

**Challenging Change:
Literary and Linguistic Responses**

Edited by

Vesna Lopičić and Biljana Mišić Ilić

**CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS**

P U B L I S H I N G

Table of Contents

Challenging Change: Literary and Linguistic Responses,
Edited by Vesna Lopičić and Biljana Mišić Ilić

This book first published 2012

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2012 by Vesna Lopičić and Biljana Mišić Ilić and contributors

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-4438-3900-0, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-3900-6

Introduction:	
Change and Its Challenges	1
Vesna Lopičić, Biljana Mišić Ilić	
Part One:	
Challenging Change – Literary Responses	
Chapter One	15
Why Making Love isn't What it Used to be	
Fraser Sutherland	
Chapter Two	23
Gender as the Force of Character Change: When the Princess Met the	
Devil in Disguise	
Vladislava Gordić Petković	
Chapter Three	33
Transmutations of Gender in Tennessee Williams' Plays	
Aleksandra Žeželj	
Chapter Four	51
<i>Inglan is a Bitch</i> – Voices of the Silenced in Linton Kwesi Johnson's	
Poetry	
Faruk Bajraktarević	
Chapter Five.....	61
From Great Expectations to Harsh Reality: Immigrant Experience in	
Himani Bannerji's <i>On a Cold Day</i>	
Milena Kostić	
Chapter Six.....	73
The Bitterness of the Promised Land: Cultural Changes as Seen by	
Nebojša Milosavljević	
Vesna Lopičić	
Chapter Seven.....	83
Tradition or Empowerment? The Battle of the Acadian Capital(s)	
Christina Keppie	

Chapter Eight.....	93
The Metamorphosis of an Altar Boy, The Genesis of a Monster: David Almond's <i>Clay</i> Danijela Petković	
Chapter Nine.....	111
'His Brother's Keeper': Marlow as a Herald of Change in <i>Lord Jim</i> Nataša Tučev	
Chapter Ten.....	119
Revisiting the Turbulent Past in Ronan Bennett's <i>Havoc, in Its Third Year</i> Lejla Mulalić	
Chapter Eleven.....	131
Space, Body and Change in the Architecture of Postmodern Poetry Alina Țenescu	
Chapter Twelve.....	151
"It's a Shame to be without an Attitude": a View on Cutting-edge Poetry from Bosnia Tatjana Bijelić	
Chapter Thirteen.....	171
<i>The 2000 Generation</i> of Moldavian (Bessarabian) Poets and their New Discourse Mihaela Albu	
Part Two: Challenging Change – Linguistic Responses	
Chapter Fourteen.....	187
On Change in the Concept of Time: Future Tense and Language Contacts Junichi Toyota	
Chapter Fifteen.....	197
Some Pseudo-Passive Constructions in English from the Perspective of Diachronic Change Vladan Pavlović	
Chapter Sixteen.....	211
Arising Adverbs Pernilla Hallonsten	

Chapter Seventeen.....	223
The Change in the Form of the Present Perfect in Middle English Ana Halas	
Chapter Eighteen.....	235
Inaugural Speeches from George Washington to Barack Obama: a Change Caught in Action – From a Speech to a Convention Aleksandar Kavgić	
Chapter Nineteen.....	253
Tracking Language Variation across the Teens: Some Sociolinguistic Aspects of Slang in Serbia Jovana Dimitrijević Savić	
Chapter Twenty.....	267
Lexical Changes in Romanian Political Discourse after 1989 Mădălina Cerban	
Chapter Twenty One.....	279
Word Order (Seemingly) out of Order Biljana Mišić Ilić	
Chapter Twenty Two.....	297
Meaning Shifts in Interpreting Visuo-Spatial Bodily Idioms Dušan Stamenković	
Chapter Twenty Three.....	313
Metonymy as a Source of Semantic Change: English Colour Terms Stefania Alina Cherata	
Contributors.....	331
Index.....	337

INTRODUCTION: CHANGE AND ITS CHALLENGES

VESNA LOPIČIĆ, BILJANA MIŠIĆ ILIĆ

In his introduction to the book *Intervention Architecture: Building for Change* published in 2007, Homi Bhabha stresses the omnipresent need to change:

"We live in the midst of difficult transitions in custom and belief, and complicated translations of value and identity. *Transition* and *translation* are complex states of being that constitute the culture of everyday life in a global world. In a state of transition – or translation – you are caught *ambivalently* between identifying with an *establishing community* of 'origins' and 'traditions', while, *at the same time*, relating to an *empowering community* of revisionary values. 'Establishing' and 'Empowering' are only approximate, unfixed, terms of personal and social reference. I have named them thus, in order to reflect the commonly held view that, for instance, 'tradition' imparts a sense of the continuity of identity, while 'empowerment' is an invitation to experiment with newer self-identifications and emergent experimental beliefs and collective values. This dynamic is as true of diasporic condition as it is of the transformations in the indigenous lives of those who stay at home" (Bhabha 2007, 9).

It would be difficult to find another excerpt where so many terms relevant for the concept of change co-exist: transitions, custom, belief, translations, value, identity, culture, origins, traditions, revision, establishing, empowering, continuity, dynamic, diaspora, transformations. It would be even more difficult to differentiate between social change driven by a variety of factors and individual change seen as personal development in a variety of manifestations, since the two aspects of change largely overlap. Where these two sets of values, social and individual, public and private, experientially and experimentally intersect most transparently, literature is created giving language its most authentic and original form. Ezra Pound phrased it beautifully when he said in his *ABC of Reading* that literature is language charged with meaning. The concept of meaning is a challenge of its own to which many have responded with wisdom and advice. Stepping out of the world of language and literature, one comes across similar

insights into the meaning of life. Suffice it to mention a famous theoretical physicist and populariser of science, Michio Kaku, who claims following Freud that beyond work and love, what gives meaning to our life is, first, to fulfil whatever talents we are born with, and second, "we should try to leave the world a better place than when we entered it. As individuals, we can make a difference, whether it is to probe the secrets of Nature, to clean up the environment and work for peace and social justice, or to nurture the inquisitive, vibrant spirit of the young by being a mentor and a guide" (Kaku 2005, 358).

Going back to the world of words, Pound rounds off his metaphor saying that great literature is simply charged with meaning to the utmost degree. If there is any room to develop this idea, then one may suggest that the greatest literature is the one that induces change, changing the community through the agency of the changing individual. Change in this sense equals meaning. To quote John Steinbeck from his Nobel Prize acceptance speech, "I hold that a writer who does not passionately believe in the perfectibility of man has no dedication nor any membership in literature." Perfectibility naturally implies the ability to change and the purpose of literature is to offer alternative models of existence for the individual stuck in an impasse that manifests itself as lack of options.

