



Working with Unspeakable Sentences

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Pour citer cet article

Dallas Graham, « Working with Unspeakable Sentences », *Cycnos*, vol. 3. (Les sujets de la lettre), 1987, mis en ligne en 2021.

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Cycnos, études anglophones

revue électronique éditée sur épi-Revel à Nice

ISSN 1765-3118 ISSN papier 0992-1893

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EPI-REVEL

Revue électronique de l'Université Côte d'Azur

"Working With Unspeakable Sentences"

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The aim of this article is to test some of the hypotheses presented by Anne Banfield in her thought-provoking book, *Unspeakable Sentences*.¹ The main hypothesis presented is the following: three types of narrative sentences can be isolated in narrative texts, namely, the sentence of narration *per se*, which is both non-communicative and non-expressive, and the sentence which represents consciousness, which is also non-communicative but which, on the other hand, allows the appearance of expressive elements and constructions. The latter type of sentence is, in fact, divisible into two categories - the sentence representing reflective consciousness (i.e. represented speech and thought), and the sentence representing non-reflective consciousness. It goes without saying that sentences of direct speech and thought may also appear in narrative texts, as well as sentences of indirect speech and thought, the former being sentences of discourse, not narration. But as far as I can make out, the status of sentences of indirect speech and thought needs clarification within Banfield's theory. She rightly considers such sentences to present, in the subordinate clause, content of thought or speech in a propositional form, and such content is presented by a quoting speaker who acts as an interpretive intermediary. Any expressive elements or constructions that appear are to be attributed to the quoting speaker and not to the quoted speaker (who in fact does not 'speak' at all in such sentences). But how are we to deal with such sentences in a 3rd. person narrative text? This is the first problem, however simple it may appear, that I should like to deal with.

In such texts, according to Banfield, there is no narrator. Sentences of narration *per se* are non-communicative and non-expressive, hence there is no speaker/narrator and no conscious subject to which expressive elements may be attributed. The other categories of narrative sentences have an experiencing self but no speaker/narrator either. Who, then, is the quoted speaker referred to above in sentences of indirect speech and thought? Are we obliged to reintroduce a narrator in order to explain these sentences? May we not find a way out of the problem by reinterpreting the notion of quoting speaker? Would it not be possible to maintain that, in a narrative context, certain sentences of indirect speech and thought do not have a quoting speaker in the sense that they have one in the discourse - i.e. communication-context?

Suppose, for example, that we encountered the following sentence in a narrative context:

- (1) The man had told her that she mustn't be impatient.

Out of context as it stands, this sentence cannot be attributed with any degree of certainty to either a quoting speaker or an experiencing self referred to by the pronoun "her." But in a suitable narrative context I see no reason why such a sentence cannot be referred to the experiencing self, the person 'on the receiving end' of the remark. What permits us to propose such an interpretation is the verb form in the main clause, "had told." The retrospective nature of the Pluperfect renders it quite conceivable that the whole sentence represents a reminiscence on the part of the experiencing self. If the verb had been in the Simple Past, this would hardly have been possible. And in that case, I daresay, Banfield would consider the sentence to be a sentence of narration *per se*, whereas her adversaries would certainly stand out for the presence of a reporting narrator/speaker.

On a practical level, I suppose, the point is of little import, the narrator, if there is one, manifesting himself merely as a reporter confining himself to 'fact.' There are no elements or constructions revealing the narrator's 'subjectivity.' Theoretically, however, the problem remains posed. And what is to be done if some expressive or modalising element *does* appear? For instance:

(2) The man told her that she mustn't be so bloody impatient.

The subjective element is in the quoted clause, and Banfield claims that such elements should be attributed to the quoting, and not to the quoted, speaker. But who can the quoting speaker be here other than a narrator? I repeat that I find it rather difficult to attribute this sentence to an experiencing self.

To make matters worse, what would happen if the expressive element did not belong to the quoted clause? For example:

(3) The man apparently told her that she mustn't be so impatient.

"Apparently" must refer to a quoting speaker, a quoting speaker who is not absolutely sure of the truth of what he is reporting. These last two sentences would seem to pose problems for Banfield's grammar. There is, however, one context in which these sentences would be quite normally attributable to an experiencing self, and that is the context where the experiencing self is not the person referred to by "her" in each of the above sentences. One could easily imagine any of the above sentences being part of the reflections of another character altogether. But outside that context, it strikes me as being rather difficult to avoid posing the existence of a quoting speaker, hence narrator.

