

grammar (person/pronoun), rhetoric and storytelling, this project aims to show how second-person narrative has developed over time and it introduces some of its qualities that appear consistently through time and that define the technique.

Acknowledging the above is a vital point that is missing from narratological and second-person research. Monika Fludernik is the only exception; she has dealt with the second-person narrative form extensively, taking into account the history of second-person storytelling and forming a theoretical model. Though the latter is problematic, it represents a significant contribution to the matter. Furthermore, in terms of studies and research, scholars have treated the second-person phenomenon mostly from a linguistic point of view, as a secondary feature in studies focussing on other topics or on the authors' work as a whole, or as a case study in studies focussing on single authors and works. This project aims to contribute to the present state of research and, by further reviewing the case studies, provide assumptions and conclusions that would benefit the discussion of second-person storytelling as a whole in narratology.

The enigma of second-person storytelling will not be solved in this project. This would be impossible given its resilience and versatility as expressed in different narratives. However, it will be better understood in terms of its appealing and intriguing aspects that make readers love or hate it and authors use it almost always only once.

PERSON

To understand the essentials of the second-person narrative technique and its dynamics, we first need to focus on the fundamental category of *person*. We thus aim to clarify its grammatical meaning and reference, and we aspire to conclude which aspect of the person is dominant. Does second-person storytelling reflect the grammatical choice of composing a text using second-person grammatical

forms or does it rather reflect a certain nominal reference and the concept of address?

Linguists define *person* as a deictic category, interpreted relative to the speaker and encoding the participants in a speech situation. The cognitive foundation of *person* reflects the basic structure of a speech act and distinguishes the participants – the speaker and the addressee – and what is spoken about.²⁴ Fundamentally, the second person reflects the role of the addressee and it is reflected in the utterance not only by way of the second-person pronominal form (*you*) but also by the verbal form (*are*).

What **are** *you* doing?

I am reading a book.

An important observation to add here is that in terms of reference and meaning the person designated as the *you*-addressee in the first sentence shifts to the role of the *I*-speaker in the second. This shows that while the grammatical role of the (second) person is concrete in the utterance, the person of reference shifts together with the input-output system of the utterance.

The category of *person* has to be expressed linguistically through morphology in order to be considered a feature, be it morpho-syntactic or morpho-semantic. Investigation of morpho-syntactic expressions of person reveals that languages with personal inflection differ greatly with respect to which and how many of the available person values are expressed in a single predication. The choice of the expression of the person value – how the person is referred to within the communication stream – may be determined by the relative position of the participant in a person hierarchy. One possible hierarchy of this type has been formulated as follows and it reflects the speaker-addressee or absent person classification:

1st/2nd person > 3rd person

24 | Benveniste (1966), 227f.

A person hierarchy captures the fact that participants can be referred to by person values independently of their semantic or syntactic status. However, the person-based reference to arguments in a clause can also be controlled by syntactic functions that are directly associated with grammar and grammatical rules:

Subject > Direct Object > Indirect Object

or semantic roles:

Agent > Recipient/Experiencer > Patient

This is important when we are confronted with different roles and positions that the second person employs within a narrative, especially in cases where the elevated style of the author and the poetics of the text make for a discourse of structural depth, rich in rhetoric.

The (cognitive) category of *person* exists in a language if it is possible to make a distinction between at least two of the basic principles/participants in a speech act. In languages with a declined verbal system the morpho-syntactic feature of person reflects the grammaticalisation (“sous des *personae* se réalise la notion verbale”²⁵) of the category of person in the language, as we have seen in the previous example with the change of the verb from *are* to *am* according to the person *you* and *I*.²⁶

Consequently, when referring to the category of person, questions of dominance or emphasis arise: “peut-il exister un verbe sans distinction de personne?”²⁷; is the person rather a marker of hierarchy and position in a speech act or is it more a category that

25 | Benveniste (1966), 225.

26 | “Dans toutes les langues qui possèdent un verbe, on classe les formes de la conjugaison d’après leur référence à la personne, l’énumération des personnes constituant proprement la conjugaison; et on en distingue trois, au singulier, au pluriel, éventuellement au duel.” Benveniste (1966), 225.

27 | Benveniste (1966), 226.

reflects grammatical values and rules? Therefore, given our interest in second-person narrative, we might ask whether the choice of the second-person pronoun as the main narrative agent would reflect a *variant* personal reference (shifting continuously in a dialogue) rather than a *certain verbal function* that highlights the concept of address itself or maybe both, and if so – what would be the emphasis in each use?

