

# *An interdisciplinary approach to the genesis of the narratives in Samuel Beckett's Endgame*

Pim Verheyen<sup>1</sup> Antwerp University. Email: [pim.verheyen@uantwerpen.be](mailto:pim.verheyen@uantwerpen.be). The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Research Council under the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) / ERC grant agreement n° 31360911.

## *Introduction*

THIS PAPER AIMS TO EXAMINE THE STORIES in Samuel Beckett's *Fin de partie* (from here on *Fdp*) or in English *Endgame* (hereafter abbreviated as *E*) by means of their genesis as well as stylistics and the linguistic approach called Conversation Analysis or CA. The connection between narratology and drama serves as a starting point in the first part of this paper since it reveals the dialogical nature of stories in a work of theatre. As the stories in *Endgame* are mainly a collaborative effort on the part of two characters, CA is a suitable manner to study the play's intricate interactional structure. By taking into account the stylistic effects of the dialogue as well as the genesis of the individual stories, these methodologies reveal interesting results that will be related in the second part of this paper. The story about the Old Questions is analysed as a case study. An overview of the development of the story's genesis will be sketched, followed by an in-depth analysis revealing that both the content as well as the form of the narrative are quite similar to the stories found in every-day conversation. The three methods - CA, stylistics and genetic criticism - thus reveal a Beckett who is concerned with the nature of his theatrical dialogues as they seem to mimic real-life interaction.

## *Conversational storytelling*

Although the connection between narrativity and drama dates back to Antiquity when Plato devised the mimesis-diegesis opposition, research on narration in theatrical works is still relatively unknown. Until recently it was believed that narrations and storytellers did not exist in drama as the genre was considered to

be exclusively a mimetic one.<sup>2</sup> However, the absence of a narrator or a narrator function does not disqualify drama as a narrative genre nor as an object of narratological study.

Narratives are basic elements in dramatic texts in general, and perhaps especially so in the plays of Samuel Beckett. According to Kristin Morrison, *Endgame* is “one of the best examples of extended narrative as an essential part of drama”.<sup>3</sup> Brian Richardson concurs: “[a]s might be expected, one of the most compelling dramatists to employ narration on stage is Samuel Beckett”, who “regularly brings mimetic and diegetic modes into paradoxical collisions”.<sup>4</sup>

Although the use of stories in dramatic works is not a new technique as “[narration] has long been a basic feature of the twentieth-century stage”,<sup>5</sup> Morrison argues that in Beckett’s work, “the narrative form itself has been employed as a significant new dramatic technique”.<sup>6</sup> Richardson agrees by asserting that Beckett “almost single-handedly created a theatre of narration. A look at his deployments of diegesis can point to his unique contributions to the development of drama, the presentation of interiority, and the redefinition of the limits of representation”.<sup>7</sup> Many theatrical works employ a single mode of storytelling throughout the play except for authors such as Beckett who vary their narrative techniques within one single work. Beckett’s drama covers a wide variety of types, from extremely short to relatively long stories.

The boundary between narrative and non-narrative dialogue in works of theatre is problematic, especially since the term “narrative” itself is a vexed issue as it has filled a conflicting diversity of conceptual roles.<sup>8</sup> Traditionally, the definitions of this concept have mostly been text-orientated since the status of a scene is determined as a narrative by means of the presence or absence of certain textual features, for example in the works of Gerald Prince,<sup>9</sup> Suzanne Keen,<sup>10</sup> or David Rudrum.<sup>11</sup>

In her influential book *Towards a “natural” narratology* (1996), Monika Fludernik attempts to counteract some of the shortcomings of traditional approaches to narrative theory and starts by redefining narratives in terms of “natural” parameters. She does not approach narratives from a text-oriented point of view, but rather from a cognitive perspective,

<sup>2</sup> PRINCE, G. *Narratology: the form and functioning of narrative*. The Hague: Mouton, 1982, p. 4; RICHARDSON, B. ‘Time is out of joint’: narrative models and the temporality of the drama. *Poetics Today*, 1987. 8.2; Idem. Point of view in drama: diegetic monologue, unreliable narrators, and the author’s voice on stage. *Comparative Drama*, 1988. 22.3, p. 193; Idem. Voice and narration in postmodern drama. *New Literary History*, 2001, 32.3, p. 682, 690; FLUDERNICK, M. Genres, text types, or discourse modes? Narrative modalities and generic categorization. *Style*, 34.2, 2000, p. 355, 358, 366; HERMAN, L.; VERVAECK, B. *Handbook of narrative analysis*. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2001, pp. 14-5; ABBOTT P. H. *The Cambridge introduction to narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003, p. 193.

<sup>3</sup> MORRISON, K. *Canter and chronicles: the use of narrative in the plays of Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983, p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> RICHARDSON, B. *Unnatural voices: extreme narration in modern and contemporary fiction*. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 2006, p. 108; Idem. Point of view in drama: diegetic monologue, unreliable narrators, and the author’s voice on stage. *Comparative Drama* 22.3, 1988, p. 197.

<sup>5</sup> RICHARDSON, B. Voice and narration in postmodern drama. *New Literary History* 32.3, 2001, p. 69.

<sup>6</sup> MORRISON, K. *Canter and chronicles: the use of narrative in the plays of Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983, p. 123.

<sup>7</sup> RICHARDSON, B. Op. cit., 1988, p. 202.

<sup>8</sup> HERMAN, L. and VERVAECK, B. Op. cit., 2001, p. 11; ABBOTT P. H. Op. cit., 2003, p. 22; GEORGAKOPOULOU, A. Thinking big with small stories in narrative and identity analysis. *Narrative Inquiry* 16.1, 2006, p. 122; RYAN, M.-L. Semantics, pragmatics, and narrativity: a response to David Rudrum. *Narrative* 14.2, 2006, p. 192-3; PAGE, R. “Narrative structure.” In: *The Cambridge handbook of stylistics*, edited by Peter Stockwell and Sara Whiteley, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2014, p. 439.

<sup>9</sup> PRINCE, G. *A dictionary of narratology*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987, p. 65.

<sup>10</sup> KEEN, S. *Narrative form*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p. 121.

<sup>11</sup> RUDRUM, D. From narrative representation to narrative use: towards the limits of definition. *Narrative* 13.2, 2005, p. 195.

which prioritises a reception-orientated approach that analyses narrativity as “a function of narrative texts [which] centres on experientially of an anthropomorphic nature”.<sup>12</sup> By doing so, Fludernik follows in the footsteps of Käte Hamburger (1973) and Dorrit Cohn (1978), who similarly analyse the capability of narratives to portray consciousness.

Fludernik insists that narratives revolve around human experience, a feature derived from William Labov’s research on oral narratives (1972). The concept of narrativity relies on the representation of a character’s consciousness: when characters tell stories, the narratives are focalised or mediated through their consciousness. This redefinition of narrativity based on experientiality was influenced by conversational storytelling, in which the narrator usually talks about his or her own experiences.<sup>13</sup> Fludernik introduces the term “experientiality” to redefine narrativity and link stories to a consciousness factor whether of mediation or participation.

Several critics believe that storytelling is an activity in which the narrator is an active performer and the audience a passive listener.<sup>14</sup> However, studies of conversational storytelling demonstrate that narration is a collaborative activity on the part of the teller as well as the recipient.<sup>15</sup> In a conversation, both parties interact to negotiate the beginning, continuation and ending of a story, work out what the story is about, and also determine what it is that the telling brings about. As Harvey Sacks points out, the speaker must first obtain the right to a “multi-unit-turn”<sup>16</sup> by means of a two-move sequence that takes place before the story. First, the speakers start with a single-unit long “story preface” in which they propose to narrate a story in the following turns. Second, the listener either accepts or declines this offer. The ordinary turn-taking procedure is suspended for the duration of the story if the listener requests to hear the story.

