The linguistics of reading literature

A pragmatic account of 'aesthetic reading' of literary texts and its didactic implications

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In this paper, I attempt a bridge between linguistics, in particular text pragmatics, and school reading of literary texts. I propose a linguistic model of these peculiarities of the reading of literary texts, especially poetry, that have been called 'aesthetic reading', arguing that a linguistically founded basis is what is lacking for school engagement with (not only literary) texts. In the last years there has been extensive research on the linguistics-literature interface; however, what is surprisingly still missing, is a consistent linguistic model of literary reading. In this paper, I propose such a model and show that 'aesthetic reading' involves a distinct reading strategy that can be captured in terms of text-world-models and the differentiation between coherence and text sense displaying. Consciously reading poetry amounts, linguistically seen, to a close reading (i) especially focusing marked expressions, i.e., deviations from phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic and textpragmatic routines, (ii) maintaining of unsolved ambiguities and thus (iii) generating an array of 'authorized inferences' that can be productively used for a principled plurality of interpretations. I specify this proposal and illustrate it with two cases of marked pronominal reference, arguing that my proposal has some important implications that make it particularly suitable for school context.

Keywords: coherence, reference, pronoun, inference, pragmatics, poetry

1. Introduction

The starting point of my paper are two seemingly non-related cases of problems in achieving the goals of the secondary school L1-education as they are explicated in curricular papers in Germany. The first problem concerns the interpreting of literary texts, which is one of the most prominent contents of secondary school German. KMK (2003: 13), German curricular standards for the ten-year school

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attendance, state for literary texts that students are to be able "to develop their own text interpretations that they prove with the text"; note the plural of interpretations. ZSL BW (2016), official gymnasium standards of Baden-Württemberg, expect from the students of the 8th form not only the competence to "develop and to put in words their text interpretations (with the help of interpretation hypotheses), to explain and to motivate their understanding of the text", but also to "recognize the ambiguity of literary texts and to outline it".

However, this seems actually not to work out properly. It has often been observed that secondary school students have problems with reading and interpreting of literary texts; Winkler (2011:7) generalizes the findings as: "German school students fail particularly at reading and understanding literary texts". Thus, not only plural interpretations, even simple understanding of a literary text seems to be difficult: there is a *comprehension problem* here. Although interpreting literary texts takes a good deal of the scholarly German curriculum especially in the higher gymnasium classes, there seems to be a big gap between the goals set in curricular documents and the actual achievements.

The second problem is a *production problem* that concerns text production. It has also been repeatedly noticed that adolescents in scholarly context have big problems with using referential means like pronouns etc. So, Peschel (2006) shows in her study of a text corpus from the 9th form of 'Realschule' (a kind of junior high school in Germany), that, first, students only use recurrent lexemes or personal and possessive pronouns for coreference; other anaphoric options like using demonstratives, synonyms or hyponyms and hyperonyms for coreference are not used at all. Second, their texts often show ambiguous cases of nominal or pronominal reference. Other and more recent studies confirm reference problems by writers from the primary school (Musan & Noack, 2014) till the graduation (German 'Abitur'; Steinäcker, 2014) as well as in university students' texts (Consten et al., 2017).

Interestingly, studies of child language oral production show an early awareness for different referential means and their respective adequateness in a particular communication situation. Gundel and Johnson (2013) show with their own data and by reviewing data from other studies that, as a rule, children from the age of two years on use the whole variety of referential means appropriately.[1]

That is, on the one hand the text-functional variety of different lexical means belongs to the implicit language knowledge that is acquired early. On the other hand, there seems to be a systematic problem in making this knowledge explicit and reflecting on it at school. The reason might be that until now, in school con-

1. Appropriately means in accordance with the assumptions of the Givenness theory, cf. Gundel et al. (1993).

text, it is primarily *global coherence* and *relational coherence and cohesion*[2] that are explicitly taught, if at all.[3] *Referential coherence and cohesion* are barely explicitly present in school books, as Averintseva-Klisch, Bryant and Peschel (2019) show in their exemplary study of 27 German school books.

In this paper, I am going to address both the comprehension and the production problems together and show that they are actually interrelated. Their common cause is the lack of reflection on (especially referential) textual coherence and cohesion and on their interplay with the interpretation of literary texts. Linguistic theories of text coherence and the practice of interpreting literary texts at school do rarely, if at all, interact till now. This lacking of interaction holds also for linguistic text theories and literary theories. However, recently there is (again) a growing interest in literary texts as linguistic material and in linguistically founded concepts of literary texts (cf. Bade & Beck, 2017; Bauer et al., 2020; Cave & Wilson, 2018; Fuhrhop & Schreiber, 2019, to name but a few). Musan and Schneider (2016) propose exemplarily analyses of literary texts with linguistic means that are explicitly developed for secondary school purposes.

Still, most of these papers focus on linguistically based interpretations of particular literary texts; some, like Bade and Beck (2017); Bauer et al. (2020) or Averintseva-Klisch and Mühlherr (2020), also address the specific value of literary texts for linguistic theory: literary texts are "especially valuable data, because of certain properties of the text type [...] The high density of creative uses of language by a language expert reveals the whole potential of language" (Bade & Beck, 2017: 318). The question remains whether the reading of literary and non-literary texts works along the same principles or not. Wilson (2018) assumes that the differences between the reading of literary and non-literary texts are quantitative, not qualitative ones and that both are governed by the same relevance principle.

In this paper, I argue that there is also a *qualitative difference in reading strategies*, even if the inferences made during reading are of the same kind: In short, a

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2. See chapter 2.1 for these terms.

3. KMK (2003) standards quoted above talk of "opening up central themes" (KMK, 2003: 12) when reading as well as writing texts of different kinds specifically named in the standards "so that a globally coherent statement emerges" (KMK, 2003: 12); this amounts to some concept of the discourse topic and to a text kind concept. They also expect students "to know and to use linguistic text coherence means: the level of words (morphological means): relational words (e.g. conjunction, adverb), composition and derivation; the level of sentence (syntactic means): sentence types, complex sentences; the level of meaning (semantic means): e.g. synonyms, antonyms; key words; superordinate/subordinate concept; selected rhetorical means" (KMK, 2003: 16). Not only are coherence and cohesion (see 2.1 below) mixed together in the last quote; only for relational coherence and cohesion, the contribution of the lexical means is more or less made explicit.

reader of a literary text uses phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic information in the text as well as pragmatic inferences based on these; that is exactly as with non-literary texts. The difference is that in this way not a single coherent unambiguous reading is explicated, but that potential ambiguities are seen as signals for interpreting and multiple readings are explicated side by side and used for subsequent literary interpretation. Under this perspective, incoherencies and ambiguities in literary texts are seen as enabling readers to generate interpretational benefits – and not as a perturbance during communication that is to be solved as soon as possible and better to be avoided altogether, as it is the case in everyday communication.