Since, indeed, all the sentences I have been commenting on pose a problem of context, it might be interesting now to give similar examples taken from genuine texts. My first example is taken from *What Maisie Knew*:²

(4) (1) Maisie's inspiration instructed her, pressingly, that the more she should be able to say about mamma the less she would be called upon to speak of her step-parents. (2) She kept hoping that the Countess would come in before her power to protect them was exhausted; and it was now, in closer quarters with her companion, that the idea at the back of her head shifted its place to her lips. (3) She told him she had met her mother in the Park with a gentleman who, while Sir Claude had strolled with her ladyship, had been kind and had sat and talked to her. . . . (p.133)

The first two sentences can fairly easily be interpreted as what is going on at that moment in Maisie's mind. How reflective Maisie's consciousness is here is a matter of some uncertainty. But it certainly grows more and more reflective as the decision to tell her father about the meeting in the Park forms itself in her mind. It is the third sentence which corresponds to the type of sentence I have been discussing previously - a sentence of indirect speech with an introductory clause "she told him." Taken on its own, we should have to allow for a quoting speaker, but in view of the context - both preceding and following - in which Maisie's consciousness has quite definitely been represented, I think that it might be possible to suggest that an exterior quoting speaker is not necessary here, and that, even in the sentence of indirect speech, Maisie can be seen as consciously coming to the decision to tell her father about the meeting and simultaneously enacting this decision. In other words, the introductory clause "she told him" implies "and so she decided to tell him immediately that..." It might be objected that I am going to great lengths for something of little importance, but I would merely reply that the only other solution is to posit a quoting speaker, i.e. narrator, or to say that a narrative function can quote. Before leaving this passage I would nonetheless like to point out that an argument can easily be made for a mingling of voices in the third sentence. The term "her ladyship" is not one that Maisie would have been likely to use in reference to her mother. She usually refers to her mother as "mamma".

I shall conclude this part of my essay with another slightly different example, taken this time from *Mrs Dalloway*.³ It is in fact the first sentence of the novel:

(5) Mrs Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself.

We have here another sentence of indirect speech which once again raises the problem of the quoting speaker. There is no doubt about there being a quoted speaker, namely Mrs Dalloway, but what she actually said is uncertain. Did she actually say "myself" or not? There is no way of knowing for sure. It is, however, impossible to attribute the whole sentence to Mrs Dalloway in the same way as I attributed the previous example of indirect speech to Maisie. It is impossible, at least within Banfield's grammar, because a consciousness can refer to itself syntactically only by a pronoun or by a proper name. Mrs Dalloway is indeed a proper name, but the person in

question would not refer to herself as Mrs Dalloway, but as Clarissa or Clarissa Dalloway, as she in fact does three lines further on in the text. The person who would refer to Mrs Dalloway as Mrs Dalloway is Lucy. What we have here is a piece of reported speech embedded in a piece of represented thought, i.e. Lucy's. So here again there is no need for an exterior quoting speaker. But, as in the previous example, it remains an open question as to whether there is a mingling of voices in the sentence.

I would now like to turn to another topic of general theoretical interest that Banfield discusses in her book. One of the principal characteristics of the sentence representing consciousness, according to Banfield, is that present and future time deictics can combine with verbs in the past tense. The situation is clearer in French than in English, however, due to the formal distinction that can be drawn between the Simple Past and the Imperfect. It is only with the latter past tense that present and future time deictics can combine. At least that is what Banfield would have us believe. I am indebted to an article by Marcel Vuillaume of Nice University in which he gives examples of the French showing that adverbs such as 'aujourd'hui' and 'maintenant' are to be found combining with the Simple Past.⁴ In any case the problem is quite different in English, where the Simple Past can correspond to both the French Simple Past and the French Imperfect. However, Banfield would very much like to establish a distinction between the Simple Past and the Progressive Past equivalent to that in French between the Simple Past and the Imperfect. She is aware that the so-called stative verbs in English pose a problem here, but appears to believe that the distinction works with the dynamic verbs, if I may go by her example of acceptable and non-acceptable sentences on page 159:

- (4) How my heart *beat now as he came toward me!
 was beating

I personally see no reason for not accepting the first of the two sentences. And in any case, in my opinion both "beat" and "was beating" would be rendered by the Imperfect in French since both forms refer to a durative process, the only difference being that the process is explicitly marked by one form and remains implicit in the other. Furthermore I would even accept a sentence such as the following one:

- (5) My heart began to beat hard now as he came toward me

where "began" can by no means be considered as a form referring to a durative process. It is possible that even this verb form would be rendered by an Imperfect in French, although after reading Vuillaume's article I am not sure that this is the case.

