

Osolsobě, Ivo

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DISPLAYING WORDS AND PLAYING WORDS BY MEANS OF WORDS

(Enclaves of Theatre in Language and Literature)¹

Ivo Osolobé (Brno)

Two basic assumptions have been accepted almost generally in all semiotics of literature and theatre: the (tacit) presumption of the semiotic purity and homogeneity of language as the one and only system upon which all literature is based, and the (explicit) postulate of semiotic impurity and heterogeneity of theatre conceived as a plurality and mixture of semiotic codes. Strange as it may seem, both the postulates are totally false.

Literature, even if written in an absolutely pure and unilingual "national idiom", is - semiotically - almost always "bilingual", using two linguistically identical but semiotically completely different codes. One code, the proper linguistic code, is used for the verbal description, which means that in this code, and by this code, events both of the outer and of the inner world of the story - including verbal events - are described, that is, verbally represented. The other code, completely different from the first one, although, in most cases, linguistically (or rather ethnolinguistically) absolutely identical with it, is a code in which, and by which, words (utterances, texts) do not denote the world but simply exhibit themselves or play other words (utterances, texts) presumably uttered by the characters of the story. Literature - but also ordinary-life story-telling - when describing interpersonal events and arriving at the topic of verbal events, usually switches from the first code to the second one, from the code of the symbols (in Peirce's sense) to the code of the icons of symbols, switching thus from the properly lingual, verbal code (the code of, say, LOGOS) to other codes, to the code

of display and to the code of play (or, let us say, MIMOS).

(The existence of a mixture of both the two codes called, say, semi-direct speech, style indirect libre, reported speech, etc., does not deny the importance of distinguishing both codes. On the contrary: they should be distinguished - with help of the linguistic analysis of the so-called crypto-quotations - even within the "mixed code".)

In contrast to literature, the semiotic system of the theatre is semiotically almost absolutely pure and homogeneous (provided there exists something like pure and homogeneous codes). This is the domain of the almost exclusive validity of the second of the two codes and of the "principle of MIMOS", which could also be called the principle of token: token modelling since, according to this principle, tokens (or strings of tokens, or clusters of tokens) do not represent the World, but, primarily, other tokens (or strings or clusters of tokens) of the same type. As result of this, the theatrical representation of semiotically heterogeneous originals (viz. situations of human interaction) by equally heterogeneous models (viz. other situations of human interaction) is semiotically absolutely homogeneous. This applies, a fortiori, to the written drama (as far as its principal text is concerned).

The above conclusions with respect to the heterogeneity of language can be confirmed by the results obtained from a comparison between language (including literature) and painting, in particular between the depiction of paintings by paintings and the "depiction" of language by language (or, better, of discourse by discourse). Painting-depicting paintings utilize absolutely identical pictorial means, whether depicting paintings or depicting non paintings. In contrast to it discourse, both written and spoken,

whenever recurring to the oratio recta (or to the technique of quoting) applies a literary device which not only differs from the devices used in its immediate context, but which is of a totally nonlinguistic semiotic nature. To express it in visual art terms, this device is nothing but a literary counterpart of collage or ready made, the heterogeneity of which - with respect to the remaining text - can be overlooked only by an eye - and mind - totally free from any semiotic considerations. The foreign-body character of quotations, quotations and cryptoquotations was recognized by logicians (e. g. by Reichenbach²) as well as by linguists (e. g. by Wierzbicka³) decades ago; however, semiotics of literature has, as yet, totally failed to recognize it. But semiotics ignoring basic semiotic facts - this is a contradiction in terms!

What consequences can be drawn as a result of recognition of these facts? It does not seem to be reasonable - and it is by no means the objective of this study - to raise any territorial claim and to change the accepted borderline between theatre and literature. As to the bone of contention, i. e. the dramatic text, it seems better to have it shared by both theatre and literature - even in a competitive way - than to leave it outside the spheres of interest of each of them. The objective of this study, its claim and aim is, in a sense, more modest and, at the same time, more immoderate: not to demand revision of the borderline of theatre with respect to other forms of art but to demand its recognition as a principle of life and knowledge. We do not place theatre on the same level as literature considering it ("only") an art, but on the same level as language. Theatre in this general, semiotic sense (we can call it "the principle of MIMOS", but the term does not seem sufficiently unambiguous) is

a semiotic principle independent from language and, phylogenetically, older than languages. In previous studies (e.g. in the French study *Cours de théâtristique générale* ⁴) I have tried to prove the validity of this semiotic principle in various domains of science and life, e.g. experimentation, play, trial and error, humour - at first sight a very disconnected field, indeed! - whereas in the present study I am trying to prove the existence of enclaves of validity of this semiotic principle even within the domain of language.