The contradictory nature of modern society seemingly opens the door to opportunity, allowing the individual free choice and conditions for improvement, but showing all signs of maladjustment, alienation and unhappiness. The optimistic attitude of Michio Kaku that we can make a difference in our small part of the world is worth considering. He is a person who received guidance and help as a child to reach the pinnacles of science which proves his belief that one can cause change in different ways. The co-founders of Challenge Day hold the same ideal dear to their hearts: "To inspire people to be the change they wish to see in the world, starting with ourselves, through compassion and service using the formula for change – notice, choose, and act." Their vision is that every child lives in a world where they feel safe, loved and celebrated. Using the slogan 'Be the change' they have been empowering the young in schools since 1987 to deal with their personal, family and communal problems through interaction with their peers. In a short leap this takes us to theoreticians like Homi Bhabha and the idea of an *empowering community* of revisionary values which is not closed to tradition but is at the same time wide open to 'empowerment' as an invitation to experiment with newer self-identifications. Change has its challenges and these are some of the ways our time responds to them.

The collection of papers *Challenging Change: Literary and Linguistic Responses* aims at illustrating different changes the authors found significant primarily in the spheres of literary and linguistic studies. The volume opens with the provocatively-titled essay "Why Making Love Isn't What It Used To Be" in which Fraser Sutherland examines the phenomenon of semantic change by revisiting the work of Anthony Trollope and some other Victorian men of letters. Reading literature, he follows the semantic drift through which a word or a phrase slowly and subtly evolves from one sense to another. The examples chosen are amusing and instructive, and especially the one about the phrase from the title is worth quoting fully:

The curious thing about *make love* is that in English the phrase early on both referred to wooing and to sexual intercourse. The 2009 online edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* gives the initial date of 1567, the citation taken from *Certaine Tragicall Discourses of Bandello*, translated from the French by Geoffrey Fenton: "The attire of a Cortisan, or woman makynge loue." Yet euphemistic usage was firmly entrenched by the early seventeenth century, and remained so into the early twentieth. As early as 1927, the language commentator Michael Quinion notes, the *OED* defined *make love* as "To engage in sexual intercourse, esp. considered as an act of love." Quinion observes, "By the 1940s, it was common to find it in novels in the sense we now know it. It's in George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* of 1949, for example: "When you make love you're using up energy; and afterwards you feel happy and don't give a damn for anything.""

Similar semantic shift characterises many other language segments so Sutherland points out that the history of a word does not occur in isolation. The processes of semantic change occur within language, while language itself exists within a social and cultural context, meaning that language changes indicate the change of social climate and values.

The next two articles of this volume challenge the notion of gender dynamics examining it in the genres of the novel and the play coming from different cultures and different periods but having in common the narrative strategies related to gender representations. Vladislava Gordić Petković reads a novel by Serbian writer Mirjana Novaković, *Fear and its Servant* in full awareness that the rise of gender studies brought a substantial change to the treatment of male and female characters reflecting the changing priorities of the literature and its altered role in a changing world. She claims that contemporary Serbian fiction has established itself as a hybrid of three narrative strategies: postmodern textual play, the rewriting of history, and obsessive confession, to which the novel in question bears testimony, dealing with a fascinating account of the hunt for vampires in the 18th century Belgrade. Through the

interplay of two narratives, his-story and her-story, Mirjana Novaković subverts the gender roles. The "he" who tells his story is the Devil himself, the false count Otto von Hausburg, whereas "herstory" comes from Maria Augusta, Princess of Thurn und Taxis, wife to the regent of Serbia. The paper "Gender as the Force of Character Change: When the Princess Met the Devil in Disguise" questions the ontology of fictional characters and also shows that "the seemingly frail and fragile Princess is a shrewd observer and a skillful conspirator who uses the paradigm of feminine traits as a disguise for her political concerns while the Devil in disguise is exposed in his inability to solve the mystery on which his life largely depends." Vladislava Gordić Petković concludes that this Gothic novel exposes political manipulation and struggle for power through unexpected gender representations.

The article "Transmutations of Gender in Tennessee Williams' Plays" centres on the analysis of transgressive gendering of characters, where they are rendered wanting in prototypical cultural assumptions and stereotypes. Aleksandra Žeželj shows that in Williams' hovering distribution of gender, men and women alike are heroic and anti-heroic, virile and effeminate, subverting conventional dominance-subordination relations. Williams deconstructs the system of binary oppositions and forever alters and reconfigures the American 20th-century drama scene by transforming gender roles where patriarchal normativities change into more complex asymmetrical interdependencies. Žeželj contends that the deconstruction is portrayed through the characters' inability to come to terms with their sexuality which is often rendered through the images of mutilation, dismemberment, fragmentation, dislocation, and even devouring.

These two articles prove the prominence of gender oriented criticism characteristic of the second half of 20th century, erasing clear boundaries between masculinity and femininity, and proving gender a cultural construct. The four texts that follow them have in common a concept of the Other marking the last few decades of critical thought. Beginning with Hegel (*Phenomenology of Spirit*, 1807) and especially with Edward Said, (*Orientalism*, 1978), the Other emerges as an inevitable ingredient of critical discourse, from gender studies to analyses of imperialism and post-colonialism. Especially in Diaspora studies does the Other assume the central place, as shown in the papers "Inglan is a bitch – Voices of the Silenced in Linton Kwesi Johnson's Poetry," "From Great Expectations to Harsh Reality: Immigrant Experience in Himani Bannerji's *On A Cold Day*" and "The Bitterness of the Promised Land: Cultural Changes as Seen by Milosavljević." Faruk Bajraktarević points out that diverse 'imported' forms of artistic expression have played a crucial role in voicing the

presence of the Other in the UK, highlighting the necessity of redefining the idea of Britishness by opening up new spaces for the inclusion of 'peripheral' constituents. Milena Kostić focuses on the position of women in the contemporary Canadian society, showing how Bannerji's story exposes multiple forms of oppression and silencing on the grounds of class, race, and gender. Vesna Lopičić suggests that the immigrant author's own ambivalence concerning his new homeland is shared by many who have to negotiate the relationship between two cultures from the position of the Other. Whether a Jamaican Creole in London, an Indian in Toronto, or a Serbian in Canada, they all have to negotiate the difference, visible or not, developing different forms of cultural hybridity and thus fighting against racial/ethnic marginalization. Managing diversity proves to be the problem not only of the immigrant Other but also of the host culture, officially embracing multiculturalism. In the case of Canada that becomes even more complex since the Acadians (French-speaking Canadians from the Maritime Provinces, east of Quebec) have for centuries been faced with the cultural crisis of being linguistically and economically dominated by the English-speaking majority, thus becoming the symbolic Other in their own country. Christina Keppie in her paper "Tradition or Empowerment? The Battle of the Acadian Capital(s)" shows the desire of the Acadians to remain culturally distinct by maintaining their traditional values and ways of living which is juxtaposed by their concurrent desire to grow alongside globalization as a modern and urban community.