The stories in dramatic works are jointly told through the dialogue of the play. The turns in which the narrative comes forth is interactionally embedded in question-answer sequences. The stories in *Endgame* are constructed by two or more characters who work together to create a narrative. When teaching about the seventeenth-century dramatist Jean-Baptiste Racine in 1931 at Trinity College Dublin, Beckett pointed out the antagonistic dialogues between the protagonists and their confidants to his students.<sup>17</sup> According to Beckett, these Racinian dialogues function more as monologues or soliloquies that demonstrate fragmentary views of

<sup>12</sup> FLUDERNIK, M. *Towards a “natural” narratology*. London: Routledge, 1996, p. 26.

<sup>13</sup> FLUDERNIK, M. New wine in old bottles? voice, focalization and new writing. *New Literary History* 32.3, 2001, p. 624; Idem. Chronology, time, tense and experientiality in narrative. *Language and Literature* 12.2, 2003a, p. 120.

<sup>14</sup> LABOV, W. *Language of the inner city*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972, pp. 354-96; see also BAUMAN, R. *Verbal arts as performance*. Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House, 1977, 1986.

<sup>15</sup> PRINCE, G. On readers and listeners in narrative. *Neophilologus*, 55, 1971, p. 117; MANDELBAUM, J. Interpersonal activities in conversational storytelling. *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 53.2, 1989, p. 114; Idem. Assigning responsibility in conversational storytelling: the interactional construction of reality. *Text* 13.2, 1993, pp. 252-3; GOODWIN, C. and HERITAGE, J. Conversation analysis. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 19, 1990, p. 300, p. 302; NORRICK, N. *Conversational narrative: storytelling in everyday talk*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000, p. 12, p. 28, p. 33, pp. 107-15; SEEDHOUSE, P. Conversation analysis as research methodology. In: *Applying conversation analysis*, edited by Keith Richards and Paul Seedhouse. Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 263.

<sup>16</sup> Qtd. in GOODWIN, C. and HERITAGE, J. Op. cit., 1990, p. 299.

<sup>17</sup> MOORJANI, A. Beckett’s racinian fictions: “Racine and the modern novel” Revisited. *Samuel Beckett Today / Aujourd’hui* 24, 2012, p. 41, pp. 47-8.

the protagonist's divided mind. Beckett even coined a new term for this notion, namely an interior "polylogue" or "poliloquy", mixing "poly" and "monologue" or "soliloquy".<sup>18</sup> If Beckett's own pseudo-couples are inspired by Racine's theatre, then Beckett's teller and listener have a strong bond as the stories are told by one narrator splitting into a protagonist and his confidant.

As a result of the collaborative nature of these stories, different versions of reality are created as the story is negotiated by two parties who each have their own purposes for telling or influencing its contents.<sup>19</sup> The manner in which a story's purpose is interactionally negotiated can be analysed by tracing the "tellability" of a narrative. The term was first introduced by William Labov in 1972<sup>20</sup> and changed into "narrativity" in 2008 by Gerald Prince. According to Labov, narrators make the narrative's point clear and evaluate it by indicating how parts of the story contribute to making that point.<sup>21</sup> Neal Norrick<sup>22</sup> similarly explains that the "tellability" of a story is measured by its news value and relevance as well as the point the interlocutors want to bring across. Hugo Bowles agrees when he explains "tellability" as "the manner in which a speaker marks up what for him or her are the salient features of the story and the way the speaker makes clear how he or she wishes them to be understood".<sup>23</sup> The speaker constantly signals why he tells the story and the listener closely monitors the reasons why the story is being told.

David Herman defines "tellability" in a different manner:

[s]ituations and events can be more or less tellable: the ways in which they are told can [...] display different degrees of narrativity. Thus, whereas both predicates are scalar, tellability attaches to configurations of facts and narrativity to sequences representing those configurations of facts.<sup>24</sup>

"Tellability" is also a concept of great importance to Fludernik's<sup>25</sup> experience-based concept of narrativity as there are three processes which "constitute narrativity", namely the reviewing of past events, their reproduction, and their evaluation in terms of the story's "tellability". In her entry in the *Routledge encyclopedia of narrative theory*, Marie-Laure Ryan writes that "[t]ellability is a quality that makes stories inherently worth telling, independently of their textualisation".<sup>26</sup> According to Luc Herman and Bart Vervaeck,<sup>27</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Daiken qtd. in Moorjani, Op. cit., 2012, p. 47.

<sup>19</sup> MANDELBAUM, J. Op. cit., 1993, p. 263.

<sup>20</sup> LABOV, W. Op. cit., 1972, p. 371.

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem, pp. 354-96.

<sup>22</sup> NORRICK, N. Op. cit., 2000, p. 5, p. 84, pp. 90-1, pp. 105-7, pp. 126-30, p. 154, p. 157.

<sup>23</sup> BOWLES, H. "The 'untellability' of stories in *Endgame*." In: *The tragic comedy of Samuel Beckett: "Beckett in Rome"* 17-19 April 2008, edited by Daniela Guardamagna and Rossana M. Sebellin. Rome: Editori Laterza, 2008, p. 295.

<sup>24</sup> HERMAN, D. *Story logic: problems and possibilities of narrative*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002, p. 100.

<sup>25</sup> FLUDERNIK, M. "Natural narratology and cognitive parameters." In: *Narrative theory and the cognitive sciences*, edited by David Herman. Stanford: CSLI Publications, 2003b, p. 245.

<sup>26</sup> RYAN, M.-L. "Tellability." In: *Routledge encyclopedia of narrative theory*, edited by David Herman, Manfred Jahn, and Marie-Laure Ryan. London: Routledge. 2005, p. 589.

<sup>27</sup> HERMAN, L. and VERVAECK, B. Narrative interest as cultural negotiation. *Narrative* 17.1, 2009, p. 113, p. 115.

[...] tellability of a story is often conceptualized in terms of the weirdness that is said to characterize story elements such as events. [...] Weirdness involves at least two things: the deviation, no matter how small, from a certain norm, and the evaluation of that deviation by a subject (the reader, the audience).

The tellability, or “narrative interest” is further analysed as the “evaluation arising in a complex and unending process of negation between topic, assets, field [i.e. the domain of communicative activity] and the reader’s expectations”.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Ibidem, p. 121.

Stories are problematic in *Endgame* since these conversational narratives demonstrate atypical interaction between the co-narrators resulting in stories that are never fully developed. These alternating levels of cooperation between interlocutors restrict the stories’ tellability.

### *It takes three to tango: conversation analysis, stylistics and genetic criticism conversation analysis*

There are two approaches currently being followed in narrative inquiry, namely the “big story” approach and the “small story” approach.<sup>29</sup> The former approach is more traditional and examines autobiographical narratives from a non-linguistic perspective by investigating what is being said and draw conclusions about the function of stories in terms of characterisation, as did Kirstin Morrison in her analysis of *Endgame*.<sup>30</sup> These stories are mostly elicited by interviews and other clinical encounters as the stories come about by somewhat longer answers in monologue form to questions posed by an interviewer. However, this is not the manner in which most people tell narratives in ordinary conversation since these stories tend to be shorter and less autobiographical. In contrast, such “ordinary” stories are mainly about past events or local news that has happened not only to the narrator but to other people as well. Narratives are constructed in a dialogical manner with and in response to our auditors.

<sup>29</sup> BAMBERG, M. Stories – big or small. why do we care? *Narrative Inquiry* 16.1, 2006, pp. 140-2, pp. 145-6; FREEMAN, M. Life ‘on holiday’? In defense of big stories. *Narrative Inquiry* 16.1, 2006, p. 131, p. 134.