In the following, I present this idea in more detail and show its didactic implications: it allows a linguistically based reflection on what exactly is needed to be able to understand and to interpret a literary text. In Section 2, I recapitulate some general assumptions on text reading and literary reading in special. With this background, I propose a linguistic modelling of literary reading in Section 3. To illustrate my point, I use referential coherence and cohesion, i.e. introducing and readdressing text referents and the corresponding linguistic means, focussing myself on the personal pronoun as a textual reference means. That is why in Section 4.1 I briefly recapitulate the usual assumptions on the textual functions of personal pronouns as referential coherence/cohesion means especially in German. With this starting point, in Section 4.2 I illustrate the model with two particular examples of pronoun use. Section 5 highlights important didactic implications of the model.

2. Preliminaries: Text understanding in general and literary reading

2.1 General assumptions on text understanding

In this paper, I differentiate with Schwarz-Friesel (2006) between *textual coherence* in the sense of plausible global (i.e. for a text as a whole) and local (i.e. for abutting segments of a text) relations between text contents and *textual cohesion* in the sense of overt linguistic marking of such relations. Local coherence and cohesion can be differentiated in relational and referential notions (e.g. Spooren, 2003: 197):

– *Relational coherence* concerns relations between propositions, e.g. cause, elaboration or temporal relations; *relational cohesion* embraces tense and aspect marking, as well as connectives and adverbs that express these relations.

– *Referential coherence* concerns introduction and re-addressing of text referents; *referential cohesion* comprises nouns, NPs and pronouns naming these referents.

When reading a text, readers parsing cohesion automatically construct coherence, in that they infer explicitly (cohesively) marked and implicit relations between propositions and referents. Reading thus involves a construction of a mental *text-world-model* (TWM; cf. e.g. Kelter, 2003; Schwarz, 2000) as its "integral part" (Schwarz-Friesel & Consten, 2014: 59).

Schwarz-Friesel (2006: 73) proposes a further level of text understanding: the producing of a '*text sense*', i.e. of "a version of conceptual interpretation that is superordinate to text structure and subordinated to establishing of text continuity," that "depends not only on our linguistic and conceptual competence, but often also on specific and professional encyclopedic knowledge, consideration of information about the text kind as well as on conscious and controlled cognitive interpretation strategies". Averintseva-Klisch and Mühlherr (2020: 32) speak of the 'diversification of text senses' instead. At least for literary texts, they assume that there is not a singular text sense, but plural senses that can be systematically reconstructed on the basis of the text (see also 3.2 below).

Besides, there are at least the following factors that should be considered in any modelling of reading:

– *reader* R and his/her personal abilities and interests as well as his/her experience with (a particular kind of) texts;[4]
– particular *reading situation* and *reading goals* G_r. So, we expect a different TWM-construction even by a same reader R with a same (expository) text T on a subject X depending on whether R reads T to get first information about X or to use T for a presentation in class.

2.2 General assumptions on literary reading

It is a common point that we do not read fiction, especially poetry, in the same way as non-literary texts. Jacobson (1960: 6) even puts forward a separate 'poetic function' of language, involving "focus on the message for its own sake". This 'poetic function' is, although not only to be found in poetry, a "dominant, determining function" of "verbal art" (ibid.). Very roughly: we do not read poetry to be informed about something, but to "savour" the text, to get some kind of aesthetic

4. The common models of literary reading in literature didactics like Rosebrock and Nix (2017) also stress the importance of readers and their literary experience as reading factors.

pleasure at it (e.g. Rosenblatt, 1994; Rosebrock, 2017, 2019; see also a short review on literary reading in Landgraf, 2020: 176–181).

As reading of literary texts crucially involves a complex author-reader-interaction (see e.g. Schmidt 1975), it seems a task for pragmatics, if at all, to model this reading linguistically. Especially Relevance Theory (RT) repeatedly explicitly addresses the interpretation of literary texts, cf. Furlong (1995, 2007), Pilkington (2000) and recently Cave and Wilson (2018), to name but a few. According to Furlong (2007: 334):

> Relevance Theory is centrally concerned with the role of context in which interpretations are made, and so allows for a productive relationship between literary studies and linguistics. […] it can shed light on the process of reading, on the criteria for interpretation and on the role of intention in literature.

Indeed, whilst Gricean and Neo-Gricean pragmatics both focus on the speaker and speaker's communicative intentions,[5] RT is in the first line an 'inference pragmatics'. That is, according to RT, an addressee, assuming that a particular message is *ostensive*, i.e. drawing his/her attention as being relevant to him/her, makes some inferences about its meaning. RT distinguishes between two general kinds of inferences, *explicatures,* i.e. inferences enriching and explicating what is said (e.g. desambiguation of lexical and structural meaning, filling in implicit arguments, reference resolution etc.), and *implicatures*, i.e. "intended contextual assumptions" and "implicated conclusions" going beyond the explicit content (Wilson & Sperber, 2004: 615).

With explicating and implicating, an addressee uses the cues the speaker has given to (re)construct the intended meaning and stops when some relevant content is achieved (e.g. cf. Wilson, 2018: 188). In a typical literature reading situation there is a highly complicated constellation of 'speakers' and 'addressees'. Literary studies distinguish between at least five speaker instances possible in a poem (cf. Burdorf, 1997: 193–203): (i) an internal speaker being a role in the poem (e.g. the child in Goethes *Erlkönig*); (ii) an "articulated self" (also "lyrical subject"); (iii) a fictive narrator (e.g. the 'speaker' of the last line in *Erlkönig*); (iv) the "text subject" as "an analytical construct, needed to be able to ascribe a coherent meaning and a literary value to a poem as lyrical text" (Burdorf, 1997: 195); (v) the author. Similarly, there is a number of addressees ranging from a text-internal role over an abstract "intended reader" and real coeval readers to a particular real today

5. Thus, Grice (1968) talks about "utterer's meaning" being what a "speaker has implicated (e.g. implied, indicated, suggested etc." (Grice, 1968: 118); similarly, Horn (2004: 3) defines an implicature as "a component of speaker meaning that constitutes an aspect of what is meant in a speaker's utterance without being part of what is said".

reader. This latter one seems to be the preferred starting point for a model, being the only instance we have any immediate access to, as we also are particular today readers.[6]

RT argues for a generally common underlying principle of relevance for interpreting both literary and non-literary texts. Thus, Furlong (1995), chapter 2, stresses the similarities between literary and non-literary communication. She argues that both involve a continuum of clearly determined vs. vague, non-propositional explicatures as well as one of clearly determined vs. vague, non-propositional implicatures; hereby, vague explicatures may lead to clear implicatures and vice versa, all possible combinations being possible. The difference lays in the managing of the indeterminacy: whilst with everyday language a hearer uses clearly determined as well as vague, weak inferences to make a communicative decision, with reading literature readers are "encouraged to explore and savour the implicatures" (Furlong, 1995: 94), also the weak ones. For RT, the differences between interpreting literary and non-literary texts seem thus to be quantitative, not qualitative ones: thus, the interpretative activity expected of readers is more demanding with literary texts and the resulting interpretation often involves non-propositional inferences (Wilson, 2018: 199).