In addition to this ambiguity, there is an analytical problem arising for the category of person, one that comes from the involvement of each person in participant groups associated with the speech act. The category of person can contain a plurality of positions. Within the speech act, there is an inclusive/exclusive distinction (typically applied with regard to the first person that designates the speaker) and a proximate/obviate distinction (typically applied with regard to the third person that designates the *non-person* of the speech act). While the inclusive/exclusive distinction is typically defined as expressing the inclusion of the addressee in the first person, the proximate/obviate distinction concerns the degree of remoteness of the non-participant.

It is worth considering how both distinctions can be applied to the second person, where no such distinction can be determined for definite. By designating the addressee role within the speech act, the second person can take on all possible syntactic and semantic roles. It serves more precisely as a placeholder within the speech situation, fulfilling a role (that of the hearer/the addressee) in which the participants will be switching according to the natural needs of communication. Hence one could argue that the person category within the speech act is more of a position or role in speech, one which the participants exchange during the act of communication – hence its appearance comes more as a grammatical reference rather than a nominal one (an actual reference to a *person*), since that is ambiguous and changes between the persons involved in the speech act.

What are *you* doing?

I am reading a book, what about *you*?

In terms of the involvement of a distinction between “you-excluding-them” and “you-including-them” a logical contradiction exists since in the case of the second person the standard definition of inclusive/exclusive as either involving the addressee or not is not determined. Given the fact that the addressee, the second person, can be both inclusive and exclusive on different occasions as well as both proximate or obviate in relation to the object of the speech act, we understand why dichotomous approaches of any kind or discipline are not applicable in the case of the second person.

An interesting alternative approach to the category of person is offered by Anna Kibort. She presents in her work another possibility for the second person, namely that of a general concept involving the degree of remoteness relative to a speech act participant according to which the person reflects the meeting of these two poles in a more generalised concept. In this view, the separation between inclusive/exclusive can be understood as the “intersection” of the second person, just as the proximate/obviate may be seen as the intersection of the third person.²⁸

The notion of relative involvement (distance) that Kibort introduces in her study of the category of person is significant for the current approach as it introduces an additional element linked to the use of pronouns in narratives. If the first person is considered *too close* and the third person *too distant*, the second person is the one that reflects a moderate degree of distance in the speech act, an “intersection”. This concept of a gradation of distance and of the levels of involvement in the narrative is essential for an understanding of second-person storytelling and will be discussed later and in more detail.

The expression of the person contrary to its system, which normally involves three grammatical persons and two numbers, is more complicated since it is more abstract and diverse and reflects

28 | Anna Kibort, *Grammatical Features Inventory: Person*. (University of Surrey, 2008) Date accessed 21 September 2017. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15126/SMG.18/1.03>.

relationships and associations between the three. This will now be discussed with reference to the category of the pronoun.

PRONOUN²⁹

Personal reference can be expressed in various ways: depending on the occasion it is possible to refer both to oneself and to one's addressee using common nominal phrases, nouns and, of course, pronouns. Hence pronouns are one of the means of expressing the category of the person and the participants in a speech act.

Nouns and nominal phrases define the person descriptively while verbs reflect it formally in their conjugation and number; in the case of pronouns, however, the expression of person is more complicated. Pronouns mainly serve to replace (previously or later mentioned) names or nouns and are used in the interest of the economy³⁰ of the text³¹ often by helping the author to avoid the repetition

29 | “Pronom, empr. du lat. pronomen, de pro, à la place de, et nomen, nom. Cette dénomination de pronom, qui nous vient des Latins, lesquels l’avaient empruntée aux Grecs (αὐτωνυμία), n’est pas adéquate à son objet; elle se trouve en contradiction avec les enseignements de linguistes éminents: “L’espèce de mot qui a dû se distinguer d’abord de toutes les autres, écrit M. Bréal, c’est, selon nous, le pronom.” Je crois cette catégorie plus primitive que celle du substantif.” Maurice Grevisse, *Le Bon Usage. Grammaire française avec des remarques sur la langue française d’aujourd’hui*. 1936. (Gembloux: Éditions J. Duculot, 1975) 448.

30 | “Die Pronomen tragen wesentlich zur Ökonomie der Sprache, d.h. zum sparsamen Gebrauch der sprachlichen Mittel, bei, indem sie unnötige Wiederholungen nicht nur vermeiden helfen, sondern häufig sogar unterbinden.” Günther Drosdowski, *Duden: Grammatik der deutschen Gegenwartssprache*. (Mannheim: Dudenverlag, 1995) 326.

31 | “Le pronom est un mot qui souvent représente un nom, un adjectif, une idée ou une proposition exprimés avant ou après lui.” Grevisse (1936/1975), 448.