<sup>30</sup> MORRISON, K. *Canter and chronicles: the use of narrative in the plays of Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983, p. 13

Because stories in drama are constructed in a dialogical manner, the second, “small story” approach is far more interesting since it examines shorter stories that are the result of common everyday social encounters. This approach is a recent

research tradition that examines narratives from a more linguistic perspective by looking at how something is said, what narrators are doing while telling stories as well as what the purpose of these stories are. The narratives are analysed in terms of the way they are told with or without the assistance of other tellers. In this manner, an examination of the interactional mechanisms is possible by drawing on Conversation Analysis as an interactional discursive approach allows for an in-depth stylistic analysis of the turn-taking in dialogues of dramatic texts. By applying CA, one gains insight into the structure, function, and communication between the characters as this instrument demonstrates the sequentiality of turn-taking, (i.e. the coordination of speakership), pairs of utterances, feedback, repairs, topic-changing and attention-preserving mechanisms, as well as analyses how the tellers accomplish a sense of self when they are narrating.<sup>31</sup>

CA not only examines how stories are told, but also attempts to unearth what the experience means to the storyteller and what the purpose is of revealing the narrative to an audience. Liz Stokoe and Derek Edwards underline the importance to study what “people are *doing* when they tell stories, and therefore, what stories are *designed* to do’ by examining ‘*how* stories are told – how they get embedded and are managed, turn-by-turn, in interaction – and *what* conversational actions are accomplished in their telling”.<sup>32</sup>

Over the years, several influential linguistic studies on conversational storytelling have been written, such as the pioneering work of William Labov and Joshua Waletzky titled “Narrative analysis: oral versions of personal experience” published in 1967; Neal R. Norrick’s 2000 *Conversational storytelling: storytelling in everyday talk*; and Hugo Bowles’s 2010 *Storytelling and drama*.

There is a fair amount of disagreement among scholars about whether or not CA can be applied to narratives in literature. The problems start with the fact that studies on conversational storytelling usually have a different corpus than the stories in dramatic works. Labov and Waletzky do not examine “the products of expert story tellers that have been re-told many times”.<sup>33</sup> Norrick’s corpus similarly consists of stories told in spontaneous conversation which have been captured on tape. CA has been proven to be well-suited to examine actual conversations of everyday talk. These stories are called “natural narratives”, which are “narratives occurring more or less spontaneously in everyday conversation”.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>31</sup> GOODWIN, C. and HERITAGE, J. Op. cit., 1990, pp. 289-90; FLUDERNIK, M. genres, text types, or discourse modes? narrative modalities and generic categorization. *Style* 34.2, 2000, p. 130, p. 282; WOOFFITT, R. *Conversation analysis and discourse analysis: a comparative and critical introduction*. London: Sage. 2005, p. 47; SIDNELL, J. Comparative studies in conversation analysis. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 36, 2007, p. 235; JEFFRIES, L. and MCINTYRE, D. *Stylistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010, p. 101; PEPLOW, D. “The stylistics of everyday talk.” In: *The Cambridge handbook of stylistics*, edited by Peter Stockwell and Sara Whiteley. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2014, p. 593; WALES, K. “The stylistic tool-kit: methods and sub-disciplines.” In: *The Cambridge handbook of stylistics*, edited by Peter Stockwell and Sara Whiteley. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2014, p. 41.

<sup>32</sup> STOKOE, L. and EDWARDS, D. “Story formulations in talk-in-interaction.” *Narrative Inquiry* 16.1, 2006, p. 57. Emphasis in original.

<sup>33</sup> LABOV, W. and WALETZKY, J. “Narrative analysis: oral versions of personal experience.” In: *Essays on the verbal and visual arts*, edited by June Helm. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967, p. 12.

<sup>34</sup> PRINCE, G. The disnarrated. *Style* 22.1, 1988, p. 4.

While CA is an appropriate methodology for the analysis of real conversation, Robin Wooffitt asserts that it “strongly resists the analysis of artificial data” such as dramatic scripts.<sup>35</sup> Opposing Wooffitt, Malcolm Coulthard strongly believes that dramatic dialogues can be successfully examined by means of methodologies originally developed to analyse real conversation.<sup>36</sup>

The question that remains is whether or not CA is an appropriate method to analyse the narratives in *Endgame* as stories in real life tend to be less orderly than the scripted dialogue in theatrical works. Labov, for example, asserts that “[n]arrative as a whole contrasts sharply with ordinary conversation, which shows a much more complex structure”.<sup>37</sup> In a 1959 article on “Conversation and Spoken Prose”, David Abercombie agrees: “the truth is that nobody speaks at all like the characters in any novel, play, or film. Life would be intolerable if they did; and novels, plays or films would be intolerable if the characters spoke as people do in life”.<sup>38</sup> In *Analysing talk*, David Langford explains the difference between a play and the transcriptions of actual conversation: “[i]n a play it is the playwright who decides, in advance of any group of actors actually uttering anything, who shall speak, for how long, and what each speaker shall say”.<sup>39</sup> Although Micheal Short notes that dramatic dialogue is in some ways like real conversation, he also explores the difference between the two: “the main way that drama is not like conversation stems from the fact that dramatic dialogue is *written to be spoken*”.<sup>40</sup>

Norricks seems to be undecided on this issue: on the one hand he writes that “[t]he dialogue in *Endgame* often diverges from everyday talk [as] Beckett revels in double meanings, vagueness and apparent dead ends”;<sup>41</sup> on the other hand, he claims that “Beckett comes very close sometimes to everyday conversation in his plays, in *Endgame* closer than elsewhere in his drama”.<sup>42</sup>

John and Beryl S. Fletcher note that the devices Beckett employs in *Endgame* “imitate well the inconsequential nature of usual conversation” since “in this desultory conversation matters are taken up, and dropped as rapidly again, for no very good reason, as in everyday life”.<sup>43</sup> Another characteristic of colloquial speech is “how frequently, in the play, component parts of sentences are separated by pauses in the speaker’s delivery, or by an interruption from another character”.<sup>44</sup>

Peter Shields also picks up the notion of pauses in his article aptly titled “Hamm Stammered: Beckett, Deleuze, and the atmospheric stuttering of *Endgame*” and writes that Hamm’s opening lines are filled with interruptions of silence, pauses,

<sup>35</sup> WOUFFITT, R. *Conversation analysis and discourse analysis: a comparative and critical introduction*. London: Sage, 2005, p. 21.

<sup>36</sup> COULTHARD, M. *An introduction to discourse analysis*. London: Longman, 1985, p. 182.

<sup>37</sup> LABOV, W. Op. cit., 1972, p. 377.

<sup>38</sup> ABERCOMBIE, D. qtd. in Burton, *Dialogue and discourse: a sociolinguistic approach to modern drama dialogue and naturally occurring conversation*. London, Boston and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1980, p. 4.

<sup>39</sup> LANGFORD, D. *Analysing talk: investigating verbal interaction in english*. Houndmills: Macmillan. 1994, p. 70.

<sup>40</sup> SHORT, M. *Exploring the language of poems, plays and prose*. London: Longman, 1996, p. 174, emphasis in original.

<sup>41</sup> NORRICK, N. Op. cit., 2000, p. 190.

<sup>42</sup> Ibidem, p. 193.

<sup>43</sup> FLETCHER, J. and FLETCHER, B. S. “Introduction” and “Notes” to *Fin de partie*. London: Methuen Educational Ltd., 1970, p. 14, p. 81.