3. Proposal: Two idealized overall reading strategies

I am going to argue for a slightly different view. I adopt the RT modelling in terms of reader's inferences, but I will argue that the modelling should take an input from the literary criticism and explicitly account for two very prominent concepts: (i) "aesthetic reading" (e.g. Rosenblatt, 1994) as a particular kind of being involved with a literary text and (ii) principled plurality of possible readings with literary texts.

Hereby I adopt the constructivist view on coherence, cf. de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981); Kintsch (1988); Givón (1995); Schwarz (2000) etc. I propose that irrespective of the text kind and the communication situation, a reader R constructs a text-world model TWM (see above) of a text T, comprising truth-conditional and expressive (in the sense of Potts, 2012) meaning of T as well

6. In a similar way, Bücking (2019) argues for a reader-oriented modelling of literary narration, and proposes a formal DRT analysis along these lines. He shows that narrator concepts proposed in the literature are often either too vague for exact modelling or, on the contrary, too anthropomorphic to be adequate for different narration kinds. Instead, in line with Maier (2017), he models the imagination subcomponent of the fictive reading process, via which a reader is responsible for the effects that are traditionally ascribed to a narrator.

as context information and R-specific inferences.[7] Irrespective of the text kind, TWM construction depends on the particular intention by reading (e.g. reading an informative text about tsunamis just to learn something about them vs. to make a presentation in class on this subject) and on the reader's competence with the particular kind of texts (cf. Schnotz, 2000).

This means that Fabb's (2010) 'development hypothesis', according to which the literary language is a particular development of the everyday one and not a quite different entity, can be reformulated as follows from the reading perspective: The general *comprehension strategies* (in the sense of Wilson, 2018: 189) like using morphological congruence and lexical semantic information are the same with literary and non-literary texts:

For comprehending any kind of text, R first and foremost relies on what Clark (1977) calls 'authorised' inferences, i.e. inferences that result out of *the use of a particular expression*.[8] So, in languages overtly marking (in)definiteness, using a definite NP instead of an unmarked indefinite one leads to an inference that the referent of this NP has to be discourse-old, hearer-old or inferrable (cf. Prince, 1981: 237; Wöllstein et al., 2016: 295–295 speaks of the referent being "explicitly or implicitly aforementioned" or "uniquely identifiable in a certain communication situation"). In this understanding, following inferences are 'authorized', i.e. linguistically based:

- semantically based inferences like reconstructing implicit verb arguments;
- presuppositions and conventional implicatures, i.e. not-at-issue, projective meaning (cf. Potts 2012) associated with particular lexemes (e.g. phase verbs, definite descriptions etc.) or syntactic structures (e.g. conditionals appositive relative clauses);
- inferences resulting from the choice of a particular form of an anaphoric definite expression; e.g. personal pronoun vs. demonstrative vs. lexical NP (see 4.1 below);

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7. Every R brings particular background knowledge, emotions, as well as particular cognitive abilities. These affect the TWM construction. E.g. in Germany, a reader sympathetic with chancellor Merkel and a reader hating Merkel vehemently would construct rather different TWMs when reading one and the same text about Merkel's politic activities; cf. e.g. Nickel-Bacon et al. (2000: 270) for this strongly constructivist definition of the (textual) reality.

8. McKoon & Ratcliff (1992: 441) differentiate between two groups of inferences: 'minimal inferences' are necessary for local coherence establishing and are automatically made "in the absence of special goals and strategies": these are bridging inferences as well as inferring of implicit verb arguments based on semantic or very general world knowledge (i.e. category membership). Besides, there are inferences that are added "when readers do have specific goals" (440) when reading.

– what Neo-Griceans call 'generalized conversational implicatures', i.e. implicatures arising in most contexts from S's using a particular lexeme (e.g. scalar implicatures) or syntactic structure (e.g. conditional strengthening or conjunction buttressing); cf. Levinson (2000).

Thus, R uses overtly textually given information and makes linguistically driven inferences. While inferring, R also uses context for TWM construction; the context is continuously constructed during the communication situation using the information of the text itself (co-text) and the knowledge about the particular communication situation as well as its participants and the relevant cultural knowledge.

This is what reading of everyday and literary texts have in common: readers use the text itself as well as linguistically driven inferences as their comprehension strategy.

However, what differs are the *overall strategies of reading*. A strategy of reading is understood as a situationally bound pattern of reading; hereby, a reading situation involves a reader R, a text T produced by S_T, and R's reading goal G_r. The difference between two reading modi arises due to respective goals of reading which are interrelated with respective prototypical text properties. As idealized poles I conceive expository texts and the everyday reading strategy on the one hand and poetry and the literary reading strategy on the other.

3.1 Everyday strategy of reading

A reader R reads T with G_r of getting information about some entities in W_{real}[9] and/or about S_T's attitude towards these entities.[10] With this underlying goal, R reading a non-literary text T automatically constructs a coherent TWM of T. To this end, R automatically searches for *maximal relevance*, consisting in one and only one strong explicature for every linguistically generated open slot. In this process, R stops when one consistent and relevant reading, with which G_r can be met, is achieved (Wilson, 2018: 187); cf. (1):

(1) Der als Nebenkläger auftretende 45-Jährige erinnerte sich hingegen wortreich an den Tatvormittag im Oktober. Seine Ex-Frau habe befürchtet, ihr Lieb-

9. Maybe it would be more exact to talk not about W, but about W'_{real}, the latter being a world that is in a systematic relation to the real world W: it is speaker's S individual (re-)construction of W (see footnote 7).