I have checked through several English works of fiction for appearances of the Simple Past accompanied by the adverb "now", and although I am aware that the latter is perhaps not

the best example of a present time deictic adverb, here are nonetheless the rough figures:

Iris Murdoch, *The Philosopher's Pupil*: Simple Past + now - 329 cases, Progressive Past + now - 40 cases; of the 329 cases of Simple Past + now, 111 were with a dynamic verb.

Joseph Conrad, *Almayer's Folly*: Simple Past + now - 66 cases, Progressive Past + now - 6 cases; of the 66 cases of Simple Past + now, 24 were with a dynamic verb.

William Golding, *Lord of the Flies*: Simple Past + now - 67 cases, Progressive Past + now - 14 cases; of the 67 cases of Simple Past + now, 28 were with a dynamic verb.

D.H. Lawrence, *The Trespasser*: Simple Past + now - 26 cases, Progressive Past + now - 4 cases; of the 26 cases of Simple Past + now, 9 were with a dynamic verb.

I find these figures quite significant as proof that a) "now" coexists quite easily with the Simple Past, and b) at least one third of the occurrences of the combination concern dynamic verbs. They are not too surprising, however, in view of the multivalence of both the Simple Past and the adverb "now" in English. In most of the examples that I found, the Simple Past of the dynamic verb would probably still be rendered in French by an Imperfect, the verb form indicating either an unmarked durative process or habitual or repetitive activity. But there were several cases in which this was not the case. Here are 4 examples taken from *The Philosopher's Pupil*:⁵

(6)a Stella had been crying into her handkerchief. She now laid this aside... (p.18)

b George seemed relieved. He now leaned back in his chair, letting his attention wander. (p.224)

c Father Bernard, leaving Clergy House in a hurry, had picked up his copy of Dante, and now turned, with new-found caution, to a passage which he knew well... (p.259)

d They had all been standing, with the exception of Ruby, and of Adam who was still sitting on the floor. George now sat down near the fireplace. (p.481)

Banfield's treatment of the combination NOW + PAST raises another problem, because she seems to consider that the phenomenon occurs only in represented speech and thought. But it seems to me that there are frequently cases where the combination occurs and where it is extremely difficult to find an experiencing self to which it can be referred. In the prologue to *What Maisie Knew*, there are two examples:

(7)a There were more reasons for her parents to agree to it than there had ever been

for them to agree to anything; and they now prepared with her help to enjoy the distinction that waits upon vulgarity sufficiently attested. (p.18)

b Poor Ida, who had run through everything, had now nothing but her carriage and her paralysed uncle. (p.20)

I shall take another two examples from Leon Edel's biography of Henry James (Vol. 1):⁶

(8)a The only 'castle' Henry knew was an elaborate villa with towers at the New Brighton summer resort; and he had never before encountered a ruin. Below the slope he spied a woman at work,...., the first peasant he had ever seen. Here was a 'sublime synthesis' of Europe for the future novelist, and it was as such that he remembered it:... Memories came to little Henry of books, of lonely reading in 14th Street; now imagined scenes focused into reality. (p.102-3)

b By the end of October when Harry was convalescent, the Jameses moved back to Paris. Now, for the first time, the children heard whispers of financial difficulties. (p.112)

And finally an example from a work of literary criticism by Linda Hutcheon called *Narcissistic Narrative*:⁷

(9) Secondly, the role of the reader began to change. Reading was no longer easy, no longer a comfortable controlled experience; the reader was now forced to control, to organize, to interpret. (p.25-6)

The two occurrences of the combination that I have extracted from James's novel do not seem to me to be easily attributable to an experiencing self, and certainly not to Maisie, who is, as everyone knows, the major experiencing self of the novel, but, who, in the prologue, has not yet appeared on the scene. On the other hand, there are many signs of a presence that looks suspiciously like a narrator/author. In particular the sentence immediately preceding the first of the two from the novel that I quoted, ends "...in the manner *I have mentioned*." The modalising and subjective expressions that abound in the 4 pages of the prologue must surely be attributed to someone, and as there is as yet no experiencing self....

As for the examples taken from Edel's biography of Henry James, neither of them can seriously be considered as examples of represented speech or thought, although the first one may well have a slightly more 'fictional tonality.' And even less can such a status be accorded to the quotation of Linda Hutcheon's work of literary criticism.