<sup>44</sup> Ibidem, p. 79.

and ellipses.<sup>45</sup> While he continues to experience having trouble speaking, Hamm eventually begins to give up on finishing his sentences. Clov similarly hesitates to complete his sentences when in conversation with Hamm. Like Fletcher and Fletcher, Wallace L. Chafe similarly believes that literary works are “an imitation of natural speech”.<sup>46</sup> Katie Wales agrees and writes that “there is an assumption that dramatic dialogue is for all intents and purposes an ‘imitation’ of real conversation”.<sup>47</sup> Robin Lakoff and Deborah Tannen take things one step further when they suggest that written dialogue in drama is often perceived to be even more realistic than transcripts of spoken dialogue.<sup>48</sup>

Despite the undecidedness about the issue whether or not dramatic dialogue is similar to real conversation or not, the method of CA brings many benefits with it for researching conversational storytelling. First, since Labov, Waletzky, Norrick and Bowles are linguists approaching a literary topic, they offer a fresh approach to investigate the dramatic language. Secondly, CA can contribute to the examination of storytelling in dramatic texts as the analysis of conversational stories suggests approaches to the interpretation of narrative passages in drama. The results of such a study can reveal the structures behind teller strategies and listener comprehension as well as the temporal sequences of narratives. Thirdly, the extension of the methods of conversational storytelling applied to the discourse in plays can highlight important aspects of dramatic interaction. Micheal Short (1996) and Hugo Bowles (2010), for example, outline the turn-taking patterns of dramatic dialogues and link this to the social relationships between the characters and how these bonds develop. Fourthly, by applying CA, Bowles offers a new perspective on how authors, like Samuel Beckett, exploit “[t]he subjectivity of memory and its relation to truth about the past” in theatrical works.<sup>49</sup> And lastly, the views of Norrick and Bowles on repetitions and story retellings are particularly interesting in an examination of *Endgame* as several stories resurface regularly throughout the duration of the play.

Kate Dorney notes that

[...] an account of Absurd drama explicated *entirely* by means of Conversation Analysis or stylistics will always be geared towards explaining the mechanisms of language rather than of drama: to ignore the medium, is, especially in the case of Beckett, to ignore the message as well.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>45</sup> SHIELDS, P. “Hamm stammered: Beckett, Deleuze, and the atmospheric stuttering of *Endgame*.” In: *Samuel Beckett's 'Endgame'*, edited by Mark S. Byron. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2007, pp. 194-5.

<sup>46</sup> Qtd. in TANNEN, D. Oral and literate strategies in spoken and written narratives. *Language* 58.1, 1982, p. 13.

<sup>47</sup> WALES, K. “The stylistic tool-kit: methods and sub-disciplines.” In: *The Cambridge handbook of stylistics*, edited by Peter Stockwell and Sara Whiteley. Cambridge: Cambridge UP., 2014, p. 41.

<sup>48</sup> Qtd. in TANNEN, Op. cit., 1982, p. 13.

<sup>49</sup> BOWLES, H. *Storytelling and drama: exploring narrative episodes in plays*. The Netherlands: John Benjamins. 2010, p. 120.

<sup>50</sup> DORNEY, K. “Hamming it up in *Endgame*: a theatrical reading.” In: *Samuel Beckett's 'Endgame'*, edited by Mark S. Byron. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2007, p. 213, emphasis mine.



CA does reveal information other than linguistic elements and is also a very efficient method to examine the dialogue in dramatic works, as Dorney's own analysis of Hamm's chronicle reveals.<sup>51</sup> Dorney draws on CA in order to lay bare the characters' awareness as performers, the atypical interaction between Hamm and Clov, Hamm's efforts to engage his audience, Clov's reluctance as a listener to Hamm's chronicle, and Clov's strategies to ruin Hamm's attempts to insert any sense of emotion into his story.

<sup>51</sup> Ibidem, pp. 240-1.

The medium of drama is not ignored by analysing stories by means of CA; instead, the research results become richer by employing this approach. As Deirdre Burton points out, CA allows a level of "precision and descriptive power" by means of its detailed descriptive apparatus.<sup>52</sup> In his introduction to the book *Applying conversation analysis* published in 2007, Keith Richards identifies the same major benefit of CA as a research method since it has the "capacity to direct researchers' attention to apparently tiny features of interaction and explode their dimensions beyond all expectations, revealing delicacies of design and management that resist the assaults of clumsier instruments"<sup>53</sup>. Not only does CA enrich the interpretation of conversational narratives, stylistics is also a relevant approach for the present study.

<sup>52</sup> BURTON, D. *Dialogue and discourse: a sociolinguistic approach to modern drama dialogue and naturally occurring conversation*. London, Boston and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980, p. 139.

<sup>53</sup> RICHARDS, K. "Introduction." In: *Applying conversation analysis*, edited by Keith Richards and Paul Seedhouse. Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 1.

## *Stylistics*

Stylistics is the study of "style", a term which is defined as the way in which language is used in literary works as the expressive system by an author in a given period or context for a specific purpose.<sup>54</sup> Stylistics depends on the field of linguistics for its terminology and methodology.<sup>55</sup> Although stylistics mainly draws on linguistics, it is an interdisciplinary method that is open to a variety of methodologies (Jeffries and McIntyre 2010, 3, 170; Wales 2014, 35). As stylistics focuses primarily on linguistic elements, the tools for examining dramatic texts only became available in the 1970s and 1980s with the advances in pragmatics.<sup>56</sup> Stylistics also borrows techniques from CA in order to examine dialogues in dramatic works, but this does come with its drawbacks, as Lesley Jeffries and Dan McIntyre point out:

<sup>54</sup> ALONSO, A. The stylistic interpretation of literary text. *Modern Language Notes*, vol. LVII, 1942, p. 490; LEECH, G. N. and SHORT, M. *Style in fiction*. London: Longman, 1981, p. 10.

<sup>55</sup> BLOOMFIELD, M. W. Stylistics and the theory of literature. *New Literary History. Poetics: Some Methodological Problems* 7.2, 1976, p. 272; SIMPSON, P. *Language, ideology and point of view*. London: Routledge, 1993, p. 3; JEFFRIES, L. and MCINTYRE, D. *Stylistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP., 2010, pp. 1-2; TOOLAN, M. "The theory and philosophy of stylistics." In: *The Cambridge handbook of stylistics*, edited by Peter Stockwell and Sara Whiteley, 13-31. Cambridge: Cambridge UP., 2014, p. 28.

<sup>56</sup> JEFFRIES, L. and MCINTYRE, D. Op. cit., 2010, p.101.

Conversation analysts would claim that we should not speculate on what a speaker means by a particular utterance, since we can never know for certain whether our speculation is correct. We must, instead, concentrate our efforts simply on describing what speakers do within a particular conversation. In so doing, conversation analysts specifically exclude context in contributing to the meaning of utterances, and their failure to consider speaker-meaning seems to us an unremittingly reductive stance to take. [...] For this reason, while stylistics utilises the descriptive procedures of CA, it disregards the methodological limitations of CA.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Ibidem, pp. 103-4.

According to Deirdre Burton, analysing dramatic dialogue by means of stylistic approaches “is not going to tell us a great deal. The only possible linguistic level to use as a basis for such analysis is *discourse*, or, even more specifically, *conversation*”.<sup>58</sup> However, while Burton acknowledges that CA is “only partially adequate theoretically”, he does believe in the benefits of the research method as it proves to be “useful in the stylistic analysis of drama text”.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>58</sup> BURTON, D. Op. cit., 1980, p. 8, emphasis in original.

<sup>59</sup> Ibidem, pp. 8-9.

Neither CA nor stylistics can be called objective research methods. As Burton declares, only “intuitive statements about the interactive characters of the conversationalists” can be made by employing CA.<sup>60</sup> Stylistics similarly depends on subjective and arbitrary literary interpretations and judgements regarding style.<sup>61</sup> Despite this, both disciplines aim to be as objective as possible by being progressive, systematic, empirical, analytical, methodical, evidential, rigorous, transparent, coherent, accessible, retrievable, replicable, falsifiable, as well as textually grounded.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Ibidem, p. 12.