10. As "learning new information from texts" (McKoon & Ratcliff, 1992: 440) is for the authors already a specific goal, these inferences are not only the minimal ones; also certain 'maximal inferences' are possible and often even necessary with everyday texts.

> haber, mit dem sie gerade Schluss gemacht hatte, würde ihr vor ihrer Arbeitsstätte […] auflauern, deshalb habe sie ihn gebeten, dort aufzupassen und gegebenenfalls die Polizei zu rufen. (Schwäbisches Tagblatt, 12.4.18)
> 'On the contrary, the 45-year-old joint plaintiff$_{[MASK]\text{-}1}$ wordily recalled the morning of the offence. His$_1$ ex-wife was afraid that her lover$_2$, whom$_2$ she'd just left, would waylay her near her place of employment. That's why she asked <u>him</u> to watch out there and to summon the police, if need be.'

Reading the segment of a newspaper article about a legal action, a reader would automatically interpret linguistically unmarked expressions as well as marked ones according to respective communicative defaults.[11] So, the change from unmarked indicative mood in the first sentence to the marked conjunctive mood would be interpreted as starting an indirect speech report. S/he would also resolve the ambiguous *ihn* ('him') in the last sentence to the plaintiff ex-husband. The resolution should be automatically possible, cf. the cognitive-linguistic definition of text coherence as automatic establishing of "conceptual continuity within a text-world-model" (Schwarz, 2001: 20) – even if in this particular text, perhaps, a reader would hesitate and need some time to decide on the referent because of the text's rather poor coherence. Prototypically, readers expect clear, coherent and cohesive texts here, which enable them to achieve their reading goal in an optimal way.

3.2 Strategy for aesthetic reading

Reader R reading a literary text T_{LIT} has some sort of "savouring" the text in the sense of his/her interaction with it while reading (Rosenblatt, 1994: 25) as G_r. By reading a literary text T_{LIT}, R non-automatically constructs a TWM of T_{LIT}.[12] To achieve this, R consciously searches for *maximal relevance*$_{LIT}$, consisting in generating *all* relevant morphosyntactically possible explicatures and other linguistically driven inferences. The inferences relevant for literary text reading are thus generally the same as with non-literary texts. However, they are first no more automatic, and second, inferring does not have one single explicature as its goal, but plural tentative explicatures.

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11. Such defaults for marked expressions are what Levinson (2000) calls R-implicatures and M-implicatures, i.e. generalized implicatures for the interpretation of less economic expressions as bearing additional meaning. Granzow-Emden (2019) uses a concept of 'pattern' ('Muster') for unmarked morphological and syntactic defaults.

12. As Landgraf (2020: 174) shows, the "deautomatization" of reading and understanding, including difficulties in automatic construction of a coherent text-world-model, can be actually regarded as "a basic element of literature consideration activities".

In his/her inferring, R_{LIT} especially relies on "apparently unmotivated departures from routine", which "provide tentative cues to ostension" (Wilson, 2018: 191). This means that the choice of a particular linguistic form, and especially of an in a particular context unexpected or marked one, is taken as a relevant signal to R_{LIT}, important for the understanding and the interpretation of the text. Or as Landgraf (2020: 100) puts it: "Literary texts need an especial reading mode, in which, contrary to other modes, an irritation and an expression of not understanding something can bring positive results".

With this linguistic modelling, it is possible first to find out and precisely describe the places of interpretative "irritation" and second to display the text senses in a principled way. Crucially, this does not mean that there is a claim to know "what the author meant to tell us" (as sometimes still worded in scholarly text interpretation; see 5 below). The signal and the invitation to construct plural explicatures is understood in the above authorization sense as *a property of a given text*.[13]

Additionally, R uses implicatures based on specific world knowledge concerning T_{LIT}'s genre, author and epoch. E.g., with medieval *minne*-songs R infers per default that the first person singer praising a lady is to be construed as a male person, whilst this cannot necessarily be a default assumption with contemporary lyrical texts which can also unequivocally present homosexual constellations.

Thus, T_{LIT}'s context is continuously constructed during the reading, using (i) co-text in the sense of linguistic content as well as meta-linguistic properties of the text itself (formal aspects like prosodic, syntactic and semantic properties of the expressions used) and (ii) the relevant historic and literary knowledge (e.g. knowledge of the writer, epoch, genre etc.).

As Averintseva-Klisch and Mühlherr (2020: 32) argue, the 'text sense' (Schwarz-Friesel 2006) thus consciously constructed is in a crucial way pluralistic. That is why they call this sense constructing 'text sense displaying', and stress

13. Leaving the issue of the author's intentions aside, it is generally plausible that the choice of the linguistic form of a poem is non-accidental, but in some way deliberately chosen by the author to convey his or her message in a suitable way. Strong evidence for this assumption is found with self-revisions, documented for numerous poets. So, for Hölderlin's poem 'Wie wenn am Feiertage' ('As when on holiday') there exists a preliminary version and a final version, showing e.g. that the textual introduction of the poets (who are the subject of the poem) gets much more marked and ambiguous: instead of explicit *So stehen jetzt unter günstiger Witterung / die Dichter* ('So the poets stand now under beneficial weather') in the first version, in the final one the referent (poets) is introduced with a cataphoric personal pronoun that gets resolved several lines later: *So stehen sie unter günstiger Witterung, sie, die kein Meister allein […] erzieht* ('so they stand under beneficial weather, they, whom not a master alone […] educates'); cf. Mottel (1998: 40–42).

that there is not one and the only one 'sense'. Instead, there are different potential senses that can be "retraced to the text" (in the sense of Landgraf, 2020: 111).[14]

To recapitulate: With the *everyday reading*, R's strategy is to achieve a most economic singular interpretation, as this is in accordance with R's goal of gaining information. The comprehension is (more or less) automatic. Ambiguities are solved in a contextually plausible way, linguistically marked expressions are interpreted according to communicative defaults. With the *aesthetic reading*, R is interested in non-automatic interpretation, i.e. conscious displaying of plural text senses. Ambiguities and linguistically marked expressions are taken to be important keys for this displaying. According to a particular reading goal and/or particular background or reading situation, R may use all of these senses for a literary interpretation or choose one of them as his/her particular interpretation.[15]

Importantly, both strategies introduced above are clearly idealized poles of a continuum. Of course, there are literary texts (Landgraf, 2020: 177, footnote 75, names especially light prose fiction) that are usually read not with a motivation and strategy described above, but just to know what happened to the protagonist further or who killed the victim and why and/or maybe to get some sort of entertainment or just to pass the time in an agreeable way. The model above actually predicts that an actual reading strategy of a given reader R depends on his/her particular intents (G_r) concerning the given text, on the particular text kind and R's experience with this text kind, particular reading situation etc.