David Almond's young adult novel *Clay*, Conrad's seminal work *Lord Jim*, and Ronan Bennett's historical novel *Havoc, in Its Third Year*, are the three novels explored by Danijela Petković, Nataša Tučev, and Lejla Mulalić respectively. The theme of change is identified and pursued in different ways in their illuminating articles. The first one, "The Metamorphosis of an Altar Boy, the Genesis of a Monster: David Almond's *Clay*," questions the romanticized/Romantic views of children, artists, outcasts and Promethean overreachers exposing them as problematic, while following the genesis of a monster in this magical realist adaptation of Shelley's *Frankenstein*. The second one explores what it means to be the 'keeper' of a guilty man, discussing Marlow's psychological motivation for such commitment and the way he manages to interact with Jim without losing his moral compass. At the same time, the author demonstrates that Marlow's behaviour in this respect represents a positive change when compared to the dominant cultural attitudes. The third article discusses the ways in which Bennett represents the otherness of the past, set in a time of severe Puritan oppression and anti-Catholic hysteria in 17th century England. The focus is on the author's use of the language of corporeality, sexuality,

madness and poverty in representing marginalized groups within an utterly unstable and insecure moment of political change in England.

The next segment explores the world of modern Romanian, Bosnian, and Moldavian poetry within the discourse of change, as seen by Alina Țenescu, Tatjana Bijelić and Mihaela Albu. As indicated by the title, "Space, Body and Change in the Architecture of Postmodern Poetry," the body is related to the architecture of place and space so that postmodern poetry relies on the changes of spatial relations and conceptual metaphors related to the body. Alina Țenescu analyses Elena Vlădăreanu's collection *Private Space* organizing conceptualizations of the body into several categories of cognitive metaphors related to the body, using a model inspired by the research of Lakoff and Johnson. Putting moral responsibility at the forefront of the contemporary agenda as stressed by the title "It's a shame to be without an attitude: a view on cutting-edge poetry from Bosnia", Tatjana Bijelić illustrates recent changes in the way certain poets converse with and challenge patriarchal values and status quo. The four poets in question respond to the 1990s war proving that the new voices are socially aware, disruptive and keen on voicing the Other at the same time producing freshness and new directions in the literature and culture of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Also cutting-edge Moldavian polemic poetry is discussed in the essay "The 2000 Generation of Moldavian (Bessarabian) Poets and their New Discourse." Mihaela Albu contends that their hybrid poems adopt the "fracturist" style and break the limits looking for the identity of the subject and for an active, participative receptor, reinventing a literary ideology of authenticity. The specific characteristic of the 2000 Generation poetry is the denying of the conventional textualism of the '80s postmodern generation, the predilection of an aggressive position towards the common language, and also of the colloquial-argotic speech (frequently pornographic).

These are some of the approaches through which poetry, and literature in general, engages in a dialogue with the community via an active reader who becomes the object and the agent of change. The language as an instrument for articulating alternative models of existence often imperceptibly permeates the pores of the emerging system of values.

The second section of this volume, *Linguistic responses*, contains ten articles which deal with the notion of change and variation in language taken both as the formal system and the usage system. The authors trace diachronic changes and examine historical, sociolinguistic, discourse, syntactic and lexical variations, mostly in the English language, but also

cross-linguistically, as well as compared and contrasted with some other languages, such as Serbian and Romanian.

Since language does not exist *per se*, despite sometimes being studied only as the abstract system, most authors recognize the significance of social factors and culture which serve both as the background and facilitators for the development and spreading of changes and variations of various features of a language, aspects of its use, and the attitudes towards not only language varieties but also to the study of language in general. Exploring changes in language, the authors deal both with internal and external sources of these changes, and address the issues such as the complexity of the language system as well as the social and cultural context of language communication, conventionalization of changes in the language use at the lexical level, contacts with other languages and cultures, and social differentiation.

In linguistics, traditionally, examining language change primarily refers to the study of diachronic changes of certain language categories and features, viewed either as purely linguistic phenomena or as induced by socio-historical factors. The first four papers in the linguistic section primarily adopt this historical approach.

In the opening article "On change in the concept of time: future tense and language contact" Junichi Toyota examines the phenomenon of the absence of a specific future tense in a number of world languages. This does not, however, mean that speakers do not understand the concept of future. They indeed understand it, but they simply do not have a means to express this specific concept of time. Toyota argues that the emergence of the future tense is related to various socio-historical factors, such as an idea of afterlife/reincarnation, i.e. those cultures without reincarnation fear death due to uncertainty after death and fear and uncertainty can be considered necessary elements in creating a specific future tense. This may explain the distribution of overtly-marked future tense in different languages. However, what is interesting is that in contact-induced changes, the future tense is often copied. This fact also reinforces the idea that human beings can comprehend the concept of future, but due to socio-historical factors, this tense may not be necessarily overtly expressed. There is a wide diversity of future tense forms in different languages, but the concept of the future tense seems to have always been present in our conceptualisation of time. Thus, something in grammar has changed, but the underlying concept may remain as it has been.

Vladan Pavlović, on the other hand, adopts a strictly linguistic viewpoint to analyze two pseudo-passive constructions in English from the perspective of diachronic change, exemplified in a) *The vase is broken. That is*

forgotten, (cf. **(Everyone) forgets that / (Everyone) has forgotten that*), and b) *He is come to town, He is gone to London, I'm finished with boxing* (cf. **(Somebody) comes him to town / He has come to town*). The author notices various synchronic similarities and differences between these two constructions in English, on the one hand, and comparable constructions in German – the construction *sein/werden + Partizip Perfekt* (eg. *Das ist vergessen / Das wurde vergessen*) and the construction *sein/haben + Partizip Perfekt* (eg. *Er ist in die Stadt gekommen / Ich habe das nicht gesehen*), respectively, on the other hand. The synchronic similarities and differences within each of the pairs of constructions are, in turn, explored from the diachronic point of view in greater detail.

In the article "Arising adverbs" Pernilla Hallonsten examines a complex category of adverbs, which are often considered too diverse to group together as one coherent category, in spite of numerous attempts to retain this traditional division. The author examines them against the background of their different developmental paths and notices that cross-linguistically adverbs can be observed to arise in remarkably different ways. Studying these changes over time, Hallonsten claims that at least a partial explanation can be given regarding the ambiguous character of this lexical category.

Finally, the paper by Ana Halas "The Change in the Form of the Present Perfect in Middle English" investigates the development of the present perfect in ME and its change into the present-day form. Perfect-like structures have their roots in OE as complex structures consisting of an auxiliary verb which was either *wesan/bēon* (to be) or *habban* (have) and a past participle form. It is presupposed that it was in the ME period when the early traces of the future loss of the verb *wesan/bēon* as the auxiliary of the present perfect can be noticed. The author examined the corpus consisting of two collections of letters (the Paston and the Stonor families) and revealed general characteristics of the language change in question. Furthermore, since the two families occupy different positions in the social hierarchy, the comparison of the two collections regarding the form of the present perfect provided an insight into the influence of social class as a factor in the change of the present perfect structures.