What is to be done to carry on this program as a semiotic program? The **FIRST TASK** would be a purely theoretical one: to deepen, or, better, to work out the theory of the principle itself. The **SECOND** very important field seems to be the history of the problem, that is previous reflections of this kind within the framework of the developing views on literature and language. Finally, the **THIRD** task is to find, describe, and, if possible, classify the different domains of theatre within language and literature themselves.

The principle itself and the **PURE THEORY** of it are, of course, fully independent: of any literary or linguistic considerations. This must be stressed beforehand because the term token: token icons (or token: token models) may evoke direct linguistic associations. No doubt, it is derived from a common linguistic term (or, rather, from a semiotic term mostly used in linguistics). In spite of this, the theory of token: token models has, as to its origin, nothing to do with linguistics or with semiotics but, rather, with a (nonexisting) theory of plural entities. Philosophy since Aristotle through gnostics up to Leibnitz or even Strawson has considered plural entities only as a background against which particular and individual entities can be individuated; that is to say, it has not considered them at all (which has been the only way to cope with something with which we cannot cope in any reasonable sense). Fortunately, there exists one kind of plural entity with which we can cope quite easily because we produce it. This is the case of production series (or series of products) as the artificial, human counterpart of the so-called natural kinds which can be - perhaps - considered production series of nature, and this is also the case (at least in a certain degree) of linguistic tokens. Each token of a certain type (let us extend the term token for any series product) can be cognitively in three principal ways: (1) as an original (if, for some reason, we are interested exactly in this parti-

cular token only; (2) as a sample (if we are interested in the whole series rather than in the sample token itself); and (3) as a model of some (or any) other member of the same series. Such token: token models are supposed to be even the best models if we can trust Arthuro Rosenblueth and Norbert Wiener claiming that "the best (...) model of a cat is (...) another (...) cat". Even though the quoted authors use this example only half-seriously, token: token models exist and deserve a theory developed in more technical and less amateurish fashion than has been done by the present author⁶.

Such a theory should take into consideration all ontological modalities of series, reals, past, future, potential, series that are stable, and series that are improving or deteriorating, and all possible variants of tokens (tokens that are normal, paradigmatic tokens, and tokens that are foils, misfits, or even fakes). This would have some interesting corollaries, e. g. that there can be no (normal) token: token models of unfeasible originals. The range of application of such a theory would be extremely wide, including not only such fields as theory of the so-called ostension⁷, theory of communication, and museology, but also theory of scientific experimentation (a series of experiments), theory of speech recognition, theory of animal and children's play, — and also theory of quotation as well as of direct speech.

To survey the second field, i. e. the HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM, we must begin with Plato⁸, the first theoretician of the "theatre in literature". Unfortunately the straight forward moralizing and naive social reformatory ideas prevent the modern reader from taking his arguments seriously. Be that as it may, it was, perhaps, thanks to this motivation that Plato's observational capacity in a degree that made him draw a clear distinction between words describing facts (both real and fictitious facts) and words playing other words (also real or fictitious), i. e., in Plato's original terms, between diegesis and mimesis. Diomedes⁹, the late Roman grammarian, took over Plato's trichotomy of poetry but, alas, rephrased it in his own terms. With Plato it is the way of representation (that is the word itself, whether it denotes, or mimes, or switches from one to the other) that distinguishes and classifies literary genres, with Diomedes it is the "person of the speaker": whether the poet, the character of the story, or both. This seemingly slight shift, which may seem to have some pedagogical advantages, results, in fact, in a terrible confusion if we take it in a literary sense (which is usually the case). There can be only one speaking person: the poet, the author. He is only one who is really speaking and who can really speak. But he can choose between two different manners of verbal representation: he can describe, or he can play. When Curtius¹⁰ neglects this difference and interprets Plato in Diomedes' terms, it is quite pardonable, the more so because he has no semiotic ambitions. But if the same happens to Kristeva,¹¹ who pretends to be a semiotician, it is a serious mistake, because it was exactly here where there was the opportunity to prove it. Unless she is not responsible for what she has written because it is not she — that "person who is speaking" — but Curtius (in the statements signed by Kristeva) and Diomedes (through the statements signed by Curtius). the issue left open by Plato and to start a dialogue over twenty-three centuries. Bakhtin draws almost the same distinction as Plato, moreover almost in the same terms. Nevertheless — and this