Still, as I argue in the following, it seems promising especially in the school didactic context to phrase explicitly the differences of the poles and to aspire the literary reading strategy. Hereby, it is plausible to see poetry as a 'literary extreme', so to speak. Poems are predestined for the literary reading strategy because of two simple reasons: first, poetic texts are usually already formally different from the everyday ones, being ordered as (often rhythmically ordered and/or rhymed) lines. Second, they are often relatively short, so that it is possible to savour every single word and to construct different readings (cf. e.g. Burdorf, 1997: 135). That is why in the next section I will use poems as illustrations.

In the following, I am going to illustrate my proposal of the linguistically based specifics of the literary reading on two particular cases of pronominal reference which are instances of two different ways of "departures from routine"

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14. In their paper, Averintseva-Klisch and Mühlherr display an array of text senses for a medieval short poem and show how these can be used for at least six different literary interpretations.

15. The issue of choosing or not is not to be solved linguistically. Also, the question what exactly is the "savouring" of the text as the goal of the literary reading, possibly cannot be answered with the means of linguistics.

(Section 4.2). To be able to do this, first I present in 4.1 briefly the common assumptions on the referential routines involving personal pronouns.

4. Literary reading and pronominal reference in lyrical texts

4.1 Referential coherence and cohesion: personal pronouns

In the following, I sum up the common assumptions about meaning and functions of referential NPs. I concentrate myself on personal pronouns; see Averintseva-Klisch, Bryant and Peschel (2019, Section 3) for an overall overview.

Traditionally, for English and German, forms of the 1st (*I, we* resp. *ich, wir*), 2d (*you* resp. *du, ihr*) and 3d person (with gender differentiation: *he/she/it, they* resp. *er/sie/es, sie*) with respective case forms are seen as constituting the personal pronoun paradigm (e.g. Mühlhäusler, 2001; Büring, 2011 for a typological overview; Wöllstein et al., 2016 for German).

Personal pronouns have in common that they "designate the roles of persons in a communicative event (speakers, addressees, persons spoken about or combinations of these [...])" (Mühlhäusler, 2001: 741). Semantically seen, personal pronouns are inherently definite. One could summarize their meaning as presupposing a unique identifiability of their referents for speakers and addressees in the current communication situation; with 1st and 2d person, the identifiability is given as a default via the communication situation itself (speaker and addressee); with 3d person, it is as a rule caused by anaphoric use.

To be more exact, the primary function of a 3d person personal pronoun is an unmarked anaphoric reference to a constant discourse topic referent (cf. Bosch & Umbach, 2007, among others), as in (2):[16]

(2) A Little Red Hen lived in a barnyard. She spent almost all of her time walking about the barnyard in her picketty-pecketty fashion, scratching everywhere for worms. She dearly loved fat, delicious worms and felt they were absolutely necessary to the health of her children. As often as she found a worm she would call "Chuck-chuck-chuck!" to her chickies. When they were gathered about her, she would distribute choice morsels of her tid-bit. A busy little body was she! [...]
One day the Little Red Hen found a Seed. It was a Wheat Seed [...]
(The Little Red Hen; https://americanliterature.com/childrens-stories/the-little-red-hen)

16. For the sake of readability, I use English examples in this section in case here are no important differences between English and German.

Discourse topicality of a referent allows a pronoun to ensure the referent's unique identifiability, as a pronoun does not have enough lexical material to ensure it in any other way. Other way round, the topicality of a referent allows for economic use of referential means, leading cross-linguistically to a preference of the shortest referential means for the most topical ("highly activated" for Gundel et al., 1993) referent. The pronominal reference can be repeated, constituting a "neutral reference chain" (Thurmair, 2003), as in (2).

Recurrence of a definite full NP is then used as a marked strategy: it marks a new text segment, like in (2), where a new narration episode explicitly marked with *one day* calls for a re-nominalization, and/or disambiguates when there are two or more possible referents, cf. (3):

(3) Not long after this there was a great bustle in the country; for the king's daughter had been carried off by a mighty dragon, and the king mourned over his loss day and night [...]
(The four clever brothers, a fairy tale; http://www.authorama.com/grimms-fairy-tales-45.html)

Here, a use of *he* in the second sentence would be ambiguous between referring to the king and the dragon, whilst a repetition of the NP allows for referential clarity.

Besides, using different lexical NPs instead of personal pronouns might be a stylistic device like in (4) and (5): Here, different NPs add new characterizations of the referent and/or show an aesthetically valued variety of expression:[17]

(4) You will learn how to change your infant's diaper, give your baby a bath, and protect and nurture your new bundle of joy.
(C. Baird, I'm Going to be a Dad, 2009: 13)

(5) [...] so how should Mauricio Pochettino and his Tottenham side approach this fixture? [...] The Tottenham manager has made many interesting calls [...]
(The Times, 9.4.19)

The possibility of stylistic variety as well as introducing new information in passing and tersely make such 'rhematic anaphors' (Consten & Schwarz-Friesel, 2007) especially popular in newspaper texts, as in (5).

This means that to use a personal pronoun not readdressing a topical referent is possible, but this use is always marked. In particular, pronominal reference can serve a pragmatically marked referent introduction: in this case, traditionally

17. Interestingly, the only one functional aspect brought up in German text books in the context of referring is 'avoiding of repetition' (in general and repetition of referring expressions in particular) as a matter of (alleged) aesthetic principle (cf. Averintseva-Klisch, Bryant & Peschel, 2019: 58).

called 'cataphor' or 'cataphoric reference', using of a pronoun introduces additional functional aspects like increasing suspense, cf. (6), or stressing the typicality or non-individuality of the referent, cf. (7):[18]

(6) Nobody seemed to know where they came from, but there they were in the Forest: Kanga and Roo.
(Alan Alexander Milne: Winnie-the-Pooh; chapter beginning)

(7) Suddenly she woke up. It was half-past two. She considered why she had woken up. Oh yes! In the kitchen someone had knocked against a chair. She listened to the kitchen. It was quiet. It was too quiet, and as she moved her hand across the bed beside her, she found it empty. That was what had made it so particularly quiet: she missed his breathing.
(Wolfgang Borchert, The Bread, translated by David Porter 1971)

To sum up: The routine use of 3d person personal pronouns is to refer anaphorically to an unambiguously accessible, topic referent. This use is unmarked. An ambiguous use of a pronoun or a use of a pronoun to introduce a referent textually is marked. This markedness as such is independent of the question whether it is ostensive and in need of an interpretation, or just a case of non-intentional deficient text coherence. With literary texts, however, a marked pronoun use is a "tentative cue to ostension", as I will show exemplarily in the following.