Another way of exploring language change is to examine variations and changes manifested in various types of discourses, focusing on the complexity of social, historical and cultural contexts where language communication takes place, and this is the approach of the next three articles in the linguistic section. In the article "Inaugural Speeches from George Washington to Barack Obama: a Change Caught in Action – From a Speech to a Convention" Aleksandar Kavgić presents a linguistic analysis of US presidents' inaugural addresses from a sociohistorical and syntactic

perspective. Using the methodology of corpus linguistics (annotating verb phrases with tense and time-reference tags, together with a set of sub-tags for aspect, voice, mood and modality), Kavgić performed a statistical analysis of the corpus focusing on the frequency of particular verb constructions and time-references in each of the analyzed speeches. Statistical data revealed that inaugural speeches have undergone a diachronic sociolinguistic change, since they have transformed from relatively spontaneous political speeches into a highly rigid, conventionalized form of addressing the US public.

Jovana Dimitrijević Savić in her paper "Tracking Language Variation across the Teens: Some Sociolinguistic Aspects of Slang in Serbia" examines the social distribution of certain slang items in the creation and display of youth identity. Unlike most of the research on youth slang in Serbia, which has been restricted to the lexicographic documentation, semantic classification, and etymological description of slang terms, in this study teenage slang is approached from a variationist point of view. Starting from the assumption that youth language, and especially youth slang as its integral part, is a prime source of information about linguistic change, the author presents a corpus-based quantitative analysis of patterns of age- and gender-based variations, concluding that youth slang plays a significant role not only in language change but also in creating social and interactional youth identities.

Madalina Cerban in the article "Lexical Changes in Romanian political discourse after 1989" analyzes borrowings and calques from English, paying special attention to the semantic changes they undergo when used in the Romanian language as well as pointing out the difficulties of translating, rephrasing or writing them. After explaining the linguistic and non-linguistic causes that have led to this phenomenon and classifying the lexical items formally, including an important class of lexical figures of speech represented by metonymies, clichés and lexicalized metaphors, Cerban discusses the changes in meaning of these new terms. To a large extent the meanings are extended, being used with both their original meanings, as well as with new meanings in a particular Romanian context, but there are also some items that have lost some of their original meanings and are used restrictively in Romanian.

The final three papers depart from the dominant historical or sociolinguistic discourse approaches to language change and focus on changes and variations in language structure and language system in the domains of syntax and the lexicon. In the paper "Word Order (Seemingly) out of Order" Biljana Mišić Ilić deals with word order changes, which have always been an interesting and diverse area of study, both diachronically and

synchronically, and views them as the variations in sentence word order, more specifically, as non-canonical word order constructions in particular languages. After a brief overview of several approaches to the study of word order variations, the paper illustrates a combination of a syntactic and pragmatic approach, which is primarily based on the notion of information structure but takes into consideration other discourse aspects as well. This approach is illustrated by analyzing several non-canonical preposing constructions in English declarative sentences. Mišić Ilić argues that word order variations are not simply a matter of stylistic idiosyncratic choices but an issue that opens many questions relevant for the linguistically significant notions and links between linearity, hierarchy, iconicity, propositional meaning and discourse functions. The author hopes to show that discourse-related approaches offer a promising path for the study of word order variations, both in particular languages and cross-linguistically.

In the theoretical model of cognitive linguistics, the two final articles deal with the semantic changes due to conventionalization processes such as metaphor and metonymy. In the article "Meaning Shifts in Interpreting Visuo-Spatial Bodily Idioms", Dušan Stamenković analyzes various changes in interpretations of idiomatic meaning based on the error analyses of the corpus of student translations of English idioms into Serbian. Although there was a high level of understanding, the noted misinterpretations and altered meanings are extremely valuable clues, because they can reveal the steps in the understanding, including various visuo-spatial configurations, common beliefs linked to body parts, metonymy, pronoun usage, and the like. The author believes that in turn, all this might reveal some facets of the conceptualization of visuo-spatial metaphorical expressions, regardless of the language they originate from. Stefania Alina Cherata starts from a well-established fact in linguistic theory that words designating concrete entities are often used figuratively to convey more abstract meanings and explores metonymy as a source of linguistic change in the formation of English colour terms. Cherata provides a classification of the contiguity relations at work in metonymic colour naming on the basis of an etymological analysis, for instance from the names of animals, plants, dyes, textiles or precious stones. The etymological discussion is complemented by the use of cognitive frames to shed light on the cultural nature of many of the associations leading to the formation of colour metonyms, thus emphasising, as many times in this volume of papers, the interplay of culture and change.

In our times of great changes, when the only constant seems to be the change itself, the authors of the articles collected in the volume *Challenging Change: Literary and Linguistic Response* responded to the

challenge and approached the notion of change from the perspectives of literary criticism and linguistics, examining change understood in the broadest sense as the need of the modern man to redefine, revise, deconstruct and reconstruct previous theories, histories, moralities, social relationships, forms of language and language use. Owing to its wide scope, both regarding the covered topics and the theoretical approaches, we hope that the book can be a challenge for the readers as well.

Bibliography

- Bhabha, Homi. 2007. "Introduction." *Intervention Architecture: Building for Change*. London: I. B. Tauris & Company, Limited.
- Hegel, G.W.F. 1977. *Phenomenology of Spirit*, translated by A.V. Miller. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Kaku, Michio. 2005. *Parallel Worlds*. New York: Doubleday.
- Said, Edward W. 1978. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Steinbeck, John. "Banquet Speech," Nobel Foundation, http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1962/steinbeck-speech.html
- "The Challenge Day Vision & Mission." <http://www.challengeday.org/>

CHAPTER TWENTY TWO
MEANING SHIFTS IN INTERPRETING
VISUO-SPATIAL BODILY IDIOMS
DUŠAN STAMENKOVIĆ

1. Introduction

1.1. Idiomatic Meaning and Change

Changes in meaning can often reveal more than we expect to find in them, depending on the approach we choose. Starting from the diachronic approach, which can reveal various phases of development of language and the human mind, and the panchronic manner, which employs 'timeless' studies in order to find universal patterns in language practice, we come to the synchronic approach, whose purposes can be very diverse. They range between microlinguistic investigations of particular words and structures and macrolinguistic experiments, which have the power of exposing more information on the functioning of the human brain. In this paper, various changes in interpretations of idiomatic meaning will be exploited for the purpose of revealing some facets of the conceptualization of visuo-spatial metaphorical expressions. Furthermore, this could bring us a bit closer towards understanding the ways in which we approach metaphorical thought, since it will attempt to discover reasons for different metaphorical interpretations of the same expressions.

1.2. General Framework

This paper is an offshoot of a larger study, which tried to evaluate the interpretation of literally translated English idioms by Serbian students (Antović and Stamenković 2011). The details of the study will be published separately, whilst the focus in this paper will be on one of the three idiom groups used in it. The study was triggered by the 2008 debate between Gibbs and Mandler (Gibbs 2008, 231–238; Mandler 2008a, 207–223; 2008b, 269–279). One of the central questions in this debate was whether the development

of concepts can rely almost solely on spatial relations (as in Mandler 2006, 66–77) or be a result of embodiment (as in Gibbs 2006, 79–100).