is one additional reason for a genuine dialogue with Plato - his motivation is totally different from that of his partner, and as for their evaluations of the same phenomena, they are exactly opposite. What Plato wished to banish from the ideal state (and what, in fact, always has been banished from the "real culture" to its "vulgar" periphery and to the underground of literature) - the spontaneous vulgar culture of carnival - is promoted by Bakhtin to the very core of literature in the vernacular and considered a fons vitae of all fiction writing. Needless to say, Bakhtin's concept of carnival is identical with Plato's concept of mimesis and with our principle of theatre. What else could carnival be, if not an improvised piece play, and role played by each for the other, and, at the same time, by all for all and by everybody for everybody?

Little wonder that the person who entered after so many centuries the dialogue with the dialectician Plato was, himself, a theorist of dialogue, that is, to use his own term, of the "dialogic speech". The same can be said about Mukafovsky. Surprisingly, his studies about dialogue have nothing to do with our problem; their proper concern is dialogue in life. Nevertheless, when writing about Karel Capek¹² he clearly distinguishes short stories describing events from short stories retelling somebody else's description of events. The same distinction is obvious even for Karel Capek himself who, in his theoretical essays (Marsyas or At the Periphery of Literature), classifies (jokes) as micro-comedies rather than as micro-stories.¹³

As for the last requirement of our semiotic program, viz. the TYPOLOGY OF THEATRE IN LITERATURE, the best approach to this problem seems to be via quotations. People produce verbal tokens in two huge sub-series, spoken and written, and each of the two sub-series can contain quotations from itself as from the other series. Thus we can have written quotations from written texts (usually described in terms of display rather than play, or, in other words, in terms of showing rather than in terms of token: token modelling), and spoken quotations from the written texts (even here the spoken utterance functions as a token: type sample of the written sentence rather than as a token: token model). On the other hand, we can also have written quotations of spoken utterances (e. g. protocols), and, finally, spoken quotations of spoken utterances (here the token: token principle seems to fit almost perfectly).

The first thing we can do with these four basic cases is to extend them from one-sentence quotation to entire-text quotations. The first possibility (written:written) will then include not only such variants as collections of quotations, but also such as, say, editions of letters, collections of articles originally printed in periodicals, readers, anthologies, etc. If such editions are realised as facsimiles, the impression of an exhibition only can be stressed. The second variant (spoken from written) can perhaps be extended from reading (that is quoting) short passages of written texts within spoken lectures to word-by-word reading of written papers, that is, from citation to re-citation. A lecturer reading word by word his own text, or a poet reciting his own poem, is it not in fact something like extended auto-quotation? The third possibility (written from spoken) can be, naturally, extended to include all protocols and proceedings, provided they are written in direct speech. As for the fourth case (spoken:spo-

ken) this variant will tend not so much to the quantitative extension (i. e. towards longer utterances), but, first of all, towards an expansion crossing the boundaries of purely linguistic quotation and aiming, via paralinguistics and kinetics, at the status of a (marginal) microtheatre.

As yet we have considered only the modality of real texts, spoken or written. Our next step aims at the inclusion of quoting from fictitious texts. It is interesting that the element of fictionality (quoting from fictitious originals) reinforces the theatrical character of the resulting product whether spoken or written. The written:written variant includes such cases of theatre in literature as novels pretending to be collections of letters (e. g. Werther or Les liaisons dangereuses), of "posthumous papers", of clippings (the Salamander War by Karel Capek), or even novels pretending (or, rather, playing) Festschriften (Life and Work of Composer Foltyn, by the same author). Finally, the "written-from-spoken" variant is theatre, genuine theatre, whether on stage or in life.