<sup>61</sup> BLOOMFIELD, M. Op. cit., 1976, pp. 272, 277, 290; BURTON, Op. cit., 1980, p. 5; SIMPSON, P. *Language, ideology and point of view*. London: Routledge 1993, p. 3; GREGORIOU, C. *English literary stylistics*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan 2009, p. 6; HALL, G. “Stylistics as literary criticism.” In: *The Cambridge handbook of stylistics*, edited by Peter Stockwell and Sara Whiteley. Cambridge: Cambridge UP., 2014, p. 87; STOCKWELL, P. and WHITELEY, S. Op. cit., p. 5; TOOLAN, M. Op. cit., pp. 20-1.

<sup>62</sup> WALES, Op. cit., p. 372; JEFFRIES, L. and MCINTYRE, D. Op. cit., p. 191; STOCKWELL, P. and WHITELEY, S. Op. cit., p. 4.

### *Genetic criticism*

The word “stylistics” mentioned in the previous subchapter has been used in many senses, and Morton W. Goodwin has attempted to list no less than eight different meanings of the term of which one, “psychological stylistics”, is of particular interest for the present study as it entails a re-tracing of the compositional steps taken by authors. The term refers to

[...] the study of language and style in order to discover the mind of a man or writer. This type of stylistics [...] stresses the element of choice in writing and what certain stylistic habits reveal of the author. The goal of this type of style study is to attempt to understand the mystery of literary creation.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>63</sup> BLOOMFIELD, M. Op. cit., 1976, p. 275.

Micheal Short adds that “[b]y examining carefully the choices writers make, and comparing them with alternative choices which they could have made, we can relate those choices in a systematic way and detailed way to overall meaning and effect”.<sup>64</sup> This type of stylistics also finds its way in Micheal Toolan’s (2014) article “The theory and philosophy of stylistics”, in which the author is listing the foundational facts of the discipline, namely

<sup>64</sup> SHORT, M. *The language and style homepage*. <<http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/fass/projects/stylistics/>>. 2005, n.p.

[t]hat stylisticians’ consideration of the craft and design of texts and their shaping of reader response assumes the author has made multiple critical choices in the composing: they have chosen these forms and contents in preference to others [...], and the particular choices are effective in ways that the alternatives would not have been.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>65</sup> TOOLAN, M. Op. cit., p. 17.

CA, stylistics and genetic criticism are approaches that have a common goal of examining shorter fragments of text in a detailed manner. Several critics such as Dorrit Cohn, Gérard Genette, Philippe Hamon, and Franz Karl Stanzel have demonstrated the value of the study of narratives across versions, but only as a secondary source of information.<sup>66</sup> However, studying the genesis of a story can provide insights into how narrative features develop across versions and can also offer a deeper insight into the functions brought forth by the telling. As Stanzel points out, this “linguistic approach to narrative texts has left its imprint on the critical scene, producing a new interest in the structure of the smaller narrative units, the sentence, the paragraph, etc.”<sup>67</sup> Genetic criticism can lead to new insights as it seeks to expose the process of creative thought. As Friedrich Schlegel points out, “[o]ne cannot pretend to have a true knowledge of a work or a thought unless one is able to reconstitute its becoming and composition – this inside understanding is the very object and essence of criticism.”<sup>68</sup>

To sum up, there are issues with any theory, model or analytical framework. Kate Dorney is right in saying that the analysis of drama should not be “entirely” based on CA.<sup>69</sup> Pierre-Marc De Biasi similarly acknowledges that “genetic criticism does not claim the status of an exact science”,<sup>70</sup> nor does it “claim in any way to be a substitute for different critical approaches to the text”.<sup>71</sup> Lesley Jeffries and Dan McIntyre point out that “[t]rying to capture the whole ‘truth’ about the data in one single unified theory of textual meaning would be unilluminating in its complexity”<sup>72</sup>. As the title of this chapter already indicated, “it takes three to tango”, and the three approaches discussed in the first part of this paper complement each other. I therefore propose to draw on a combination of Conversation Analysis, stylistics, and genetic criticism in order to analyse the stories in *Endgame*.

“Ah the old questions, the old answers, there’s nothing like them!”

The story about the Old Questions is jointly told by Hamm and Clov. As Hugo Bowles points out, both Hamm and Clov participate in the telling of the narrative.<sup>73</sup> Samuel Beckett includes the story in 1956, which is rather late in the entire genesis of *Endgame*. The first version is written down in the “Tara McGowran” Notebook. Although Beckett does not date any of the passages in this particular notebook, Ruby Cohn deduces that these early versions of the play were probably written in May or early June 1956,<sup>74</sup> while Stanley E. Gontarski believes this version was most likely composed sometime between 12 April and 21 June 1956.<sup>75</sup> From the moment the story is included in the genesis of the play, Beckett only makes minor changes to it. Although these changes are small in nature, they still reveal valuable information.

<sup>66</sup> BERNAERTS, L. and VAN HULLE, D. Narrative across versions: narratology meets genetic criticism. *Poetics Today* 34, 2013, p. 288, p. 303.

<sup>67</sup> STANZEL, F. K. Towards a “grammar of fiction”. *Novel* 11.3, 1978, p. 247.

<sup>68</sup> Qtd. in BOWMAN, F. P. Genetic criticism. *Poetics Today* 11.3, 1990, p. 630.

<sup>69</sup> DORNEY, K. Op. cit., p. 213.

<sup>70</sup> DE BIASI, P.-M. What is a literary draft? towards a functional typology of genetic documentation. *Yale French Studies* 89, 1996, p. 53.

<sup>71</sup> Idem, 2004, p. 42

<sup>72</sup> JEFFRIES, L. and MCINTYRE, D. Op. cit., p. 170.

<sup>73</sup> BOWLES, H. Op. cit., 2008, p. 296.

<sup>74</sup> COHN, R. *A Beckett canon*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001, p. 221.

<sup>75</sup> GONTARSKI, S. E. *The intent of undoing in Samuel Beckett’s dramatic texts*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1985, p. 44.

The story consists of two parts: while the first part deals with the general notion of old questions and old answers, the second part deals with Clov's history as he admits he cannot remember his father or his home. Hamm took in Clov when he was a young boy and allowed him to live in his house. The second part of the story starts off with a classic "do you remember?" structure, indicating that the story not only qualifies as a collaborative narrative, but also as a joint reminiscence on the part of Hamm and Clov.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>76</sup> BOWLES, H. Op. cit., 2008, p. 296.

The section about Clov's past appears first in the genesis. In the "Tara McGowran" Notebook Beckett includes the scene at the top of f.38v, only to strike it out sentence by sentence and later on by large diagonal lines (OSU Rare MS ENG 33-01). Beckett then writes a second draft at the bottom of the same folio. The scene is an addition to f.39r, which the box with the accompanying arrow to the right at the bottom of ff.38v-39r makes clear. The second segment of the story appears again in the following step of the genesis as part of the typed text (OSU Rare MS ENG 29-4 – TS 2, ff.17r-18r) and reappears with relatively small changes in the following typescript (OSU Rare MS ENG 29-5 – TS 3, Part 2, ff.16r-17r).

The first part of the story is an addition to TS 2 in Beckett's handwriting (OSU Rare MS ENG 29-4 – TS 2, f.2r) and is rendered in the exact same manner in the following version of the play (OSU Rare MS ENG 29 29-5 – TS 3, f.3r). The fact that the first part of the story is a written addition to TS 2 could indicate that Beckett wanted to insert a short scene about the general notion of old questions and old answers earlier on in the play before continuing with the more specific second part about the dialogue dealing with Clov's past.

CA is an interesting way to examine the genesis of the stories in this play, and this narrative is no exception. In *Language and characterisation: people in plays and other texts*, Jonathan Culpeper explains that an actor's speech reveals much about the character they are playing.<sup>77</sup> For example, by examining the turn-taking patterns it is possible to deduce information about the characters. As Micheal Short explains, "[a]ll other things being equal, powerful speakers in conversation have the most turns, have the longest turns, initiate conversational exchanges, control what is talked about and who talks when, and interrupts others"<sup>78</sup>.