Perhaps one must indeed postulate a 'double temporalité' in all these texts, such as Vuillaume has argued for narrative texts alone.⁸ But it is also worthwhile noting that all my

examples come from texts where there definitely is or would seem to be a narrator/author: Linda Hutcheon is presenting her views on the role of the reader; Leon Edel is telling the story of Henry James's life, and even in the novel, as I pointed out above, there does seem to be, at this point at least, a 'teller'. And perhaps all these "nows" can be taken as signs of a narrator's attempt at getting 'closer' to his narrative, thereby bringing the reader closer to it too.

Moreover the two viewpoints, Vuillaume's and my own, are not necessarily incompatible. At any rate, the subject is far from exhausted, and it would seem that the combination of NOW + PAST should not be considered as reserved specially for fictional narrative, and certainly not merely for represented speech and thought.

Before leaving this topic, I should like to make two points. Firstly, it must be remembered that most of the remarks that I have been making above concern the adverb 'now' and not just any present or future time deictic, for I personally have as yet found no examples of, for instance, 'today' combining with the Past tense in English and occurring in non-fictional texts. Secondly, I do not wish to give the impression that represented speech and thought do not occur outside fictional narrative (a position which seems to be held by Banfield *et al.*). Here are two examples, one of represented speech and one of represented thought:

(10)a The General Council was now, he said, involved up to the hilt in the dispute. (*The Weekly Guardian*, Sept.2, 1984)

b They took the railway to Lyon and, at the Hôtel de l'Univers, Henry spent more time in bed. The hours in this hostelry prepared him, he felt, for the French *vie de province* in the pages of Balzac. (Edel, p. 102)

In the final part of my essay I propose to apply Banfield's hypotheses in a more detailed and practical fashion to two passages of fictional narrative. My aim is to attempt to show that what would seem, from a reading of her book, to be crystal-clear and well-defined, turns out to be much more obscure and fuzzy in actual texts, or, to be more precise, that it is not always easy to cut up a text into different categories of sentences.

The passage I am going to start with is drawn from Virginia Woolf's novel *To the Lighthouse*.⁹ I have chosen this novel for obvious reasons, Virginia Woolf being one of those novelists who have a predilection for the use of represented speech and thought. So, without more ado, let us plunge in at the beginning:

(11) 'Yes, of course, if it's fine tomorrow,' said Mrs Ramsay. 'But you'll have to be up with the lark,' she added.

(1) To her son these words conveyed an extraordinary joy, as if it were settled the expedition was bound to take place, and the wonder to which we had looked forward, for years and years it seemed, was, after a night's darkness and a day's sail, within touch. (2) Since he belonged, even at the age of six, to that great clan which cannot keep this feeling separate from that, but must let future prospects, with their joys and sorrows, cloud what is actually at hand (...), James Ramsay, sitting on the floor cutting out pictures from the illustrated catalogue of the Army and Navy Stores, endowed the picture of a refrigerator as his mother spoke with heavenly bliss. (3) It was fringed with joy. (p.9)

The second paragraph opens with a complex sentence, which, were it not for two small parts of it - "to her son" and "for years and years it seemed" - could be interpreted as a sentence of narration *per se*. Let us pause for a second at the parenthetical clause, "it seemed." To whom did it seem? One is surely entitled to suppose that 'it seemed to him,' i.e. to Mrs Ramsay's son James. "For years and years" would therefore be a brief passage of represented thought, and, owing to the presence of the parenthetical, it must be, if we accept to follow Banfield, thought belonging to the category of reflective consciousness: "when a parenthetical is added to a sentence interpretable as the representation of a perception, it has the same effect as the addition of an exclamation: the sentence must be read as represented thought, i.e. reflectively." (Banfield, *op. cit.*, p.204). It is true that in the examples she gives, all the parentheticals are of the type "he thought," "she realized." Perhaps a parenthetical like "it seemed" is not to be taken as belonging to the same group.

However, whether the consciousness represented here be of the reflective or of the non-reflective variety, it raises two difficulties. The first is one we are constantly brought up against when analysing texts in this fashion. Are we to suppose that the passage of represented thought begins on the word "for" and ends on the second "years" - in which case how do we classify the surrounding context? - or does the marked passage of represented thought allow us to consider the surrounding context as forming part of the represented thought, albeit unmarked - in which case where do we stop the 'contamination'? As far as the present example is concerned, why not consider the whole sentence to be a representation of what is going on in James Ramsay's mind at that moment? If we accept Banfield's reasoning we cannot, because, in non-reflective consciousness, the experiencing self can be referred to by a pronoun or a proper name, and in reflective consciousness, only by a pronoun. But our sentence begins with "to her son." So we cannot attribute the whole sentence to James.