As for other modal variants, let us mention quoting from possible uses of the same word in a different context, which is - within a serious text - usually signaled by an excessive use of quotation marks indicating our distancing from a "real" use of the inappropriate expression in this context. (Cf. the quotation marks at the expression "real" in the preceding sentence.)

Like other models (and in contrast to language), token: token models (including quotations) have no built-in information concerning their modality (that is, no information whether they represent originals existing, potential, past, future, etc.). Moreover - and in contrast to other models - token: token models have no built-in information whether they are meant (offered) by their senders as original or as models. In addition to all this, quotations - as verbal token: token models - occur in verbal contexts. Consequently, both easy confusion, and easy prevention from confusion by explicit metacommunication are equally possible: this is why the domain of token: token models of (possible) utterances or texts occurring within normal utterances or texts is a world of easy deception, mystification, and at the same time of (relatively) easy recognition of deception and thus the domain of joke, fun and play.

The principle of theatre in literature and of token: token models in general can be, perhaps, used as an explanatory principle of fiction in general. Fictionality, in contrast to other ontological modalities, is never signaled by mechanisms built into language: on the contrary, language signals it, deceptively, as a normal reality. Obviously, the substance of fictionality has nothing to do with illocution (from in-loquor), that is with speech-acts, but very much to do with illusion (from in-ludo),

that is "play-acts", particularly with "play-acts with speech-acts", i. e. with illusion in the (and of the) illocution.¹⁴

Finally let us pay regard to a different concept of theatre,¹⁵ i. e. to that form of theatre that can be found in amusement parks, Disneyland attractions, carousels, swings, etc. This is a type of, say, theatre where the consumer, confronted with a mechanical device, has to be involved in an active participation, becoming thus (most usually) the one-person public of his own experiencing. It may seem totally out of place, but identical structures of token: token modelling can be found in Disneyland's Space Trip (the picture of Earth diminishes at the bottom "window" of the "space ship" whereas the whole auditorium, staring at it, plays the role of the cosmic voyageurs), in baroque churches with through-the-open-ceiling-views-of-the-open-heavens trompe l'oeil painting (the entire church, including the visitor's gaze, plays the role another church: of a church where the vault has just opened and a miracle is happening so that we can see the canopy of heaven open), in some cultic behaviour (kneeling and kissing a lying cross; the holy communion; praying of "mechanical" prayers, i. e., prayers with pre-established (order of) "speech events" and "narrated events"), and in the so-called "inner monologue" or "stream of consciousness" of post-Joycean prose. We might ask whether also "private" reading of fiction should not be placed in this category, because, perhaps, even the printed tokens play (and evoke) the "inner tokens" of the "inner monologue" of the reader's mind.

This study is dedicated to Prof. PhDr. Josef Vachek, DrSc., to whom we owe the formulation of the principle theorems of the theory of the "second sub-series" in which verbal tokens are produced, that is of the written language.

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- 2 Cf. e. g. PELC, Jerzy: *Logika i jazyk. Studia z semiotyki logicznej*. Warszawa 1967.
- 3 Cf. WIERZBICKA, Anna: *Descriptions or Quotations*. In: Greimas, A. J. et al. /eds./: *Sign, Language, Culture*. See also my review of this study entitled *Fifty Keys to Semiotics*, in: *Semiotica VII*, 1973; pp 226-281, especially its final section "Linguistic Non-Linguistics as a Key to Semiotics (The Problem of Quotation)".
- 4 *Études littéraires XIII*, No 3, décembre 1980, pp. 413-435.
- 5 Surprisingly, an interesting theory of modern production series can be found in the medieval realists, provided we consider universalia in re production series produced /and conceived ante rem/ by God.
- 6 This applies, unfortunately, both to my book *Divadlo, které mluví, zpívá a tančí - Teorie jedné komunikační formy*, Praha 1974, where this theory was exposed for the first time, and to my last study dealing with this problem, *Two Extremes of Iconicity*, in: Bouissac, Paul, Michael Herzfeld and Roland Posner, (eds.): *Iconicity - Festschrift for Thomas A. Sebeok*, Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 1986, pp. 95-117.
- 7 Cf. my article *Ostension in the Encyclopedic Dictionary of Semiotics*, Sebeok, T. A. (general editor), Berlin-Den Haag-New York: Mouton, 1986.
- 8 *The Republic*, Book III, 392-398.
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- 14 The present theory is fully compatible with the views expressed in the works of Austin, Ryle, Gale, Urason, and Searle dealing with related problems. Cf. AUSTIN, J. L.: *Philosophical Papers*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961, pp. 201-219 (Chapter 9: Pretending); RYLE, G.: *The Concept of Mind* London: Hutchinson, 1949, pp. 245-279 (Chapter 8: Imagination); RYLE, G.: On