The idioms used in the study were selected from the *Cambridge International Dictionary of Idioms* (1998) and *Oxford Dictionary of Idioms* (1999). They had no direct equivalents in Serbian and were classified into three groups: (a) **visuo-spatial bodily idioms**, i.e. idioms referring to the body for whose interpretation visual perception seemed necessary (e.g. *He keeps his head down*); (b) **bodily idioms**, i.e. idioms referring to the body for whose interpretation visual perception did not seem necessary (e.g. *She has a sweet tooth*); (c) **non-bodily idioms**, i.e. idioms with no reference to the body (e.g. *You're in your cups*). All the idioms were literally translated into Serbian and used in neutral contexts. A group of sixty students of mechanical engineering (most of whom had no or very little formal training in English) and thirty students of English were assigned the task of interpreting their figurative meanings.

Briefly, the results show that the bodily idioms with a visuo-spatial component were understood best, followed by the idioms referring to the body only and, finally, the non-bodily idioms. Not only was the first group understood better than the other two, but it also proved to be the most interesting for error analysis. The answers that were labelled partially correct and partially wrong (values 2 and 3 on the scale¹) showed patterns in shifting the original meaning that could be attributed to various reasons related to the body, vision, spatial relations, culture and the subjects' mother tongue. The main purpose of this paper is to explore and investigate these reasons for misinterpretation.

The focus in this paper will be on the shifted meanings which emerged from the process of (mis)interpretation of the first group of idioms. These idioms will be defined (section 1.2) and the methodology for the analysis of the responses will be presented, along with the aims of the paper (section 1.3). In the main part of the paper (section 2), the responses with values 2 and 3 will be analysed. The answers analysed will be selected by another criterion – only those given by the sixty students of mechanical engineering will enter the paper's corpus. The analysis will then be contrasted with the responses to the remaining two idiom groups (section 3), after which some conclusions will be drawn (section 4).

¹ The answers were classified into five groups: Value 4 – completely correct; Value 3 – partially correct; Value 2 – answers showing the understanding that there was a metaphor, but with the idiom misinterpreted; Value 1 – answers with no understanding of the metaphor; Value 0 – no answer (Antović and Stamenković 2011). The answers having the values 0 and 1 will not be included in the analysis.

1.3. Visuo-spatial Bodily Idioms

The idioms belonging to the first group, labelled *visuo-spatial bodily idioms*, were classified as such for the following reasons: (a) all of them clearly refer to a body part; (b) in each of them we encounter movement, transition, positioning or a change of state, all of these being related to a certain spatial configuration of objects. It can be assumed that such spatial configurations most likely require vision in order to be perceived and, in turn, understood (literally or figuratively). The role of vision and its relevance to their interpretation is yet to be investigated and confirmed, although the importance of vision in the process of concept building has already been stressed (Arnheim 1969, 13–37; Mandler 2006, 41–51; 66–78). What is common to most of them is that whenever the subjects misinterpreted and changed their meanings, the shifted meanings still made sense (were 'logical' to a certain degree) and the interpretation still remained in the field of metaphor.

With these idioms, we will frequently encounter metonymic vehicles, as very many correct and incorrect interpretations could be categorized as the PART FOR WHOLE relation (linked with synecdoche in Saeed 2003, 352). Categorizing them as metonymic is in accordance with Langacker's notion of salience (concrete>abstract) (Langacker 1993, 30). The particular metonymic strategies employed in these idioms could be labelled A BODY PART FOR THE WHOLE BODY (and MIND within it). Besides this, many visuo-spatial relations used in the idioms in question express *image schematic* features (more on image schemas in Johnson 1987). The 'ease' that is felt in the process of interpreting them could correlate with that of understanding orientational metaphors (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 16–21). The links with orientational metaphors will aid the analysis of interpretations of a certain number of idioms.

1.4. Aims, Corpus and Methodology

The main aim of this paper is not to check whether visuo-spatial bodily idioms are understood better than the rest, but to analyse what led the subjects to make wrong conclusions about the figurative meanings of the presented sentences. The analysis of the wrong or partially wrong answers might provide some feedback on how people use visuo-spatial arrangements to grasp metaphors unknown to them. It is expected that the visuo-spatial component would aid the process of meaning construction. Those metaphors in which the role of the human body is considered to be central to their

meaning are among the most universal around the globe (Kövecses 2006, 4–34) and that is why these particular metaphors were selected in this study. These two components, the visuo-spatial and the bodily, both played their own roles in the construction of the supposed meanings of our examples. The influence of the mother tongue and culture can be regarded as the other two crucial 'guides' in the process of understanding the misinterpreted English idioms.

The corpus of the paper contains 1,200 responses to 20 idioms given by the mentioned group of 60 Serbian students of mechanical engineering. Most of them had very little formal training in English and their English knowledge levels implied that they had not encountered the majority of idioms used in our study. The responses of the group of 30 students of English are going to be excluded from the analysis, as they are less diverse and more correct. This seems to be a direct outcome of their knowledge of English. The fact that they had encountered a number of these idioms accounts for the higher rate of correct answers, while their knowledge of other structures and word meanings explains the similar responses (which suppressed diversity).

The methodology employed in the paper will be a qualitative sentence-by-sentence analysis of all the examples from the first group of idioms. The wrong and still metaphorical answers will be extracted and classified based on the reason for misinterpretation – the reasons are in some cases obvious, whereas in certain instances we may encounter a number of possibilities stemming from various cognitive, linguistic and cultural sources. In all the examples, the idioms are used in a neutral context, in the same way they were used in the initial study.

2. Analysis

2.1. She is Head over Heels

Instead of interpreting this expression as 'being very much in love', many of our subjects opted for 'she is very haughty/stuck up/stuffed up' or 'she is excessively proud'. The main reason for this seems to be the fact that the (extremely) elevated position of the head is usually interpreted as 'thinking that you are above others' or 'not caring about anything that happens around you'. The second reason could be the existence of similar expressions in Serbian (*digla je nos* = 'she has raised her nose', which is similar to the English expression 'turn your nose up at somebody' and *digla se* (coll.) = 'she has gone up'). Nevertheless, even in the latter case,

the visuo-spatial configuration of the head of the person in question is still high and can be linked to the original misinterpretation, regardless of the fact that the head is not explicitly mentioned. The other group of wrong answers referred to this expression as 'being smart/thinking with her own head'. In this case, the lifted position of the head was linked to intellect along the lines of the VIRTUE IS UP/DEPRAVITY IS DOWN metaphor (as described in Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 17).