But there is perhaps, although the reader need not immediately be aware of it, another

experiencing self functioning here. Once we have read the first 2 or 3 pages, it becomes clear that there is a predominant experiencing self, namely Mrs Ramsay. And although the noun phrase "her son" cannot as a whole refer to the experiencing self, perhaps the possessive adjective all alone can. In other words, Mrs Ramsay, who obviously knows her son very well, would here be conscious of the pleasure she is giving her son by letting him believe that they might well go to the lighthouse the following morning. But in that case, either we must attribute "for years to years" to Mrs Ramsay, the "it seemed" implying 'it seemed to her' (which is, I suppose, possible), or we continue to attribute it to James, and it is an example of shift in point of view.

Banfield is not terribly clear about how to define shift in point of view. The only definition she gives is valid when there is an explicit parenthetical present, but she admits that when there is none we may have a problem on our hands.¹⁰ Here we do have a parenthetical, but it is not much use really because it has no pronoun or noun, subject or indirect object, which might refer to an experiencing self. Furthermore shift in point of view is supposed to take place between Es, i.e. between grammatical structures which, in transformational grammar, are hierarchically superior to Ss and \bar{S} s,¹¹ and not within an E. I am not sure that that is the case here. Banfield herself implicitly admits that there may be some difficulty in defining an E.¹²

The second sentence begins by posing a problem of a different nature. It opens with some generic considerations on childhood before closing on a repetition, or extension rather, of the joy felt by young James Ramsay. Are we to attribute such generic reflection to a narrator, or is it once again Mrs Ramsay 'philosophising'? We have no way of telling. It could be either, therefore our interpretation will depend merely on our basic theoretical stance - do we, like Banfield, accept the existence of narratorless sentences, or do we agree with Scholes and Kellogg (*The Nature of Narrative*) when they say that "by definition narrative art requires a story and a story-teller"?¹³

The short third sentence is quite interesting. It has no visible mark either allowing us to attribute it to a character, and yet we feel that it could well be a representation of what James was feeling at that moment. Moreover the context plays an extremely important role here. If we are prepared to accept the sentence as an example of represented consciousness, probably of a non-reflective order, we cannot but note how well its occurrence has been prepared. From "an extraordinary joy and the wonder to which he had looked forward" in the first sentence, via "heavenly bliss" in the second, we are led to "fringed with joy." And although I am willing to see in this sentence an example of what Bally called "une figure de pensée,"¹⁴ I cannot help feeling that the contextual preparation for this sentence could well be the sign of the way in which a narrator/author controls his text, while remaining discreetly in the background, so to

speak. Be that as it may, the role of the context in delimiting and characterising the various speech and thought processes in a text requires more attention than Banfield accords it in her book.

Before leaving *To the Lighthouse* I would like to comment on a passage to which Banfield herself refers in her book. It is the passage (on page 16-17 of the Penguin edition) where Charles Tansley and Mrs Ramsay are out walking, and Tansley is telling Mrs Ramsay about his family. The whole passage is a mixture of direct speech and represented speech. But - and here I agree with Banfield - the represented speech is presented to the reader via the intermediary of a listening consciousness, i.e. that of Mrs Ramsay. This is another example of the phenomenon I have already mentioned, namely the mingling of 'voices' due to the embedding of reported speech in a piece of represented thought. There is, however, one extremely interesting sentence in the passage which Banfield does not mention:

(12) For, though they had reached the town now and were in the main street,.... still he went on talking, about settlements, and teaching, and working men, and helping our own class, and lectures,.... (p.17)

Here, much more so than earlier in the paragraph, Mr Tansley's words have been "transposed into the thought of a listening consciousness," but the really interesting phrase is "helping our class." What exactly did Mr Tansley say? "We must help our own class"? But in that case it should have become, in the represented version - "helping their/his own class," because there is no question of Mr Tansley and Mrs Ramsay belonging to the same class, and so the "our" cannot be inclusive of Mrs Ramsay. How can the "our" be explained? As a curiously unmarked return to direct speech? As an authorial slip? Or did he say "we must each help our own class" - meaning that he should help his and Mrs Ramsay hers? I find this latter suggestion unlikely, and even so, in represented form, it would be better transposed as "helping one's own class." The "our" certainly poses a problem, there being no easy justification for a first person form in a literary style which, in this book at least, is wholly third person.