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- 15 An attempt at a description of Disneyworld in terms of theatre can be found in my article Divadlo v Tampé a okolí očima semiotika. In: Program, Magazine of the State Theatre in Brno, 47 (1975-1976), pp. 191-197. The same type of theatre is examined in the last chapter of my book Mnoho povyku pro semiotiku (in press).

DIVADELNOST JAKO KLASIFIKAČNÍ KRITÉRIUM SÉMIOLOGICKÉ A GENELOGICKÉ

Ivo Osolsobě (Brno)

Divadelnost v nadpise tohoto shrnutí je spíš poučač než termín a měla by být v úvozovkách. Terminologicky přesnější by bylo mluvit o "token": "token" modelech (či modelech v měřítku 1:1 a v materiálu originálu), to jest modelech, kde model i originál jsou prvky téže hromadné entity (třídy, přirozeného druhu), a kdo tedy jeden prvek (jedno jedinečné token) je modelem jiného "token" (jiného jedinečného token) téže hromadné entity (téhož typu). Ovšem vzhledem k tomu, že nám jde převážně jen o literaturu, případně o její materiál, řeč, jazyk, vystačíme docela dobře s termínem kvazicitát a kvazicitátovost.

Na první pohled nemůže být nic vzájemně cizějšího než citát (tato doména učenosti) a divadlo (toto hájenství Dionýza). Ve skutečnosti však to, co se i v tom nejsuchoparnějším projevu odehrává mezi slovy "cituji" a "konec citátu", je něco velmi blízkého ne-li přímo divadlu, tedy aspoň výstavní síni Logikové, například Reichenbach, či filozofové jazyka, jako třeba Searle ve svých Speech Acts, dávno zjistili, že citáty jsou vlastně cizí tělesa v jinak homogenním proudu psaného či mluveného jazykového textu, a že tedy svou podstatou nepatří do kategorie jazyka, ale do kategorie předmětů (i když - v tomto případě - náhodou předmětů, vytvořených ze slov). Citují-li, jako bych do své promluvy včlenil reálný předmět: jako bych - být malířem - vlepil do svého plátna reálnou hrací kartu, jídelní lístek, železniční jízdenku či jinou "ready made" věc: jen díky tomu, že v tomto případě "plátno" je jazykové, verbální, a vlepená věc rovněž jazyková (ať už jde o jazyk mluvený či jazyk psaný), ujde tato reálná věc, toto cizí těleso naší pozornosti. To, co ujde pozornosti nás lidí, neujde pozornosti strojů: ke stejnému závěru jako filozofové jazyka a logici došli totiž i matematická lingvisté: citáty jim hatily všechny jazykové analýzy a počítače je vyplivovaly jako "nestražitelné", tj. neanalyzovatelné, což vedlo vzápětí k objevu kryptocitátů (skrytých citátů) popisovaných v práci A. Wierzbické.