2.2. It is out of my Hands

Very many subjects interpreted this idiom correctly, as 'being difficult or impossible to control'. However, a group of them internalized the reason for this lack of control. They described the person in question as being incapable of controlling the situation. The use of the possessive form of 'I' could be the main reason for this shift of meaning. The other large group of interpretations can be described as 'being out of reach'. Here, it seems that the metonymic principles which exist in the original interpretation as well as in the first group of misinterpretations are at least partly lost. The reason for this change could be found in the fact that in the course of the development of our species, we have predominantly been using our hands to *reach* objects (along with some other basic actions, such as grabbing, picking, catching and manipulating). Reaching is seen as a primary function of the hands. If something is positioned as out of hand, then this logically makes it out of reach in the eyes of those who are not acquainted with the conventionalized expression.

2.3. She has Cried her Eyes out

Visualizing the eyes literally falling out of the eye sockets due to crying was more than enough for the vast majority of subjects to interpret this idiom as 'crying too much'. A minority of them made wild guesses such as 'she was sad' or 'she has suffered way too much'. In both cases, we may say that the subjects attempted to 'overmetaphorize' the expression, as the right interpretation may have seemed to be too obvious to them. They simply transferred the literal action of crying to the field of sadness. In the latter of the two examples, the intensity seems to be more or less unchanged, while in the former one, the intensity is obviously lowered.

2.4. He Follows his Nose

Those who were unable to interpret this idiom as 'he acts according to what seems right or reasonable, rather than following any particular rules' described its meaning as 'he trusts himself/has no confidence in others' or 'he sticks his nose everywhere'. Both of them seem to have preserved the link between the concrete domain of smell and the abstract domain of instinct, which is in accordance with *the Mind-as-Body metaphor* (Sweetser 1990, 23–30). The reason for the first interpretation could be found in the fact that the nose replaces the eyes in the course of orientation. In the new reality, where the nose seems to be the only guide, the person in question is segregated from the rest of the world. This interpretation is close to those we had in example 2.1 (the one with the raised head position). The second modified interpretation is most likely connected to the expression 'to poke/stick your nose into something', which exists in both English and Serbian.

2.5. She Forces his Hand

The correct interpretation of this idiom would be 'she makes him do something that he does not want to do or makes him do it sooner than he had intended.' The first group of changed meanings clusters around the interpretation 'she has control over him'. Here, we are facing an overextension of the idiom's meaning – forcing one's hand is seen beyond a particular situation. The idiom is instead interpreted as an almost permanent state, but the metonymic strategy governing the original idiomatic meaning seems to be almost intact. The second major group of shifted interpretations includes those in which forcing one's hand was seen as 'refusing him or forcing him away from here.' In this interpretation, the action stemming from the idiom appears to be decomposed – it becomes divided into the presupposed previous action (of *him* approaching *her*) and the present action of forcing one's hand. In the previous action it is presupposed that 'he' tried to reach 'her' with his hand (not physically, but metaphorically, to get closer to her). *Her* response to his attempt involves forcing *his* hand away. The 'away' part of the changed meaning seems to originate from the Serbian verb *terati* (used in the translation of *force*), which can equally mean 'force away'. With this second interpretation, metonymy appears to be almost completely neutralized.

2.6. He has a Finger in Every Pie

A vast majority of the subjects managed to interpret this idiom correctly – 'he tries to be involved in a lot of different activities and tries to have influence over them, especially when other people think that this is annoying.' There were some variations, such as 'he likes to control things' or 'he pokes his nose into everything', but they all led to more or less acceptable answers. Very few wrong responses include interpretations such as 'he desires everything', 'he likes to eat much' or 'he is voracious'. In all three of these, the action of sticking one's finger in every pie is linked to some sort of gluttony – in some interpretations it is vague and general; in those which can be labelled as less metaphorical, *his* desire is limited to food (due to the fact that pies are mentioned). The metonymic nature of this idiom seems to be preserved in all the correct and incorrect interpretations.

2.7. He has a Hand in it

Most of the subjects managed to grasp that this idiom expresses something that we can label 'being actively engaged or remain in the practice doing something'. Nevertheless, some of them added more meaning to it. What can be read from their shifted interpretations is that they probably had some sort of feeling that this action is irritating to a certain degree (reminiscent of the previous idiom, 2.6). So, their interpretations included sentences such as 'he interferes or meddles with it.' Some answers went further from the correct meaning of this expression – additional interpretations of the idiom involved examples such as 'he is good at something' and 'he controls it'. In the first case, a hand seems to be connected with skilfulness, so having a hand in something logically means that you are skilful at it. In the second example, hands appear to serve as an association for having control over something. In both of these cases, the existence of a metaphor was recognized, but due to other factors, namely because of the common associations linked to the human hand, they were partly misinterpreted. Metonymy was preserved in all the interpretations, excluding the one which involved skilfulness.

2.8. You have Your Back to the Wall

In interpreting the metaphorical meaning of 'having one's back to the wall,' very few subjects managed to understand it correctly in its entirety

(as 'being in a difficult situation in which you are forced to do something, but are unable to make the choices that you would like'). One third of them interpreted it as 'being in trouble' or 'having no options', most probably due to the influence of the idiom 'being driven up to the wall' from Serbian (meaning 'to be in trouble'). Another third of them understood it as 'being supported or protected' – a very likely reason for this is another Serbian idiom – 'to keep/save one's back', which means 'to protect.' Even if we disregard the impact of the Serbian idiom in this instance, we may suppose that securing the human back, as the organ which supports the whole of our body, by means of the wall, would mean protecting the body's entirety. The remaining responses can be grouped around the meaning 'you are cautious'. Having one's back to the wall is here interpreted as hiding oneself from someone or something, the wall serving as a factor of concealment or protection. In this interpretation, one's back and his or her very being seems to be in some sort of danger. The latter two misinterpreted variations of the idiom seem to possess a higher degree of metonymy than featured in the original meaning.

2.9. She Keeps them at Arm's Length

Besides the fact that many of our subjects managed to interpret it correctly, as 'she avoids having a close relationship with them' or 'she keeps a distance', there were some of them who shifted the idiom's meaning in at least two major directions. The first one is only a small variation on the original meaning – the idiom was interpreted as 'she is cautious.' In this case, we could conclude that the interpretation is still linked to metaphorical distance, but it gets metaphorized further to create a novel emotional state or a state of mind. The other main group of changed meanings is related to the interpretation 'she is keeping them apart.' In this example, the usage of *them* appears to be responsible for the 'multiplication' of this idiom's action pattern – it practically gets doubled. Instead of keeping *them* at a distance from *her*, she tries to separate some other parties, more precisely, to create a buffer zone between them.

2.10. He Keeps his Head down

Instead of comprehending this idiom as 'he avoids attracting attention to himself', the majority of the subjects seems to have relied on other aspects created by the visual configuration induced by the very idiom.