4.2 Using the model: Two examples of meaningful departures from routine

4.2.1 *Reference routine one: Avoid ambiguity*

In Rilke's First Duino Elegy, line 27, the pronoun *sie* is clearly ambiguous in its reference, thus being a clear ostensive departure from routine, cf. (8):

(8) Ja, die Frühlinge brauchten dich wohl. Es muteten manche Sterne dir
yes the springs needed you PART EXPLET demanded some stars you
zu, daß du **sie** spürtest. […] (Rilke, Duino Elegy I, 26–27)
V_PART that you they$_{AKK.PL}$ *feel*$_{2PSSG}$
'Oh yes, the springtimes presumably needed you. Some stars demanded from you that you feel them'

Here, the pronoun *sie* (them) actually morphosyntactically and semantically plausibly refers back to either *the springs* or *some stars*. Both potential antecedent NPs are in plural and thus suit morphologically. The NP *some stars* as a subject of

18. A cataphor being a means of increasing suspense is a usual definition, e.g. Zifonun et al. (1997: 547); this is clearly an oversimplification; however, in any case, cataphoric reference is pragmatically marked, leading to a number of additional meaning aspects of such reference.

the main clause that embeds the clause with the pronoun is syntactically a good antecedent for a personal pronoun. However, discourse-structurally, the NP *the springs* is a better antecedent: as a subject in the 'forefield' (in terms of linear syntax; see e.g. Gallmann, 2015) of its clause, it holds a syntactic topic position (cf. Molnár, 1991), which makes it a good candidate for a discourse topic. *Some stars*, on the contrary, is a 'middle field' subject and as such not in an inherently topic-favouring position. Also, the definiteness of *the springs* and the indefiniteness of *some stars* makes the first NP a better topic (see e.g. Roberts, 2011: 1928). Besides, anaphoric reference back to *the springs* would establish a coherence relation of elaboration between the two clauses and thus enhance the discourse coherence. Semantically seen, *the springs* can be *felt* in the literal sense of bodily perception; with *stars* it is not quite that clear, as they are actually perceived by sight, not by feeling in the proper sense of the word. Still, stars are perceptible in the wider sense of the word, too.[19]

That is, we cannot with linguistic keys definitely decide for one anaphoric resolution or the other. According to the proposal above, we need not: the pronominal reference here is, first, a "departure from routine", being notoriously ambiguous. Second, as the text is a lyrical text, the overall strategy of reading systematically allows for many simultaneously valid anaphoric resolutions, thus leading to a "wide array of weak implicatures" (in the sense of Wilson, 2018: 196) relating springs and stars to a complex image of a spring night. A potential ambiguity is not to be solved, but to be used for the interpretation.

4.2.2 *Reference routine two: Resolve personal pronouns to topics*

As shown above, personal pronouns are preferably used anaphorically for topic referents. These are often subjects (of the preceding clauses); most prototypical topics are animate and human. This routine is ostensively exploited in a poem by Ingeborg Bachmann, cf. (9):

19. Of course, both NPs name something that in the literal sense can neither *need* nor be *demanding*; so, both reference options would involve a so-called 'personification' of the referent. This is, however, independent of the anaphoric resolution.

(9) Drüben versinkt dir die Geliebte im Sand,
'Over_there sinks to_you the$_{\text{FEM}}$ *loved.one*$_{\text{FEM}}$ *in_the*$_{\text{MASK}}$ *sand*$_{\text{MASK}}$
er steigt um ihr wehendes Haar,
he rises around her streaming hair
er fällt ihr ins Wort,
he falls her in_the word
er befiehlt ihr zu schweigen,
he orders her to be_silent
er findet sie sterblich
he finds her mortal
und willig dem Abschied
and willing towards_the farewell
nach jeder Umarmung. (Ingeborg Bachmann, Die gestundete Zeit, 2d stanza)
after each embrace
'In the distance your lover sinks under the sand,
It pours through her wind-loosened hair,
It covers her words,
It turns her to silence,
It finds her mortal
And ready to part
With every embrace.'[20]

In the German poem, the masculine personal pronoun *er* in the second line is a non-routine use, as the text-pragmatic preferences of the pronominal reference and the morphosyntactic antecedent properties do not agree here. Morphosyntactically seen, *er* can only refer back to the masculine *Sand;* semantically seen, too, sand rising around the woman's hair is fully compatible with her sinking in it, so that this reference is plausible. However, as shown above, this is not the prototypical text-pragmatic case, personal pronouns strongly preferring topical and/or subject antecedents.[21] *Sand* in the first line of the stanza is neither subject nor topic, so a personal pronoun to refer back to it is here not expected.

Interestingly, an interpretation of the poem one finds on a private internet platform in fact proposes that a new person gets introduced into the text with

20. 'The time allotted', translation by Jerome Rothenberg (Rothenberg & Joris, 1998: 32). Through the use of *it* as a pronoun, the coreference of the pronoun and *the sand* is made unequivocal.

21. Bader and Portele (2019) recently argue with experimental data for a different generalization; their data, in which the variables subject, topic and clause position have been systematically varied, show that "the preferred antecedent of a personal pronoun is the subject of the preceding clause" (Bader & Portele, 2019: 31).

er: "[…] one He, the fourth character in the poem, handles the lover in an overbearing, dictatorial way and destroys the relationship between the You and the lover [the other three characters being 'the I', 'the You' and 'the Lover'; my comment]".[22] Note that this reading involves an equally marked (see 4.1 above) cataphoric or deictic introduction of a new referent with a pronoun. This 'person reading' would allow a semantically straightforward understanding of the lines 3 following: some male human interacts with the woman, prohibits her to speak etc. However, for the second line this reading leads to a semantic problem, as rising around the hair is something possible for sand masses, but not for humans. The anaphoric reading with *he* referring back to the sand seems thus to be more plausible. Still, the lines 3 and following imply a so-called 'personification' of the sand, or, to be more exact, aspects of both readings, a marked anaphoric reference to the sand as well as an (equally marked) deictic introduction of a male character (who is the sand at the same time). Thus, although the actual personification starts in line 3, line 2 has a crucial role in the text, as it already prepares the personification in a subtle way, using an untypical pronoun reference. The irritation of a text-pragmatically competent reader at this point starts the text sense displaying process via spelling out the referential ambiguity and using it actively for the interpretation.