We can see already from the detailed study of these two very short passages from *To the Lighthouse* that it is no easy matter to apply Banfield's grammar to real texts. I shall now conclude by analysing a short passage from Henry James's novel *What Maisie Knew*. The extract I have chosen is from the beginning of Ch.19, although there are numerous passages throughout the novel which would have done equally well.

(13) (1) When he had lighted a cigarette and began to smoke in her face it was as if he had struck with a match the note of some queer clumsy ferment of old professions, old scandals, old duties, a dim perception of what he possessed in her and what, if everything had only - damn it! - been totally different, she

might still be able to give him. (2) What she was able to give him, however, as his blinking eyes seemed to make out through the smoke, would be simply what he should be able to get from her. (3) To give something, to give here on the spot, was all her own desire. (4) Among the old things that came back was her little instinct of keeping the peace; it made her wonder more sharply what particular thing she could do or not do, what particular word she could speak or not speak, what particular line she could take or not take, that might for everyone, even for the Countess, give a better turn to the crisis. (5) She was ready, in this interest, for an immense surrender, a surrender of everything but Sir Claude, of everything but Mrs Beale. (6) The immensity didn't include *them*; but if he had an idea at the back of his head she had also one in a recess as deep, and for a time, as they sat together, there was an extraordinary mute passage between her vision of this vision of his, his vision of his vision, and his vision of his vision of her vision. (pp.131-132)

My discussion of the first sentence will focus on the hypothetical "it was as if," the repetition of the adjective "old," and the exclamation "damn it!" The exclamation is without doubt to be attributed to Beale Farange, and, working back from there, the simplest solution would be to interpret the sentence as representing the reflections of Maisie's father, at least from "it was as if." The hypothetical construction, the repetition of the adjective "old" and the exclamation are all manifestations of a subjectivity at work, and, because "damn it" is clearly an exclamation of Beale Farange's and not of Maisie's, then we shall, temporarily at least, attribute the whole sentence to Farange. Had it not been for the exclamation, then it would have been equally possible to refer the reflections back to Maisie herself.

The second sentence will therefore be taken as the continuation of the reflections of Beale Farange, the modalising verb "seemed" and the modal auxiliary "should" referring back to the self conducting these reflections. This second sentence is, however, more ambiguous than the first. The verb "seem", when it is not accompanied by a referential prepositional group, remains, as we have seen, vague. Once again we are obliged to ask the question - 'to whom did this seem?' The modal is also ambiguous. We must not forget that if we attribute these sentences to Beale Farange, we are in the domain of represented thought, in which case the tenses and auxiliaries are 'shifted.' Nevertheless, as far as the modal here is concerned, we cannot know whether Frange thought "what I shall be able to get from her" or "what I should be able to get from her." "Shall" would indicate a mental operation of prediction on the part of Farange (with perhaps an additional nuance of volition), whereas "should" (which cannot 'shift,' since there is no corresponding "shall") would be an epistemic modal indicating that the self considers the

hoped-for success of the operation as being probable. "Should" can also be a radical modal, but I think that the presence of "be able" blocks this possibility of interpretation.

To return, then, to the problem of attribution, we may say, I think, that the modalising elements in this sentence do not allow us to attribute the reflections to Beale Farange with as much certainty as did the exclamation in the first sentence. But let us leave it at that for the moment and turn to the third sentence. Here I think the self changes. We must surely attribute this sentence to Maisie. That it is a reflection is clear, I think, from the spatio-temporal expression "here on the spot." But the intensifying adjective "own" is rather problematic. Up to this point the text has been focusing on Beale Farange's desire, and now all of a sudden it is Maisie's desire that is focused. Giving is opposed to getting, and I think that it is the emphatic value of the adjective "own" that brings this out. But the problem is that Farange cannot possibly know what Maisie's desire is, and the same is true for Maisie regarding Farange's desire. Therefore "who" or "what" is emphasizing the contrast between giving and getting here.

It is with the fourth sentence that our analysis up to this point is called into question, and that the important role played by the context is highlighted. The sentence begins: "Among the old things which came back," which is a direct anaphoric reference to the "ferment of old professions, old scandals, old duties" mentioned in the first sentence. In that case it becomes more difficult to attribute the first sentence to Beale Farange. But if we reverse our analysis and attribute the whole of this paragraph to Maisie, then it is the exclamation "damn it" that becomes highly problematic.