Lowering one's head for many of them meant 'being ashamed or humiliated.' The reason of this could be found in the idea that the position of the head is frequently associated with shame and disgrace is usually a ducked one. Another changed interpretation is quite close to this one – the ones who interpreted it as 'being humble or modest' possibly had a similar set of links in their mind. The image of one's head bent down can also create a sense of humility, which is frequently in correlation with modesty. The third group of these shifted interpretations referred to this expression as 'he is fearful or not courageous enough.' We may say that keeping one's head down gives a sense of hiding from someone – instead of understanding it as 'avoiding attention', some of the subjects saw it as being unable to face someone. These alternative interpretations can be connected to a set of orientational metaphors (e.g. HAVING CONTROL OR FORCE IS UP/BEING SUBJECT TO CONTROL OR FORCE IS DOWN; HIGH STATUS IS UP/ LOW STATUS IS DOWN) (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 15–18).

2.11. She has Laughed her Head off

Laughing her head off was in many cases interpreted correctly, as 'she laughed loudly, excessively or for a long time.' However, some variations on the correct meaning emerged in the process. One group of the subjects understood this idiom as 'she laughed at herself.' This is most likely to have happened due to the usage of 'her', which remained in the Serbian translation and led the subjects to think that the direction of laughter is in the focus of this idiom. Another group of them interpreted it as 'she has gone insane.' We might find the reason for this in the fact that the image created by this interpretation is way too extreme and might lead the interpreter towards the conclusion that something serious has happened to *her head*. Moreover, excessive laughter is usually a symptom of some sorts of madness. The third and the smallest group of subjects grasped this idiom as 'she is stupid', which seems to be a generalization of the image created by the idiom and a result of the subjects' attitude towards laughter.

2.12. He Let his Hair down

This idiom is one of those with very few diverse responses – there were those who interpreted it as they should have, 'to relax and enjoy yourself, especially in a lively way', but we are unable to group those who shifted its meaning. These remaining answers include: 'he is poetic', 'he is

sloppy', 'he is crazy', 'he lives his own life.' Except for the last response, which can be linked to the correct meaning, 'he is poetic', 'he is sloppy', 'he is crazy' appear to be mere generalizations of a subject's attitudes or feelings towards the action contained in the idiom. These interpretations can be linked with the process previously labelled 'overmetaphorization.'

2.13. It is on Everyone's Lips

The correct response in this case would be 'they are all talking about it' and the subjects invented a number of variations on it – 'they are slandering', 'they are defaming', 'it's an open secret' and 'it's a lie'. The third solution seems to be the most general of the four, while the ones dealing with slandering and defaming represent similar 'specializations' of spreading the word. Connotations in these two instances are much more adverse than in the case of the neutral understanding. The last shifted interpretation, 'it's a lie', is a further step in the course of specialization, as it indicates the type of word that is being spread. All the completely wrong answers were literal, which means that they will not enter the analysis.

2.14. He has Put his Back into it

Along with interpreting this idiom as 'he has used a lot of effort and energy on a particular task', our subjects provided partially wrong, shifted responses, which can be classified into two major groups. The first group includes answers that can be classified under the definition 'he is in trouble/danger.' In this case, the crucial reason for connecting this idiom to trouble or danger seems to be the usage of the noun *back*. In Serbian, the back is usually connected to the issues related to one's very life – if someone is 'working around one's back' (in Serbian) he or she is threatening one's life, so this interpretation seems to be directly influenced by the subjects' mother tongue. The other changed meaning is linked to the interpretation 'he became obstinate in doing it.' It is quite clear that in this instance our subjects intensified the original meaning of the idiom for no obvious reason. In any case, the metonymic characteristics supporting this idiom seem to have been maintained throughout all the interpreting procedures.

2.15. He has Put his Foot in his Mouth

There were not many subjects who managed to interpret this sentence as 'he has said or done something that upset, offended or embarrassed somebody.' Among the wrong responses, very many were literal interpretations, but there were also a couple of them which showed that our subjects recognized the existence of metaphor in this expression. Some of them understood this expression as 'he is reserved' – for them, the visuo-spatial setup triggered by the expression seems to have evoked the feature of being silent and this is probably the key reason to their changed interpretation. Another interpretation inspired by the specific imagery (visuo-spatial setup) that this idiom sets is 'he has done the impossible' – putting one's foot into one's mouth appears to be a hard task, so this is what made them connect it to an impossible action. The third shifted interpretation, 'he has broken his promise,' can be seen as an alternation of the correct understanding – the difference is in the fact that this alternative interpretation seems to be more specific.

2.16. Her Blood is up

The largest group of the subjects 'weakened' the intensity of the correct interpretation of this idiom ('she is very angry and ready to argue or fight,' which seems to be linked with the RATIONAL IS UP/EMOTIONAL IS DOWN metaphor) (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 18). They interpreted it as 'she is excited or stirred up,' most probably due to the existence of a similar bodily idiom in Serbian – 'one's blood is boiling' (which also exists in English as 'make someone's body boil'). When comparing these idioms, the one with 'boiling' seems to be more forceful, so the subjects correspondingly linked a more severe meaning to it, leaving the weaker 'variant' for the remaining idiom. Another changed interpretation was 'she is successful' – this looks to be in accordance with the already mentioned VIRTUE IS UP/DEPRIVITY IS DOWN metaphor. A similar interpretation – 'she comes from the upper class' – can be linked to an analogous orientational metaphor – HIGH STATUS IS UP/LOW STATUS IS DOWN (as described in Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 17). The last interpretation to be mentioned here, 'she is scared', seems to be pretty much connected to the correct meaning, only the emotion became more specific.

2.17. Her Heart is in her Mouth

The role of the subjects' native tongue seems to have played a crucial role in interpreting this idiom. Instead of responding with 'she feels nervous or frightened about something,' very many subjects replied with 'she is tired/exhausted.' This probably happened due to the existence of the Serbian idiom 'one's soul is one's nose.' The visuo-spatial arrangement triggered by both of them appears to be very similar – something from the middle of the chest moves towards the head and stays there as a result of an emotional, mental or physical state. Another small meaning shift can be seen in the interpretation 'she is very scared.' Once again, the reason could be located in a Serbian idiom – this time the idiom in question is 'one's heart is in one's heels.' Although the visuo-spatial setup is quite different from the one created by the original idiom, the subjects seem to have been misled by the usage of the noun *heart*. Some of the subjects understood this idiom's meaning as 'she speaks from the heart.' This shifted interpretation was possibly generated due to the proximity of the heart and the vocal apparatus in the situation or imagery activated by the idiom. The last interpretation of this idiom to be mentioned is 'she is talking about love/her speech is full of love.' Once again, the misinterpretation was most likely the result of the nearness of the heart and the vocal apparatus with the accompaniment of the fact that the heart is a symbol of love and care.

