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SAMUEL BECKETT'S WORDCRAFT (BASED ON RADIO PLAYS "WORDS AND MUSIC" AND "CASCANDO")

"Words are all we have."

Samuel Beckett

Summary. This article is dedicated to Samuel Beckett's rhetoric in his early radio plays "Words and Music" and "Cascando". The aim of the research is to analyze the playwright's language in both plays in terms of linguostylistics. The object of our article is Beckett's wordcraft in the two radio plays and its subject is linguostylistic means of his wordcraft.

Both plays touch upon interaction between language and its sounding, thus proving that Beckett's mastery consists in using simple, minimal, sometimes unspoken, words to denote a deep, implicit sense. Beckett's minimalistic but skillful use of rhetoric involves manifold allusions to his previous works ("Waiting for Godot", "Endgame" and "The Unnamable") and targets at an intellectual reader who reflects on the text and is able to decode its unconventional symbolism.

The main idea encoded by the playwright is to show the impossibility of expressing meaningful utterance only through words – feelings, representing expressiveness, should be integrated with words. Words are restricted unlike infinite feelings.

Among typical linguistic features of Beckettian language, discovered in both plays, are onomatopoeic author's remarks, indirect characterization, allusions to other Beckett's works and characters, emotionally coloured vocabulary, plentiful author's remarks "Pause" and "Long pause", emphatic syntax (exclamatory sentences, aposiopesis, parcellation and parallelism), repetition (both lexical and syntactic) and unusual symbolism.

Not only does the language of the plays contribute to their complexity and depth but their structure and setting also strengthen this effect. Beckett uses unidentified setting and time as well as frequently applies repetitive cycles of characters' lines.

Key words: radio plays, Beckettian wordcraft, unidentified setting, allusion, unconventional symbolism, intellectual reader.

Problem statement. Samuel Beckett is a literary legend, a major figure of British, even English, literature that has not only influenced the literature of the XX century but also determined the development of English literature of XXI century. Being a representative of the *Theatre of the Absurd*, Beckett is mostly associated with his well-known plays "Waiting for Godot", "Endgame" and "Happy Days" which have received worldwide acclaim. Nevertheless, he is an author of 5 less known radio plays which provoke contrary opinions. "Words and Music" as well as "Cascando", both written in 1961, are among them.

So, the aim of this research is to analyze Beckett's wordcraft in his two early radio plays "Words and Music" and "Cascando" in terms of linguostylistics, thus showing that less attention given

to them does not diminish their value and complexity. The object of our article is Beckett's wordcraft in the two radio plays and its subject is linguostylistic means of his wordcraft.

Analysis of recent research and publications. "Words and Music" and "Cascando" have been an object of some investigations – Tzu-Ching Yeh examines Beckett's radio plays from aesthetic approaches and literary-theoretical viewpoints [1]; Lucy Jeffery analyzes how contemporary and Romantic music instructed Beckett's creative process, paying attention to his structural techniques and narrative voice [2]; Alexandra Poulain explores two competing paradigms of torture and passion in Beckett's radio plays [3]; Richard J. Gray II highlights the juxtaposition of sound and silence in Beckett's most influential radio dramas [4] and Andreas Mahler investigates Beckett's audioliterature in the context of musico-literary studies [5]. Each research dealing with a specific aspect is not related to linguistics. In our investigation, we have performed an in-depth comparative linguistic stylistic analysis of two radio plays – "Words and Music" and "Cascando".

Results and discussion. The play "Words and Music" is set in unidentified space. The only hint a reader gets from the playwright is mentioning of "stairs" and "tower" [6, p. 334] which makes us assume that this play takes place in a castle or something similar to it. We get acquainted with the castellan Croak, called "My Lord" several times by Words [6, pp. 333, 334, 335]. Accordingly, two other characters – Words and Music are his servants whom he simply calls Joe and Bob. While reading a play and observing the behavior of all personages, we draw a parallel with medieval or Renaissance court where a monarch (a king) is entertained by a bard and a singer.

It becomes obvious that Croak is elderly thanks to numerous onomatopoeic author's remarks – "shuffling carpet slippers" [6, pp. 333, 340]; "rending sigh" [6, p. 334]; "deep sigh" [6, p. 340]; "groans" [6, pp. 335, 337, 338, 339]; "faltering" [6, p. 335]; "murmur" [6, p. 337] and "thump of club" [6, pp. 334, 335, 336]. Thus, Beckett skillfully, without direct characterization, enables his readers to imagine the way Croak looks – a very old man with a weak and gruff voice, walking with difficulty and using a cane.