It would seem therefore that whatever decision we make as to the attribution of these sentences, there is a problem. Note that, as I have already pointed out, there are problematic elements in at least 2 of the first 4 sentences.

Stylistically there is another important point to be made here - the relatively large number of repetitions that occur in this first paragraph of Ch.19. I have already noted the repetition of the adjective "old" in the first sentence, followed by its 'echo' in sentence 4. In this latter sentence there is an evident syntactic repetition - "what particular thing she could do or not do, what particular word she could speak or not speak, what particular line she could take or not take." In the following sentence there are two distinct repetitions - "surrender... surrender" and "everything but ... everything but." And, above all, there is the vertiginous ending to the sixth sentence where the reader founders in visions of visions of visions. Repetition is often considered to be a sign of a subjectivity at work, and no doubt, on occasion, the subjectivity in question can be that of a character, but surely it can also be taken as a sign of *écriture*, indicating

the presence of an author/narrator fashioning the text. I think that in this passage we can see the two phenomena. In the first sentence and in the fifth sentence the repetition could indeed be attributed to a character, probably Maisie, although my previous remarks have, I hope, shown how it is not so easy to decide. But the syntactic repetition in sentence 4 is, I feel, less obviously a sign of a character's subjectivity at work - note that it occurs in a passage of subordinate indirect speech in which the main verb is in the simple past tense, thereby making it difficult for us to accept this as representing part of Maisie's thoughts at the time. As for the end of the sixth sentence, there is surely an immense amount of "scriptural activity" going on here. One could allow that the beginning of the sentence, as far as "deep," should be attributed to Maisie, but thereafter it is difficult to accept that we have remained in Maisie's consciousness, because normally a character cannot be represented in his/her own consciousness and at the same time in the consciousness of another character. In any case, the repeated use of the abstract noun "vision" has in the end a depersonalising effect, and we get the impression of an outside observer witnessing this mute exchange of consciousnesses. One must surely posit some controlling, guiding hand here, and it can only be that of the author/narrator.

I trust that my analysis of these passages from *To the Lighthouse* and *What Maisie Knew* has shown that Banfield's grammar of narrative sentences cannot be applied automatically to actual texts. Problems keep cropping up, problems of which Banfield is no doubt aware, but to which she has given no solution, or at best only a partial one. There is first the problem of the delimitation of the different categories of sentences, which arises especially when there are insufficient indications - syntactic or otherwise - to permit us to classify them with certainty. Then there is the role played by context. We have seen, in the James text particularly, how we can be obliged to change our minds over an interpretation because the text, having allowed us to interpret in a certain direction, then leaves us high and dry. I also showed at the beginning of my article how a sentence, isolated from any context, can permit almost any interpretation. And, in note 10, I quoted Banfield's own uncertainty as to the exact nature of the context.

Then again there is the possibility of sentences in which we can 'hear' a mingling of voices. Banfield rejects categorically the Dual Voice theory, and I agree that many examples given by advocates of this theory do not stand up to close scrutiny. I feel that the danger of this theory is the return to intuitive analysis of literary texts, whereas one of the great merits of Banfield's approach is that she bases her analysis on more serious linguistic ground. Nevertheless there are sentences in which there seem to be traces of more than one voice, and I think that the so-called Dual Voice theory needs to be reconsidered.

And this leads me to my final point, the problem of the narrator. In a sense this is where Banfield makes her main stand - for her there is no other narrator than a first person narrating character. Going on from there, she is obliged to reject the Dual Voice theory because the second voice postulated by this theory is that of the narrator. But we have seen, in the *Mrs Dalloway* example for instance, that both voices can be voices of characters. This is not to say that I think we can accept a modified version of the Dual Voice theory and still maintain that there is no narrator in a third person narrative. The narrator problem is merely distinct from that of dual voice. I cannot possibly deal at length with the narrator problem now. I would make two comments however. Firstly, I wonder whether many interventions attributed to a narrator should not rather be attributed to an author-figure. And secondly, the problem of the existence of a narrator arises only when there are indications of subjectivity at work which cannot be attributed to a character in the novel. Where there are no subjective markers the sentence is equivalent to what Banfield calls a sentence of narration *per se*.