To sum up: in both cases, a marked use of a pronoun evokes a potential referential ambiguity. According to the aesthetic reading strategy, it is not resolved, but two conflicting readings are developed in a parallel way, being reconciled in complex images[23] to be further interpreted with the means of literary studies; this interpretation is explicitly not a matter of linguistics.

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22. „[…] ein ‚Er', die vierte Figur im Gedicht, behandelt die Geliebte autoritär und herrisch, zerstört die Beziehung zwischen dem Du und der Geliebten"; https://www.xlibris.de/Autoren/Bachmann/Werke, (checked on 26.8.19). Note that this interpretation requires a stressed strong pronoun. It seems that a non-topical, non-subject and non-animate referent for a forefield subject pronoun is so untypical (although masculine and feminine personal pronouns in German per se can refer to inanimate referents when staying in forefield, if they are weak, i.e. unstressed; cf. Cardinaletti & Starke, 1999) that the author of the interpretation does not read *er* as referring back to the sand at all, but as introducing a new person into the text.

23. Such complex images are what Wilson (2018: 198) calls 'non-propositional effects': "interpretive effects which are 'non-propositional' in the sense that they do not constitute a meaning or message which can be rendered as a single proposition (or small set of propositions)." I am not quite happy with this concept, propositions being just a way of modelling linguistic meaning and not a cognitive phenomenon. My proposal allows a unified account of text meaning, e.g. (but not necessarily) in terms of a set of propositions. The peculiarity of literary texts is under this account that such sets might combine superficially contradictory propositions and still allow a TWM construal in the sense of 'text sense displaying'.

5. Looking ahead: Didactic implications of the model

The model above has clear didactic implications that can be made fruitful in scholarly German teaching.

First implication: Reading as TWM construal for all texts

With the differentiation between cohesion, coherence construal and text sense displaying, there is

1. a clear concept for the similarities and differences between the reading of non-literary and literary texts and
2. a possibility to locate potential understanding differences for a particular text more exactly.

Ad (1)

Not only in school context a simple generalization that fictional texts are about fictional worlds whereas non-fictional texts make objective assertions about the real world can be found, e.g. the following quotation from a more or less official internet site specialized on coaching:

> The most important difference between fictional and non-fictional texts is, as the name already tells us, that fictional texts are invented ones, while non-fictional texts refer exclusively to the reality. With fictional texts, any aspect of these can be fictional or just some particular aspects. In non-fictional texts, nothing should be freely invented.[24]

This is an everyday simplification of common semantic and pragmatic assumptions, cf. Searle's (1975: 158) concept of assertive speech acts, that have "word to world direction of fit". However, not only recently with the concept of *fake news* in the focus of public attention, the quoted differentiation seems to be too simplistic, cf. (10), several examples from German periodicals. These are all non-fictional and all concerned with one and the same event, the planning of an official meeting between the French Prime Minister Édouard Philippe as a representative of the French government with some representatives of the Gilets jaunes protest movement in the first days of December 2018. However, this meeting is presented in a strongly varying way:

24. Found on the site of the ZGS-Bildungs-GmbH, www.schuelerhilfe.de on 05.12.2018.

(10) a. Am Dienstag will Premierminister Édouard Philippe Vertreter der „Gelbwesten" empfangen, wie die französische Nachrichtenagentur AFP berichtete. (www.tagesspiegel.de, 3.12.18)
'On Tuesday, the Prime Minister Édouard Philippe is going to receive some representatives of the Gilets jaunes, as the French news agency AFP reports.'

b. Zudem habe Macron Premierminister Édouard Philippe gebeten, „mit einem Anliegen für Dialog" die Vorsitzenden der wichtigsten Parteien und Vertreter der Protestbewegung zu treffen. (https://www.welt.de, 5.12.18)
'Besides, Macron asked the Prime Minister Édouard Philippe to receive the heads of the most important parties and some representatives of the protest movement "with a wish for a dialogue"'

c. Er [Macron] habe Philippe angewiesen, Vertreter der Protestbewegung sowie die Spitzen der im Parlament vertretenen Parteien zu empfangen, teilte der Élysée-Palast […] mit. (www.zeit.de, 3.12.18)
'He (Macron) has ordered Philippe to receive some representatives of the protest movement and the heads of the parties with sits in the Parliament, as the Élysée-Palace disclosed.'

d. Bisher versteckt sich der Präsident und lässt andere seine Zugeständnisse verkünden. (http://www.spiegel.de, 5.12.18)
'Until now, the president is hiding and has others proclaim his concessions for him.'

In (10a), the meeting is presented as the Minister's own decision, *will … treffen* meaning literally 'wants to meet'. In (10b) and (10c), on the contrary, the meeting is not the initiative of the Minister, as he is allegedly *gebeten* ('asked') in (10b) resp. *angewiesen* ('ordered') in (10c) by the President to organize it. In (10d), it is also assumed that the President is the one behind the meeting, but this information is additionally presented as evidence against him. Interestingly, this is achieved without any lexically pejorative expressions: what is asserted is that Macron is *hiding himself* and letting others do his work; this clearly contradicts our expectations of a Head of State who is to be active and to assume responsibilities himself; so, a negative evaluation of the President's behaviour can be implicated here.

In other words, one and the same event in the real world gets textually presented in very different ways. Hereby, pragmatic aspects interplay with clearly semantic aspects like verb meaning in (10a) vs. (10c); the latter are assumed to be truth-conditionally relevant. However, intuitively neither of the sentences in (10) is straightforwardly false, even if their meanings are very different; still, they are all about 'the real world'.

In contrast, as shown above, text studies propose similar understanding mechanisms for fictional and non-fictional texts: with any kind of text, a text

recipient constructs a subjective TWM while reading (see Section 2 above). The model proposed in this paper on the one hand captures the similarities of non-fictional and fictional texts sketched above: both involve a reader-based construction of a TWM as well as an author-based specific presentation of (fictional or real) world. On the other hand, it reproduces the linguistically relevant differences between the reading of fictional, especially poetic, texts and non-fictional texts.

Ad (2)

It is of didactic importance to locate potential differences exactly and to couple them to text properties and not to potential reader incapacity: It goes without saying that the reading motivation suffers if one believes him-/herself to be too stupid to understand the text.[25] Instead, if one gets tools to locate reading difficulties systematically at the cohesion level, coherence level or text sense level, to solve them and to use them for further text interpretations, it not only helps to cope with a particular text, but also enhances the positive self-concept as a competent reader (cf. Rosebrock & Nix, 2017: 21–22).