<sup>77</sup> CULPEPER, J. *Language and characterisation: people in plays and other texts*. London: Longman, 2001, p. 236.

<sup>78</sup> SHORT, M. *Exploring the language of poems, plays and prose*. London: Longman, 1996, p. 206.

It is interesting that both parts of the story are initiated by Hamm as he introduces the new topic of the dialogue. In OSU Rare MS ENG 29-4, Hamm asks Clov: "[t]u n'en as pas assez?" (f.2r), and in OSU Rare MS ENG 33-01: "[t]u te souviens de ton arrive ici?" (f.38v). Hamm's questions indicate that he initiates both parts of the story and tries to control the dialogue in this manner. However, Clov does not relinquish the power to Hamm so easily, since he answers Hamm's question, "[t]u n'en as pas assez?", with follow-up questions, "[d]e quoi?" and "[t]oi non?" (OSU Rare MS ENG 29-4, f.2r). In the second part of the story, Clov also rebuts Hamm's desire to talk about the past. In the first version of the story, Clov mentions in his first three turns that he was "trop petit" to remember the events clearly (OSU Rare MS ENG 33-01, f.38v).

The dialogue between Hamm and Clov about old questions and old answers mimics real-life interaction, as conversations between people mostly contain ordinary 'old' information instead of "new" information.<sup>79</sup> The same questions and answers have been recycled ad

<sup>79</sup> SHERZER, D. Beckett's *Endgame*, or what talk can do. *Modern Drama*, 22.3, 1979, p. 293.

*infinitum*: as Micheal Guest mentions,<sup>80</sup> this story underscores the notion of time being “[t]he same as usual” as the characters in the play repeat the same questions and answers day after day (E 7).

There are several parallel constructions which relate to the theme about questions and answers. The second document in the genesis of the story includes the fact that every day “les mêmes questions, les même réponses” are repeated as they become “les vieilles questions, les vieilles réponses” (OSU Rare MS ENG 4-29 – TS 2, f.2r, f.17r, emphasis mine). When Clov declares: “[ç]a peut finir”, he refers to the questions and answers posed between himself and Hamm as they only reveal banal information of low informational content (OSU Rare MS ENG 4-29 – TS 2, f.2r).

Time in *Endgame* seems to come to a halt since the characters are attached not only to the same questions and answers, but also to the same ideas and old patterns of thought that will not let time move on.<sup>81</sup> Helene Keyssar rightly points out that if people stop asking the same questions and reply with the same answers, or, in other words, if we use language differently in order to communicate differently, something might change for the better.<sup>82</sup>

Unfortunately, Hamm desires the familiar since the old questions and old answers provide him with a sense of security as “[t]hey fill his life and give him something to say”.<sup>83</sup> In a similar vein, Eric P. Levy writes that “Hamm is immune to change because, as Clov observes, he perpetuates the same state, whatever his external circumstances” (2002, 268). This aspect comes even more to the fore in Beckett’s first attempt to translate the play into English when he crosses out “like old” in the sentence “I like old questions” and writes above “love the old” (HRC TXRC00-A1/B3.F5, f.37r). Despite the fact that the definite pronoun “the” is only a small word, its insertion has a significant impact in terms of semantics: it is not old questions in general that Hamm loves, but “the” old questions that have been asked and answered many times before. The significance of this alteration is underlined as Beckett inserts the definite pronoun twice more in the following line when changing “[a]h old questions, old answers” into “[a]h, the old questions, the old answers” (HRC TXRC00-A1/B3.F5, f.37r, emphasis mine). It can be argued that the sentence previously quoted has been merely changed by Beckett to ensure a certain rhythm in the dialogue. Although we cannot be certain, it seems reasonable to assume that if one takes these three insertions of “the” together, they indicate that Hamm is referring to the questions and answers he already knows. Hamm wants to make clear to his servant Clov that it is crucial for them to only converse about the questions and answers Hamm is familiar with. The change from “like” to the much stronger emotion “love” also underscores Hamm’s desire for things to stay exactly the same as they have always been. However, as Eugene Webb writes, this type of behaviour “can also become a frustrating trap, and that is what the inhabitants of this house have made of it. Although he holds fast to the old questions and the old answers, Hamm also sees through them, and this leads to boredom and anger”.<sup>84</sup>

Hamm is searching for the right word to denote something, just as people would do in everyday real-life conversation. John and Beryl S. Fletcher explicate that Hamm hesitates over the gender of the word “chose” in the sentence “[d]e ce... de cette... chose” (Fdp 26). The genesis

<sup>80</sup> GUEST, M. “Paul Ricoeur and watching *Endgame*.” In: *Samuel Beckett’s ‘Endgame’*, edited by Mark S. Byron. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2007, p. 88.

<sup>81</sup> WEBB, E. *The plays of Samuel Beckett*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1972, p. 61, p. 65.

<sup>82</sup> KEYSSAR, H. Theatre games, language games and *Endgame*. *Theatre Journal*, 31.2, 1979, p. 227.

<sup>83</sup> FLETCHER, J. and FLETCHER, B. S. Op. cit., 1970, p. 14.

<sup>84</sup> WEBB, E. Op. cit., 1972, p. 62.

of this particular sentence reveals that Beckett first writes “[d]u besoin” in the first draft of this scene (OSU Rare MS ENG 29-4 – TS 2, f.2r). He does not change Hamm’s reply in the subsequent version (OSU Rare MS ENG 29 29-5 – TS 3, f.3r). “De ce... de cette... chose” is more hesitant than the short statement “[d]u besoin”, since the former includes two ellipses before continuing with the vague word “chose”. In the English versions from HRC TXRC00-A1/B3.F5, f.8r onwards, as well as the published French version, Beckett makes Hamm’s reply more hesitant as he seems to have been concerned with the realistic nature of the characters’ dialogue. The translation of the sentence in English is “[o]f this... this... thing”, which does not change in subsequent versions (HRC TXRC00-A1/B3.F5, f.8r).

The dialogue mimics real-life interaction as it contains many repetitions as well as parallel constructions. These repetitions reveal a second theme, namely that of the relationship between fathers and sons. The first draft of the story includes what Ruby Cohn calls a “volley doublet”, a technique in which the same word or words are thrown back and forth, just like the ball in a volleyball match.<sup>85</sup> The “volley doublet” in this draft is the French word “père”: it appears twice in the speech of A (Hamm), and then B (Clov) repeats it, only to give the word back to A (OSU Rare MS ENG 33-01, f.38v). The following versions in French and English also pick up the same “volley doublet”.

<sup>85</sup> COHN, R. “Words working overtime: *Endgame* and *No man’s land*.” *The Yearbook of English Studies* 9, 1979, p. 200.

The word “father” is connected to the word “home” in the later versions as Hamm repeats that his home was also a home for Clov. This connection is first established in the “Été 56” Notebook as an addition to “p. 18” (RUL MS 1227/7/7/1, f.1r) and is further developed in the English versions (HRC TXRC00-A1/B3.F5, f.37r; OSU Rare MS ENG 29-6, f.20r). The draft in the notebook continues with “[s]ans moi [...], tu n’avais pas de père. [...] Sans ma maison, pas de home” (RUL MS 1227/7/7/1, f.1r), which is changed into “[s]ans moi [...], pas de père. Sans Hamm [...], pas de home” (*Fdp* 46). The published French version thus reveals a more rhythmic parallel structure than the draft.