In the course of this article I have, I hope, raised problems and produced sentences which cannot really be explained by Banfield's theory. But I am well aware that Banfield, transformationalist grammarian as she is, has a ready-made answer to this. As McHale points out in an interesting article,¹⁴ Banfield would merely refuse to accept these sentences which seem to resist her grammar. For her, they would be deviant, individual stylistic freaks. I quote: "That writers may sporadically violate principles of style, as speakers may violate grammar rules, presents a problem which cannot be ignored but which must be set aside until these principles have been established." In other words, to invalidate her theory, counter-examples are not enough; what is needed is a stronger theory. And until that stronger theory is elaborated, her theory stands firm. I do not totally disagree with this, but I would merely say that, in that case, the proportion of deviant sentences is perhaps greater than she gives credit for, and suggest that, until someone comes up with a stronger theory, it might well be epistemologically useful to investigate such deviant sentences.

1 - Anne Banfield, *Unspeakable Sentences* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982).

2 - Henry James, *What Maisie Knew* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1984).

3 - Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1984).

4 - Marcel Vuillaume, "Grammaire temporelle des récits de fiction," *Semantics*. Vol. 7, N°1. 1983, p.61-62. ". . . Le malheur diminue l'esprit. Notre héros eut la gaucherie de s'arrêter auprès de cette petite chaise de paille, qui jadis avait été le témoin de triomphes si brillants. Aujourd'hui personne ne lui adressa la parole; sa présence était inaperçue et

pire encore. (Stendhal, *Le Rouge et le Noir*, p.421)

"Il (=Negoro) avait été le témoin de l'irrésistible mouvement de colère du jeune novice, lorsque Harris lui avait appris la mort de Mrs Weldon et du petit Jack. Négro, lâche coquin, ne se fût pas exposé à subir le même sort que son complice. Mais maintenant, en face d'un prisonnier solidement attaché des pieds et des mains, il supposa qu'il n'avait rien à craindre et il résolu de lui rendre visite. (Jules Verne, *Un Capitaine de quinze ans*, p.350)

- 5 - Iris Murdoch, *The Philosopher's Pupil* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1984).
- 6 - Leon Edel, *The Life of Henry James*, I (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1977).
- 7 - Linda Hutcheon, *Narcissistic Narrative* (London: Methuen, 1984).
- 8 - "Le rôle des morphèmes verbaux est de situer les événements dans leur sphère temporelle propre (le passé) et celui des adverbes de dater leur 'double textuel'. . . . L'emploi en contexte passé de déictiques de temps comme 'aujourd'hui' repose sur le même principe que celui de datations comme 'au moment où nous (parlons + entrons + retrouvons notre héros + . . .)' . . . (Such expressions) sont évidemment solidaires et sont relatives au moment où on les lit. . ." (op. cit. , p.71)
- 9 - Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, (St. Albans: Panther Books, Granada Publishing Ltd., 1983).
- 10 - "But as we have already observed, a parenthetical is not obligatory with the represented E. There is some evidence that a shift appearing in the absence of a parenthetical requires an appropriate NP in a 'neighbouring E' and perhaps a consciousness or a communication verb (or some other semantically related word) to permit interpretation. But just which NPs are eligible and what constitutes a 'neighbouring E' has not yet been determined." (Banfield, op. cit. , p.102)
- 11 - It is difficult to be clear here without going into the detail of transformational grammar. Suffice to say that S = sentence, \bar{S} = S + a complementiser like 'that' or 'if', and E = \bar{S} + some subjective expression like 'Good heavens' or 'Blast.'
- 12 - "There is a sentence in *To the Lighthouse* which contains representations of the distinct points of view of two characters: 'What damned rot they talk, thought Charles Tansley, laying down his spoon precisely in the middle of his plate, which he had swept clean, as if, Lily thought, (he sat opposite to her with his back to the window precisely in the middle of view), he were determined to make sure of his meals.' (London: Hogarth Press, 1974, p. 98). But the existence of this sentence does not suggest the revision of '1 E/1 SELF', but rather of the definition of an E. The sentence above is so interpretable because its syntax allows the clause beginning 'as if...' to be treated as an independent E with respect to this principle for the determination of point of view." (Banfield, op. cit., note 12, pp.293-294).
- 13 - Cited by F.K. Stanzel, *A Theory of Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p.4.
- 14 - Charles Bally, "Figures de pensée et formes linguistiques," *Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift* IV, 1914
- 15 - Brian McHale, "Unspeakable Sentences, Unnatural Acts, Linguistics and Poetics Revisited," *Poetics Today*, 4, 1983.