To k čemu došla moderní logika a lingvistika, věděl už dávno starý Plato, který v Politice přísne rozlišil básnictví lyricko-epické na straně jedné a dramatické na straně druhé, přičemž rozlišovacím kritériem byl právě způsob napodobení (tedy, jak bychom dnes asi řekli, způsob modelování). Platonovo rozdělení poezie na lyricko-epickou, dramatickou a smíšenou bylo ovšem vzápětí zastíněno rozdělením Aristotelovým, dělicím poezii na lyrickou, epickou a dramatickou, rozdělením, s nímž pracujeme dodnes. Aristotelovo dělení je z praktických a historických důvodů vhodnější, ovšem logicky důslednější a principiálnější je původní dělení Platonovo. V historii poetiky se několikrát krisí, bohužel nikoli ve své autentické podobě. Diomedes je sice přejímá, zároveň je však interpretuje (a ve skutečnosti komolí) po svém: od něho pochází zná-

zá formulace "mluví autor", "mluví postava" atd. Je to formulace pedagogicky sice (a zdánlivě) výhodná, ve skutečnosti však matoucí a zcela odlišná od jasného kritéria Platonova. Ve skutečnosti totiž v celém díle nemluví, ani nemůže mluvit nikdo jiný než autor, básník. Může však mluvit a popisovat počínání svých postav, včetně jejich počínání slovního, může však také mluvit a svými slovy jejich slovní verbální počínání hrát. A právě takovou hrou, v níž vlastní slovo autora hraje cizí slovo hrdiny, jsou ony kvazicitáty promluv fiktivních postav, kterými říkáme přímo řeč. Jsou to enklavy divadla, ryze divadelního způsobu modelování, čisté divadelní semiózy uprostřed svrchovaného území jazyka a literatury.

Mluvili jsme o kryptocitátech, řekli jsme kvazicitáty, ale stejně dobře bychom mohli mluvit docela prostě o citátech a prohlásit, že přímo řeč a citáty jsou jedno a totéž, jak konečnou naznačují i uvozovky. Fakt vyostřená formulace může ovšem vzbudit námitky. Jsme zvyklí chápat citáty diachronicky, historicky: napřed tu byl jakýsi text ("prototext") a teprve po něm a s odvoláním na něj může vzniknout jeho citace, citát. Ve skutečnosti však povahu citátu, ba přímo fotografického faksimile mají i výstřižky ze sbírky fiktivního pana Povondry z Čapkovy Války s aloky, přestože žádný prototext, ba ani protovýtisk novin, z něhož by mohly být vystřiženy, neexistuje. Podobným výstřižkem (či kvazivýstřižkem) textu, jenže v tomto případě mluveného, je i každá přímo řeč fiktivní povahy. I tato řeč je citát, i když citát fiktivního prototextu. Tak je tomu aspon z hlediska semiotiky, či - přesněji - z hlediska teorie modelování. Zatímco jazyk modeluje skutečnost a modeluje ji v měřítku až 1:— (co jiného je slovo vesmír poměřeno svým konečným denotátem!), citáty modelují výlučně texty a modelují je v měřítku 1:1 (a navíc i v materiálu modelovaného originálu). Je to nejazykový, divadelní, herecký způsob modelování, a každý citát, kvazicitát a zejména pseudocitát je vpravdě divadlo. Jak blízko má citát k divadlu vyplývá mj. i z toho, že velice často v každodenním hovoru, jakmile citujeme z promluvy někoho jiného, obyčejně začneme tohoto "někoho jiného" nejen citovat, ale přímo imitovat, hrát. Citát není vůbec něco suše vědeckého a školometského ("citují" a "konec citátu!"), ale cosi bytostně blízkého divadlu.

Domnívám se, že tyto principy stojí za to, aby se i v literární vědě podrobily důkladnému zkoumání. Najdeme-li a uplatníme dostatečně obecný základní princip - takový, jaký nabízí kupř. teorie modelování nebo poněkud reformně pojatá semiotika -, můžeme převést na společného jmenovatele dokonce i takové malířské postupy, jako je tzv. iluzivní malba typu nástropního trompe-l'oeil v barokních katedrálách či typu Maroldova panoramatu bitva u Lipan, s takovými postupy, jako jsou techniky polopřímé či nevlastní přímé řeči v románu: v jednom i v druhém případě ikonické zobrazení nepozorovaně přechází v token: token modelům vystavovaných objektů. Možná, že pak najdeme cosi společného i v takových atrakcích, jakými jsou Disneyův snový jarmark Disneyland a Joyceovský bděle snový vnitřní monolog. Na první poslech to vypadá nehorázně - ale nevypadalo snad na první pohled nehorázně i to, když Bachtin mluvil jedním dechem o Dostojevském a o - karnevalu?!