jezdnie ciągi neonów zestrzelone</u>
> obłoki niosące resztki ech nad miastem piękne miasto

"Zestrzelenie" of objects represents, on the one hand, their elimination or destruction by force of arms, while on the other (and this is what the peculiar chain of elements without punctuation suggests) it means their accumulation, convergence, sum or ratio, and thus the mutual interaction and recontextualization of combined categories. Clouds can also be concentrated – and this is a typical consequence of interlineal tension – as clouds can also carry the remains of echoes (remains after concentration) over the city, creating beauty. The movement of things (objects) is expressed both lexically and phraseologically ("at this moment" something is happening, simultaneously, suddenly, in a way that makes it impossible to count all of the elements involved), as well as by a syntactic chain combined with a slowing-down of sound through the tension of the interlineal.

It is worth our while, however, to return to accommodation. In the context of the problems discussed here, accommodation poses the following question: what do objects (as grammatical categories) demand, but also – what is demanded of them? These demands are syntactic in character, and therefore also semantic, referential, connotative, and so on. Precisely on that basis, we can describe a "pot with water," "water in a pot," or a "pot of water," and similarly – half a glass of water or a half-empty glass. To illuminate this circumstance, another example will help – this time from the poetry of Ewa Lipska.

> **Grudzień** (*Drzazga* [Splinter], Kraków 2006, p. 27)
>
> <u>*Moja ty myszo optyczna*</u> mówi do niej on.
> Na niebie ślizgawica. Coraz krótszy grudzień.
> Zamarza <u>gadatliwe miasto</u>.
>
> A w nich wrzątek miłości. <u>Tylko pocałunek</u>
> <u>nie odbiega od reszty</u>. W ustach szron.

Na łyżwach samogłoska.
Moja ty myszo optyczna mówi do niej on.

(**December.** *My optical mouse you*, he says to her. / Glazed frost in the sky. December shorter and shorter. / The garrulous city is freezing up. // While in them love is boiling hot. Only a kiss / does not stray from the rest. Hoar-frost in the mouth. / A vowel on skates. / *My optical mouse you*, he says to her.)

It should be underscored – a crucial fact in the context of Lipska's poem – that one manifestation of accommodation in poetic syntax is anthropomorphicization. It can be executed by means of incorporating objects and phenomena in syntactic relations – through their subordination to human action or to a condition, but also through the implication of human traits (for example, in terms of an attribute – here, skates). Anthropomorphicization here is an ideal example of the expansion of categoriality in description, albeit in close connection with the practice of colloquialism ("moja ty myszo optyczna"), and thus a non-specialized, basic description of the perceived world. It is thus a peculiar thing, in this context, that the daily practice of transferring the features and properties of objects to our own human perspective becomes the source of effective metaphorical constructions, astonishing innovations and (frequently) catachretic curiosities.

The repeated phrase "moja ty myszo optyczna," which in the text has the status of a quotation, represents an example of original, modern reification. The apparent tenderness generated by the comparison with a highly advanced manual accessory used to perform a great many tasks at the computer (an object that functions as a medium – mediating between human being and computer) finds its basic grammatical expression in the unconventional form of the vocative case. In this case, personification (because of the lack of expressions of corporeality) is completed through the exploitation of the paradigm's possibilities ("myszo"). The whole perspective of the subject in the poem, however, indicates full equivalence between the orders of objects and of human beings (in various metonymic arrangements).

The exhibition of the qualities of a kiss through the paradox that emerges in view of the peculiar lineal retardation ("tylko pocałunek / nie odbiega od reszty") represents yet another singular feature of the kind of poetic syntax being presented in this essay. "Tylko pocałunek," with the closing of the vowel (especially *o*, the most frequently repeated vowel in this bookend line) used to express unsatisfied need, a sign perversely testifying to the intensity of feeling, is another example of the dynamics of potential syntactic functions, the contingent interpretative possibilities of the poem form, but with a perception of the phraseological stabilization in the language of receivers ("nie odbiega od reszty"). As a result of relations between lines, an image thus takes shape which is much more complicated. The modulant "tylko" activates, in the lineal perspective, the meanings: "not much," "too little," "disproportionately" (to the boiling water of love), while in the interlineal perspective it also adds the meanings: "exclusively," "unlike everything else." Thus through syntactic condensation (multifunctionality of textual elements in the poem) a semantically complex process of accommodation takes place. The kiss therefore has its properties diffused in context, but is also exhibited via the only open line in the text. It is thus simultaneously warm and cold, open and closed, harmonized with

the rest though unique in its intimacy. Accommodation in its interlineal formulation here causes the precise defining at once of both the function of the noun (object) and the syntagmatic relation between relational lines.

The Ocean in a Glass of Water – Attempt at a Summing-up

The approximate and fragmentary interpretations presented here represent an illustration of some characteristic phenomena of poetic syntax. The artefacts presented in these illustrations become objects with multiple values, and are ultimately defined by the relations of elements in the text primarily in terms of the lines' semantic autonomy. Accommodation understood as adaptation to syntactic demands becomes a mechanism of metaphorization, definition and contextual revitalization of lexical elements. The artefacts that work to help create space in the text in this manner (by means of lexical references and typical semantic-syntactic roles) acquire features that dismantle conceptual categoriality and, by virtue of their multiplicity of functions, intensify the interpretative projects constructed by the reader. Syntactic relations, precisely, as rules of a particular text (but also rules of a poem) become the primary motivator of original meanings which nevertheless do not invalidate standard linguistic mechanisms such as repeatability, typicality and categoriality as the foundations of meaning in a text constructed by the reader. As in the passage from the poem by Różewicz, the object is set in motion by relations among words and relations among lines within a poem. Each construction reveals the objects described in a different perspective and with distinct contextual dependencies. Sometimes – as in the poems by Siwczyk and Karask – this point is reached by relations between the simple referentiality of individual lexemes or lexicalized words and the referentiality of actualized phraseological unions. At other times – as in the cases of Grzebalski and Lipska – the referentiality of lexemes is confronted with references that result from metaphorical combinations, and finally – as in the case of Gutorow – recontextualization is effected by means of a combination of nominal or paratactic chains. In all of these cases, it needs to be underscored that the phenomenon of accommodation in poetry does not mean simply the adaptation of elements of an utterance to the demands of actual syntagmatic functions. In the case of free verse it is also multifactorial adaptation – formulating relations in lines, between lines but also in the text as a whole. All of these levels of textual analysis contribute to the creation of an interpretative project; only in the light of aspects of such an interpretation, through the recognition of a peculiar simultaneity of multiple readings and the spatiality of the poem, does the richness of poetry make itself known.

Keywords | Abstract | Note on the Author ● ● ●

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Abstract:

The article deals with the problem of poetic syntax in free verse, examined with reference to the phenomenon of accommodation. The cases analyzed here of the conceptualization of objects in poetic texts (and thus in categories of nouns) allow for a two-track discussion: at the level of elements creating the space of a poem, i.e., the textual accommodation of individual line syntagmas, and also at the level of objects with their lexical (nominal) manifestations in the text, i.e., syntactic accommodation. Accommodation understood as adaptation to syntactic demands becomes, in this formulation, a mechanism of metaphorization, specification and contextual reinvigoration of lexical elements. The objects that thus together create the space in a text (by means of lexical references and typical semantic-syntactic roles) acquire features that disrupt conceptual categorization and due to their multiple functions reinforce the interpretative projects constructed by the reader. Each individual phenomenon is illustrated with poems by renowned contemporary poets.

process of metaphorization

accommodation

F R E E   V E R S E

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