Croak is entertained by Words and Music which stand in opposition. From the very beginning of the play it becomes clear that despite being together for a long time they are both rivals being jealous and competitive:

MUSIC Long la.

WORDS [imploring] No! [6, p. 336];

MUSIC Renews timidly previous suggestion.

WORDS [interrupting, violently] Peace! [6, p. 338].

One can spot a typical Beckettian technique – to make references to other plays. In this case, Words and Music resemble

Hamm and Clov – main characters of “Endgame”. The relationship between Words and Music is antagonistic; each implores, loathes, interrupts, and seeks to gain ascendancy over the other until they hear the sound of Croak [7]. Besides, there is an implicit reference to “Waiting for Godot” when personages are caught in cycles of repetition: “Sloth is of all the passions the most powerful passion and indeed no passion is more powerful than the passion of sloth, this is the mode in which the mind is most affected and indeed – ... The mode in which the mind is most affected and indeed in no mode is the mind more affected than in this...” [6, p. 333] resembling “Love is of all the passions the most powerful passion and indeed no passion is more powerful than the passion of love. This is the mode in which the mind is most affected and indeed in no mode is the mind more affected than in this.” [6, p. 334] or “Age is ... age is when ... old age I mean ... if that is what my Lord means ... is when ... if you’re a man ... were a man ... huddled ... nodding ... the ingle ... waiting – ... Age is when ... to a man ... Age is when to a man ... Huddled o’er ... the ingle ... Waiting for the hag to put the ... pan in the bed ... Waiting for the hag to put the pan in the bed. And bring the ... arrowroot. ... And bring the toddy ... She comes in the ashes ... She comes in the ashes who loved could not be ... won or ... Or won not loved ... [6, pp. 335-336] resembling:

“Age is when to a man
Huddled o’er the ingle
Shivering for the hag
To put the pan in the bed
And bring the toddy
She comes in the ashes
Who loved could not be won
Or won not loved
Or some other trouble
Comes in the ashes
Like in that old light
The face in the ashes
That old starlight
On the earth again.” [6, p. 337].

The play opens with Music represented by “small orchestra softly tuning up” [6, p. 333] but Words is annoyed because these sounds have interrupted his soliloquy on the “theme sloth” [6, p. 333]. Croak tries to make up a quarrel, uttering “Be friends!” [6, pp. 334, 338], “My balms!” [6, p. 335], “My comforts!” [6, p. 338] and “Together!” [6, p. 336]. Samuel Beckett manages to display emotionality of their communication with the help of **emotionally coloured vocabulary** – “implores” [6, pp. 333, 335, 336, 340]; “anguished” [6, pp. 334, 335, 338]; “no! please!” [6, p. 335]; “drowning protestations” [6, p. 335]; “violent thump” [6, pp. 334, 336]; “tremendous thump” [6, p. 336]; “interrupting, violently” [6, p. 338]; “disregarding, cold” [6, p. 338]; “irrepressible burst of music” [6, p. 339]; “vain protestations” [6, p. 339]; “peace! No! please!” [6, p. 339]; “reverently” [6, p. 339]; “shocked” [6, p. 340]. The characters also raise two sensitive and relevant topics – love and age. When Croak announces the topic of love, he mentions a female name Lily [6, p. 338]. This figure remains unknown to a reader and mysterious but it can be the person who Croak is attracted to. When he appears for the first time, he utters: “I am late, forgive. [Pause.] The face. [Pause.] On the stairs. [Pause.] Forgive. [Pause.] ... The face. [Long pause.] Theme tonight ... [Pause.] Theme tonight ... love.” [6, p. 334]. Moreover, plentiful **author’s remarks “Pause” and “Long pause”** (used 76 times) add emotionality and tension. Expressive means on a syntactical level, used by the author, include **exclamatory sentences** (“Please!... Listen!... At last!” [6, p. 333]; “Love!... Oh! Louder!” [6, p. 335]; “Age!” [6, p. 336]; “Together! Together, dogs!” [6, p. 336]; “Peace!” [6, p. 338]); **apophysis** (“Of