Second implication: Revising the direction of the text analysis with literary texts

The model proposed above suggests a text interpretation procedure that differs in a crucial way from the common practice of everyday school literary analysis. With the latter, the way of interpreting a text is as a rule '*text-external to text-internal*': a student interpreting a literary text is expected to propose an 'interpretation hypothesis', which is then validated with the help of particular text material.[26] The way to an 'interpretation hypothesis' is not at all clear. Here, a clear

25. Consten et al. (2017: 94) discuss a short poem from 1971 by Reiner Kunze, translated as *He went. The papers did not report any loss.* that comments on the forced departure of then well-known poet Peter Huchel from the DDR; they observe that here, it is especially the respective world knowledge that allows the construction of a TWM; without this knowledge, the text is nearly incoherent. One can argue whether this reading is the only one possible (Consten et al. talk of "the prevalent interpretation") or, according to the model above, only one of many possible text senses, so that there are other ways of understanding for this text (cf. also Wilson, 2018: 190, for discussing interpretations attestedly not based on author's intentions in the case of a novel by Philip Roth). In any case, there is a potential understanding problem here that can be precisely located at both cohesion and coherence levels as a marked pronoun use.

26. At least, this is what the wording of corresponding tasks or teacher instructions suggest, e.g. the following instruction for reviewing written exams ('Abitur'): "Are the interpretation hypotheses validated and explicated with text evidence?" (Utikal n.d.: 1).

'*text-first*'-strategy beginning with the text itself and ending up with interpretation hypotheses directly following from the model above, could be helpful:

1. Explicate the general reading strategy for a particular text, identifying these aspects of the text surface, which could be relevant for an interpretation hypothesis, i.e. deviations from linguistic routines as "tentative cues to ostension".
2. Explore carefully the exact meaning potential of such "departures from routine", e.g. describe a marked sentence structure, an ambiguous pronoun etc. in its peculiarity as exact as possible.
3. Propose an interpretation hypothesis based on the steps one and two.

This strategy might, due to its explicitness and text-based-character, be especially helpful for non-expert readers and for inclusive German teaching.[27] Of course, it has a precondition that might be seen as an important drawback especially in this context: the reading strategy requires from readers some knowledge, explicit or at least implicit, of the linguistic default, to enable to identify departures from it. Landgraf (2020: 105) discusses this point as a general problem of the deviation-based concepts: "There arises a circle, as deviation-based poetologic concepts presuppose a performance that a successful (German) teaching produces as a final output". However, he argues that "a gradual mediating process" (ibid.) is possible, in which the knowledge of poetologic, or, in our case, linguistic defaults and the identifying of important deviations can in fact promote each other. A linguistic default relevant for any text under consideration should in any case be made obvious to the learners using adequate methods for the particular case.[28] This leads directly to the third implication:

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27. This may be the case also for autism spectrum readers. As Vermeulen (2012, Chapter 3) points out, autism spectrum persons often have problems in using what he calls 'global context' to create coherence: i.e., they cannot make top-down-inferences based on the default frame knowledge. An example Vermeulen (2012: 113) uses is a picture of a person before a ticket counter in a context of a train travel story. Even if a picture is not a very detailed one, the context usually helps to identify the suitable situation and its parts like the passenger, the counter and the ticket vendor. An autist, however, took the counter for a sink with a mirror (there being some visual similarity between the counter and a sink) not being able to use the 'global context'. Similarly, understanding a fictional text involves lots of frame knowledge involving the particular text world as a frame, but also external aspects like text kind, text author and epoch, etc. If a person cannot access this knowledge, an understanding might easily fail. An explicit step-by-step retracing of the important information in the text itself might turn useful here.

28. This is especially important as the default is the so-called elaborated code, which is not necessarily familiar enough to any particular student, cf. Landgraf (2020: 104).

Third implication: Integrative grammar teaching is necessary and possible

According to the model above, text understanding is non-automatic with literary texts, but crucially involves conscious text sense displaying. Thus, literary texts, especially poems, give an opportunity to think and to talk about phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic properties of the text and in this way to make implicit linguistic knowledge explicit.[29] To stay with pronouns as a case study: in the sense of "a gradual mediating process" sketched above, thinking about potential referents for a pronoun in a poem allows students to consider general mechanisms of pronominal reference – and thus serves as a motivation to reconsider grammar concepts like morphosyntactic congruence in this context. This allows for a truly 'integrative grammar teaching' (cf. Einecke, 2013) of literature and grammar. This learning process is indeed bilateral, as on the one hand, grammar concepts and unmarked defaults are used as a starting point for analyzing of marked deviations from the default and for literary interpretation; on the other hand, the contemplating of the marked cases and interpreting them helps to understand the default better; see also Landgraf (2020, Chapter 8).

Fourth implication: Avoiding 'what the author wants to tell us' or 'nutcracker hermeneutics'

The model above on the one hand takes the linguistic structure of a text seriously and views a choice of a marked expression as a signal to its readers. On the other hand, it clearly avoids a much-criticized teaching routine using a concept of author's intention, in the school context often present as "what the author wants to tell us" (e.g. Matuschek, n.d.: 1). This question presupposes that the author actually wants to tell something, but out of some reasons does not do it directly. Understanding and interpreting the text then amounts to a "kind of nutcracker hermeneutics, assuming that literary texts are puzzles to be solved, i.e. cracked" (Matuschek, 2013: 65).[30] This "cracking", however, does not come up to the real purpose of the literature, the latter being "an offer of purely linguistically evoked reality concepts" (Matuschek, n.d.: 3).

All the more, for the so-called 'hermetic texts', i.e. deliberately occult especially lyrical, but also prose texts from the beginning of the 20th century on (Baßler, 2000: 34), even a simple understanding is programmatically not possible.

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29. Or, as Landgraf (2020: 30) puts it, "thus, literary texts offer a potential context for applying the grammar knowledge that lies beyond the much-scolded knowledge of terminology".

30. I owe the reference to 'nutcracker hermeneutics' and to Matuschek's text to Manfred Consten (Univ. of Jena).

That is, an interpretation strategy that solely relies on understanding in the sense of establishing coherence, simply does not suit for such texts. A 'close reading' with a focus on linguistic means especially in their marked use would instead allow "to show the non-understandability and the refusal of sense and to demonstrate, how exactly well-established patterns of interpretation fail" with these texts (Landgraf, 2020: 115). Disconnecting the text sense displaying in a principled way from coherence establishment predicts that there might be non-coherent texts with a systematic openness of text senses not allowing a sensible choice. What still remains, is a clear pattern of the text reading focusing marked linguistic expressions even for these texts.

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