2.18. She has Set Tongues Wagging

Very few subjects understood the meaning of this idiom as 'she has caused people to start talking about somebody's private affairs.' Instead, we had a couple of variations – 'she has been slinging mud on them,' 'she has slandered them,' 'she has made them talk about her,' 'she has made them shut up,' and 'she is a slander victim.' All of them belong to the domain of speaking and listening and in three of them we even have *private affairs* (in the form of slander and mudslinging) as an active component. In 'she has been slinging mud on them' and 'she has slandered them,' the subjects seem to have removed the intermediary role of the subject and 'accused' *her* of jeopardizing one's private dealings in a rather direct manner. This probably happened due to the absence of the personal pronoun which would materialize the presence of another party (in this case, *them*). In 'she has made them talk about her' and 'she is a slander victim,' the subjects seem to have swapped the roles of the subject and the object of this idiom. *Her* very being or her actions were the cause for some parties to start talking about her – we may conclude that this is a valid

misinterpretation, as no reason for slander is stated within the idiom. The completely correct meaning of the idiom seems to be conventional. In the remaining example, 'she has made them shut up,' we may conclude that the subjects in question got confused by the usage of the verb *wag* – one may think that a wagging tongue cannot be engaged in the action of speaking.

2.19. He has Tried his Hand at it

Many of the shifted interpretations in regard to this idiom have meanings which are very close to the correct one (the correct one being 'he has done something, such an activity, for the first time'). A large group of our subjects interpreted this idiom as 'he has burnt himself,' which, in turn, is a Serbian correspondent of 'to burn one's fingers,' meaning 'to suffer as a result of doing something without realizing the possible bad results'. In all probability, this appears to be a consequence of the similar visuo-spatial configurations of the two idioms. The other major group of interpretations was clustered around the response 'he has done it directly/personally' – the component of meaning which seems to be stressed here is the absence of an intermediary, as one's hand involves a direct contact. All the interpretations appear to have retained the metonymic features of the original.

2.20. He Said it with Tongue in Cheek

Very few subjects managed to get this idiom right – as 'not intended seriously; done or said as a joke.' A great number of them responded with 'he barely said it,' 'he said it with difficulty,' 'he said it indistinctly,' 'he was mumbling.' This response is at least partly literal, as 'tongue in cheek' is perceived as an obstruction (in some cases even a physical one), which prevents the speaker from expressing himself in a regular manner. Out of these five responses, 'he said it with difficulty' and 'he barely said it' could be regarded as having the highest degree of metaphorical meaning, as 'difficulty' and 'barely doing something' could be considered non-physical. There were responses with even more metaphor in them – 'he said it in a shy manner' and 'he said it unsurely.' Although the tongue is here still seen as an obstruction, the target of obstruction (obstruction resulting in insecurity) is not physical. Therefore, we may conclude that the subjects who gave such responses recognized the metaphorical nature of the expression.

3. Comparison with Other Responses

3.1. Bodily Idioms

Responses given to (non-visual and non-spatial) bodily idioms also included a number of misinterpretations which could be used in a similar analysis, but the number of these is much lower than in the case of visuo-spatial bodily idioms. The lack of the visuo-spatial component seems to have put most of the subjects' recognition capabilities out of action, at least when it comes to sensing metaphors. Even in those cases when the subjects tried to walk along the metaphorical lines, the reasons for their responses were far from being as reasonable as the ones we could find in the analysis in the previous section. Visuo-spatial features seem to facilitate the process of meaning construction, so their absence has a severe impact on the procedures which make the subjects' wrong responses sound 'logical.'

3.2. Random Non-bodily Idioms

Non-bodily idioms were a further step behind those described in 3.1 in terms of having misinterpreted meanings that could be useful in a study similar to this one. Wrong responses given to the translated non-bodily idioms were in many cases simply random, no matter whether the existence of a metaphor was recognized or not. The subjects simply seemed to have no directions which would lead them to a comprehensible (though wrong) answer. In the same manner, their responses do not reveal the steps that led the subjects to their conclusions.

4. Conclusions

Both the origins and the outcomes of the changes analysed in this paper proved to reveal at least a fragment of the metaphorical *modus operandi* in the process of 'decoding' idiomatic meaning. On the whole, the factors that induced various changes in the idioms' meanings were quite divergent and coming from different sources. Firstly, visuo-spatial configurations, as well as positions of body parts and other objects which interact with them are among the reasons for the altered meanings of these idioms possibly based on or constrained by *embodiment*. Those examples in which we could find orientational metaphors (mostly in those examples with vertical visuo-spatial configurations) and metonymy (predominantly

in the idioms dealing with the *hand*) could belong to the same, embodied category. Secondly, the influence of other idioms, existence of polysemic changes and usage of pronouns where they are not expected (or their absence when they are expected) all belong to the field of L1 interference. Thirdly, those instances where the primary functions related to body parts and common associations linked with them played crucial roles in the course of interpretation could belong to the class of cultural reasons for changed meanings.

All these motives led to changes which included processes such as overextension (scope growth), underextension (specification or scope narrowing), overmetaphorization (implying more metaphorical meaning) and a range of intensity shifts. Nonetheless, no matter how rigorous these changes were, they still 'made sense,' (showed logical patterns of conceptualization and thus were understandable), most probably owing to the bodily and the visuo-spatial aspects of the idioms. To support this, wrong interpretations of bodily-only idioms express merely a part of these 'logical patterns', while responses to non-bodily idioms show almost none of them.

Bibliography

- Antović, M. and D. Stamenković 2011. Vision, Space, and Embodiment: Interpretation of English Idioms by Serbian Students. *Online Proceedings of UK-CLA Meetings*, vol. 1. *Forthcoming*.
- Arnheim, R. 1969. *Visual Thinking*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Gibbs, R. 2006. *Embodiment and Cognitive Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gibbs, R. 2008. Image schemas in conceptual development: What happened to the body?. *Philosophical Psychology*, 212: 231–239.
- Johnson, M. 1987. *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Kövecses, Z. 2006. *Metaphor in Culture: Universality and Variation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lakoff, G. and M. Johnson 1980. *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Langacker, R. 1993. Reference-point Constructions. *Cognitive Linguistics* 4: 1–38.
- Mandler, J. 2006. *The Foundations of Mind: Origins of Conceptual Thought*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mandler, J. 2008a. On the birth and growth of concepts. *Philosophical Psychology*, 212: 207–230.

- Mandler, J. 2008b. Infant concepts revisited. *Philosophical Psychology*, 212: 269–280.
- Saeed, J. 2003. *Semantics*. 2nd edition. Malden: Blackwell Publishing.
- Sweetser, E. 1990. *From Etymology to Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dictionaries:

- Cambridge International Dictionary of Idioms* 1998. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oxford Dictionary of Idioms* 1999. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Serbian-English Dictionary of Idioms* 1995. 3rd Edition. Milosavljević, B. and M. Williams-Milosavljević. Belgrade: *Srpska književna zadruga*.

Acknowledgements: I would like to express gratitude to prof. Mihailo Antović, PhD (Faculty of Philosophy, University of Niš), Miloš Tasić, MA (Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, University of Niš), Nenad Popović, MA (Faculty of Philosophy, University of Niš) and Sonja Dix Stojanović (Faculty of Philosophy, University of Niš) – without their immense help, this paper would have been completely impossible.