When translating the play into English, Beckett began to doubt the rhythm of this sentence once more, as “[n]o Hamm [...], no father. No Hamm [...], no home” is changed back into “[b]ut for me [...], no father. But for Hamm [...], no home” (OSU Rare MS ENG 29-6, f.20r, emphasis mine). Beckett changes this sentence in the typescript so that the text aligns with the previous English draft (HRC TXRC00-A1/B3.F5, f.37r). In the first part of this parallel construction, Beckett hesitates between “Hamm” and “me”, but he seems to opt for “me” so that the story becomes more personal. In this scene, Hamm reveals his emotions about being abandoned as a child. Despite the presence of his parents on stage, Hamm “makes a bid to grant himself the status of an orphan” as he claims to have had no father and no home.<sup>86</sup> Beckett momentarily considers “Hamm” in the second English translation of this scene, but by referring to himself in the third person Hamm distances himself from the difficult feelings he has to face while co-telling this story. In this manner, Beckett reveals the character’s consciousness: Hamm is now looking from the inside out as he refers to himself as “me”, instead of looking from the outside in as he would by referring to himself in the third person as “Hamm”.

<sup>86</sup> STEWART, P. “But why Shakespeare. The muted role of Dickens in *Endgame*.” In: *Samuel Beckett’s ‘Endgame’*, edited by Mark S. Byron. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi. 2007, pp. 216-7.

Although the many changes to the parallel construction described in the paragraph above are relatively small in nature, they reveal a Beckett who was very much concerned with the rhythm of the dialogue in his theatrical works. Another example that demonstrates this is the change from “[m]y house *that was* a home for you” (HRC TXRC00-A1/B3.F5, f.37r, emphasis mine) to “[i]t was my house was a home for you”, which is later on corrected in the typescript in pen to “[m]y house a home for you” (OSU Rare MS ENG 29-6, f.20r, emphasis mine). The first change drops the relative pronoun “that”, while the second change also drops the verb “to be”. Beckett first attempted to achieve a parallel construction by having “was” two times in the sentence, probably in order to repeat the same construction of “[i]t was I was a father to you” (HRC TXRC00-A1/B3.F5, f.37r). While Beckett does not change the previous sentence about Hamm being a father to Clov, the rhythm of the sentence about Hamm’s home must have felt unsatisfactory for the playwright: he drops the repetitions of the verb “to be” in order to end up with a short, well-structured sentence.

As mentioned previously, the repetitions of the words “father” and “home” examined above underline the importance of a second theme, namely the relationship between fathers and sons. Many critics, such as Paul Lawley, believe Clov to be the starving son in Hamm’s chronicle, or at least a fictional version of him, while Hamm is the vassal.<sup>87</sup> Hamm’s chronicle thus establishes the possibility that Clov is the starving son and that Hamm has taken in Clov. This form of ‘adoption’ lends some credibility to Hamm’s statement that he “was a father” to Clov (*E* 25).

The story reveals one last grammatical structure that is rare in the English spoken language. The first sentence of this scene, “[h]ave you not had enough?” (HRC TXRC00-A1/B3.F5, f.8r; OSU Rare MS ENG 29-4, f.3r) is one of the many examples in the play where a negation is inserted into a question when proper English usage would demand a rephrasing in order to omit “not” as in “have you had enough?”.<sup>88</sup> In the French version this question is translated as “[t]u n’en as pas assez?”, which is the correct grammatical use of the negation with “ne...pas” (OSU Rare MS ENG 29-4 – TS 2, f.2r).

<sup>87</sup> LAWLEY, P. Symbolic structure and creative obligation in *Endgame*. *Journal of Beckett Studies* 5: First Series. <<http://www.english.fsu.edu/jobs/num05/Num5lawley.htm>>. 1979, pp. 66-7.

<sup>88</sup> OGDEN, B. H. What philosophy can’t say about literature: Stanley Cavell and *Endgame*. *Philosophy and Literature* 33.1, 2009, p. 134.

## Conclusion

Analysing the genesis of the stories in a theatrical work by means of CA, stylistics, and genetic criticism reveals important aspects about dramatic interaction. The story about the Old Questions is a collaborative effort on the part of two characters and reveals a dialogue which has several similarities with every-day conversations. The analysis of the story proves that the three methodologies discussed in this paper can be used together in order to study the play’s other narratives as well.

An in-depth examination of these jointly constructed stories is possible by drawing on several methodologies, as the approaches used in this paper allow an examination of small units. Comparing these short fragments over different versions throughout the genesis of individual stories produces new insights and exposes Beckett’s creative process as a playwright who makes changes in order to create realistic-sounding dialogue. Beckett was very much concerned with the nature of his theatrical dialogues as they seem to mimic real-life interaction.

### *Works cited*

- ABBOTT, Porter H. *The Cambridge introduction to narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP 2003.
- ALONSO, Amado. The stylistic interpretation of literary text. *Modern Language Notes*, vol. LVII, 1942, pp. 489-96.
- BAMBERG, Micheal. Stories: big or small. Why do we care? *Narrative Inquiry* 16., 2006., pp. 139-47.
- BAUMAN, Richard. *Verbal arts as performance*. Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House, 1977.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Story, performance, and event: contextual studies of oral narrative*. Cambridge studies in oral and literate culture. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986.
- BECKETT, Samuel. *Fin de partie*. London: Methuen Educational Ltd., 1970.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Endgame*. London: Faber and Faber, 1990.
- BERNAERTS, Lars and Dirk VAN HULLE. Narrative across versions: narratology meets genetic criticism. *Poetics Today* 34.4, 2013, pp. 281-326.
- BLOOMFIELD, Morton W. Stylistics and the theory of literature. *New Literary History*. Poetics: some methodological problems, v. 7, n. 2, 1976, pp. 271-311.
- BOWLES, Hugo. "The 'untellability' of stories in *Endgame*." In: *The tragic comedy of Samuel Beckett: "Beckett in Rome" 17-19 April 2008*, edited by Daniela Guardamagna and Rossana M. Sebellin. Rome: Editori Laterza, 2008, pp. 292-304.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Storytelling and drama: exploring narrative episodes in plays*. The Netherlands: John Benjamins, 2010.
- BOWMAN, Frank Paul. Genetic criticism. *Poetics Today* 11.3, 1990, pp. 627-46.
- BURTON, Deidre. *Dialogue and discourse: a sociolinguistic approach to modern drama dialogue and naturally occurring conversation*. London, Boston and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980.
- COHN, Dorrit. *Transparent minds: narrative modes for presenting consciousness in fiction*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1978.
- COHN, Ruby. Words Working Overtime: *Endgame* and *No man's land*. *The Yearbook of English Studies*, v. 9, 1979, pp. 188-203.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *A Beckett canon*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 2001.
- COULTHARD, Malcolm. *An introduction to discourse analysis*. London: Longman, 1985.
- CULPEPER, Jonathan. *Language and characterisation: people in plays and other texts*. London: Longman, 2001.
- DE BIASI, Pierre-Marc. What is a literary draft? towards a functional typology of genetic



- documentation. *Yale French Studies*, n. 89, 1996, pp. 26-58.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Toward a science of literature: manuscript analysis and the genesis of the work." In: *Genetic criticism: text and avant-textes*, edited by Jed Deppman, Daniel Ferrer, and Michael Groden. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004, pp. 36-68.
- DORNEY, Kate. "Hamming it up in *Endgame*: a theatrical reading." In: *Samuel Beckett's 'Endgame'*, edited by Mark S. Byron. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2007, 227-52.
- FLETCHER, John and Beryl S. FLETCHER. "Introduction", "Notes". In: Samuel Beckett. *Fin de partie*. London: Methuen Educational Ltd., 1970.
- FLUDERNIK, Monika. *Towards a "natural" narratology*. London: Routledge, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Genres, text types, or discourse modes? Narrative modalities and generic categorization. *Style*, 34.2, 2000, pp. 274-92.
- \_\_\_\_\_. New wine in old bottles? Voice, focalization and new writing. *New Literary History* 32.3, 2001, pp. 619-39.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Chronology, time, tense and experientiality in narrative. *Language and Literature* 12.2, 2003a, pp. 117-34.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Natural narratology and cognitive parameters." In: *Narrative theory and the cognitive sciences*, edited by David Herman. Stanford: CSLI Publications, 2003b, pp. 243-67.
- FREEMAN, Mark. Life 'on holiday'? In defense of big stories. *Narrative Inquiry* 16.1, 2006, pp. 131-38.
- GEORGAKOPOULOU, Alexandra. Thinking big with small stories in narrative and identity analysis. *Narrative Inquiry* 16.1, 2006, pp. 120-30.
- GOODWIN, Charles and John HERITAGE. Conversation analysis. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 19, 1990, pp. 283-307.
- GONTARSKI, Stanley E. *The intent of undoing in Samuel Beckett's dramatic texts*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1985.
- GREGORIOU, Christiana. *English literary stylistics*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- GUEST, Michael. "Paul Ricoeur and watching *Endgame*." In: *Samuel Beckett's 'Endgame'*, edited by Mark S. Byron. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2007, pp. 69-98.
- HALL, Geoff. "Stylistics as literary criticism." In: *The Cambridge handbook of stylistics*, edited by Peter Stockwell and Sara Whiteley. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2014, pp. 87-100.
- HAMBURGER, Käte. *The logic of literature*. Translated by Marilyn J. Rose. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1973.
- HERMAN, David. *Story logic: problems and possibilities of narrative*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002.

- HERMAN, Luc and Bart VERVAECK. *Handbook of narrative analysis*. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_. Narrative interest as cultural negotiation. *Narrative* 17.1, 2009, pp. 111-29.
- JEFFRIES, Lesley and Dan MCINTYRE. *Stylistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010.
- KEEN, Suzanne. *Narrative form*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
- KEYSSAR, Helene. Theatre games, language games and *Endgame*. *Theatre Journal* 31.2, 1979, pp. 221-38.
- LABOV, William and Joshua WALETSKY. "Narrative analysis: oral versions of personal experience." In: *Essays on the verbal and visual arts*, edited by June Helm. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967, pp. 12-44.
- LABOV, William. *Language of the inner city*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972.
- LANGFORD, David. *Analysing talk: investigating verbal interaction in English*. Houndmills: Macmillan, 1994.
- LAWLEY, Paul. Symbolic structure and creative obligation in *Endgame*. *Journal of Beckett Studies* 5: First Series, 1979. <<http://www.english.fsu.edu/jobs/num05/Num5lawley.htm>>.
- LEECH, Geoffrey Neil and Michael SHORT. *Style in fiction*. London: Longman, 1981.
- LEVY, Eric P. Disintegrative process in *Endgame*. *Samuel Beckett Today / Aujourd'hui* 12, 2002, pp. 263-79.
- MANDELBAUM, Jenny. Interpersonal activities in conversational storytelling. *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 53.2, 1989, pp. 114-26.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Assigning responsibility in conversational storytelling: the interactional construction of reality. *Text* 13.2, 1993, pp. 247-66.
- MOORJANI, Angela. Beckett's racinian fictions: "Racine and the Modern Novel" revisited. *Samuel Beckett Today / Aujourd'hui* 24, 2012, pp. 41-55.
- MORRISON, Kristin. *Canter and chronicles: the use of narrative in the plays of Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.
- NORRICK, Neal. *Conversational narrative: storytelling in everyday talk*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000.
- OGDEN, Benjamin H. What philosophy can't say about literature: Stanley Cavell and *Endgame*. *Philosophy and Literature* 33.1, 2009, pp. 126-38.
- PAGE, Ruth. "Narrative structure." In: *The Cambridge handbook of stylistics*, edited by Peter Stockwell and Sara Whiteley. Cambridge: Cambridge UP., 2014, pp. 439-55.
- PEPLOW, David. "The stylistics of everyday talk." In: *The Cambridge handbook of stylistics*, edited by Peter Stockwell and Sara Whiteley. Cambridge: Cambridge UP., 2014, pp. 590-606.

- PRINCE, Gerald. On readers and listeners in narrative. *Neophilologus* 55, 1971, pp. 117-22.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Narratology: the form and functioning of narrative*. The Hague: Mouton, 1982.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *A dictionary of narratology*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The disnarrated. *Style* 22.1, 1988, pp. 1-8.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Narrativehood, narrativity, narratability." In: *Theorizing narrativity*, edited by John Pier and José Ángel García Landa. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008, 19-27.
- RICHARDS, Keith. "Introduction." In: *Applying conversation analysis*, edited by Keith Richards and Paul Seedhouse. Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, pp. 1-15.
- RICHARDSON, Brian. "Time is out of joint": narrative models and the temporality of the drama. *Poetics Today* 8.2, 1987, pp. 299-310.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Point of view in drama: diegetic monologue, unreliable narrators, and the author's voice on stage. *Comparative Drama* 22.3, 1988, pp. 193-214.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Voice and narration in postmodern drama. *New Literary History* 32.3, 2001, pp. 681-94.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Unnatural voices: extreme narration in modern and contemporary fiction*. Columbus: Ohio State UP., 2006.
- RUDRUM, David. From narrative representation to narrative use: towards the limits of definition. *Narrative* 13.2, 2005, pp. 195-204.
- RYAN, Marie-Laure. "Tellability." In: *Routledge encyclopedia of narrative theory*, edited by David Herman, Manfred Jahn, and Marie-Laure Ryan. London: Routledge, 2005, pp. 589-91.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Semantics, pragmatics, and narrativity: a response to David Rudrum. *Narrative* 14.2, 2006, pp. 188-86.
- SEEDHOUSE, Paul. "Conversation analysis as research methodology." In: *Applying conversation analysis*, edited by Keith Richards and Paul Seedhouse. Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, pp. 251-66.
- SHERZER, Dina. Beckett's *Endgame*, or what talk can do. *Modern Drama* 22.3, 1979, pp. 291-303.
- SHIELDS, Peter. "Hamm Stammered: Beckett, Deleuze, and the atmospheric stuttering of *Endgame*." In: *Samuel Beckett's 'Endgame'*, edited by Mark S. Byron. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2007, pp. 189-206.
- SHORT, Micheal. *Exploring the language of poems, plays and prose*. London: Longman, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The language and style homepage*, 2005. <<http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/fass/projects/stylistics/>>.
- SIDNELL, Jack. Comparative studies in conversation analysis. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 36, 2007, pp. 229-44.
- SIMPSON, P. *Language, ideology and point of view*. London: Routledge, 1993.

- STANZEL, Franz Karl. Towards a "grammar of fiction". *Novel* 11.3, 1978, pp. 247-64.
- STEWART, Paul. "But why Shakespeare. The muted role of Dickens in *Endgame*." In: *Samuel Beckett's 'Endgame'*, edited by Mark S. Byron. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2007, pp. 207-25.
- STOKOE, Elizabeth and Derek EDWARDS. Story formulations in talk-in-interaction. *Narrative Inquiry* 16.1, 2006, pp. 56-65.
- STOCKWELL, Peter and Sara WHITELEY. "Introduction." In: *The Cambridge handbook of stylistics*, edited by Peter Stockwell and Sara Whiteley. Cambridge: Cambridge UP., 2014, pp. 1-9.
- TANNEN, Deborah. Oral and literate strategies in spoken and written narratives. *Language* 58.1, 1982, pp. 1-21.
- TOOLAN, Micheal. "The theory and philosophy of stylistics." In: *The Cambridge handbook of stylistics*, edited by Peter Stockwell and Sara Whiteley. Cambridge: Cambridge UP., 2014, pp. 13-31.
- WALES, Katie. *A Dictionary of stylistics*. London: Longman, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The stylistic tool-kit: methods and sub-disciplines." In: *The Cambridge handbook of stylistics*, edited by Peter Stockwell and Sara Whiteley. Cambridge: Cambridge UP., 2014, pp. 32-45.
- WEBB, Eugene. *The plays of Samuel Beckett*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1972.
- WOOFFITT, Robin. *Conversation analysis and discourse analysis: a comparative and critical introduction*. London: Sage, 2005.