all – “ [6, p. 334]; “...is the soul more urged than by this, to and – “ [6, p. 334]; “Arise then and go now the manifest unanswerable – “ [6, p. 335]; “Ages is ... age is when ... old age I mean ... if that is what my Lord means ... is when ... if you’re a man ... were a man ... huddled ... nodding ... the ingle ... waiting – “ [6, pp. 335-336]; “And bring the ... arrowroot ... And bring the toddy ...” [6, p. 336]; “She comes in the ashes ...” [6, p. 336]; “She comes in the ashes who loved could not be ... won or ...” [6, p. 336]; “That old moonlight ... on the earth ... again.” [6, p. 337]; “Seen from above in that radiance so cold and faint ...” [6, p. 338]) and **parcellation** (“Be friends! [Pause.] I am late, forgive. [Pause.] The face. [Pause.] On the stairs. [Pause.] Forgive. [Pause.] Joe.” [6, p. 334]). Words and Music are antagonists, symbolizing language and feelings (or expressiveness). Each of them wants to dominate. The main idea encoded by Beckett is that it is impossible to express meaningful utterance only through words – there always have to be feelings. A reader can clearly see it at the end of the play when Music and Words stop quarreling, interrupting each other and try to cooperate: “Music invites with opening, pause, invites again and finally accompanies very softly... Words trying to sing, softly.” [6, p. 340]. At this point, closer to the end of the play, one starts pondering that Croak may symbolize Beckett himself, Beckett as a writer. After all, all Beckett’s works are full not only of sense but also of feelings and emotions.

A radio play “Cascando” is very similar to “Words and Music” in an implicit message of the playwright and the way it is presented. As in the previous radio play, the setting is not mentioned and there are three characters – Opener, Voice and Music. They all represent unity, forming together a human being. The first line of Opener starts with mentioning of “May” – “It is the month of May ... for me.” [6, p. 343] and this month is repeated twice throughout the play: “Yes, correct, the month of May. You know, the reawakening.” [6, p. 348]; “Yes, correct, the month of May, the close of May.” [6, p. 349]. Its **symbolism** is obvious – May stands for reawakening, as the protagonist mentions himself.

From the first lines of the play we immediately understand that Opener is a reviving writer ruled by Voice and Music, thus wishing to express both meaning (Voice) and feelings (Music). He wants to finish the story and finally find a rest: “– story ... if you could finish it ... you could rest ... sleep ... not before ... oh I know ... the ones I’ve finished ... thousands and one ... all I ever did ... in my life ... with my life ... saying to myself ... finish this one ... it’s the right one ... then rest ... sleep ... no more stories ... no more words ...” [6, p. 343]. From this excerpt, we find out that he, being a writer, has written a great deal of stories. **Parcellation combined with parallelism** “no more stories ... no more words” emphasizes how emotional this excerpt is, how important writing a new story is and how tired Opener is. One cannot but notice the importance of this story and confidence of main character that this story is right – “it’s the right one” [6, pp. 343, 344, 345, 347, 348, 351].

Further pages of the play explain how others, probably critics, cannot understand him: “They say, It’s in his head.” [6, p. 345]; “They say, He opens nothing, he has nothing to open, it’s in his head. They don’t see me, they don’t see what I do, they don’t see what I have, and they say, He opens nothing, he has nothing to open, it’s in his head.” [6, p. 346]; “They say, That is not his life, he does not live on that. They don’t see me, they don’t see what my life is, they don’t see what I live on, and they say, That is not his life, he does not live on that.” [6, p. 347]. The playwright highlights Opener’s indignation, despair and fatigue through a range of rhetoric devices – **anaphoric repetition** “they don’t see”, **reiterated word “nothing”** (which becomes a key word) and **parallel constructions**. He is too tired repeating “I open.”; “I close.”; “I start again” [6, pp. 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 349, 350] but his Voice urges him saying “don’t give up”

[6, pp. 344, 345], “come on!” [6, p. 349], “don’t let go” [6, pp. 350, 351]. It echoes the final words of “The Unnamable” by Beckett: “...you must go on, I can’t go on, I’ll go on.” [8, p. 135].

The last cues of characters explicitly hint a reader at the story being written:

OPENER [with Voice and Music]: *Good.*

VOICE and MUSIC together: – *nearly ... just a few more ... a few more...*

OPENER [with Voice and Music, fervently]: *Good.*

VOICE and MUSIC together: – *this time ... it’s the right one...* [6, pp. 350–351].

As one can see, the characters act in unison producing a perfect piece. As we can notice in both plays, all the personages are interconnected and an ideal piece of literature requires not only a producer, writer (Croak and Opener) but also both form and meaning / words and feelings (Words and Music as well as Voice and Music).

Characters of both above-mentioned plays embody Beckett himself. The problem raised in these plays echoes Franz Kafka’s quote about “the limitations of words and the infinity of feelings” [9]. Words are restricted and they cannot express measureless feelings. That is the playwright’s idea.

Both radio plays can be alluded to Beckett’s tragicomedy “Waiting for Godot”. The above-mentioned plays have unknown and unnamed settings as in “Waiting for Godot”. Besides, repetitive cycles of main characters’ lines resemble cues of Vladimir and Estragon waiting for Godot and being unable to change anything. The only difference is that despite repetitive events Vladimir and Estragon still do not meet Godot at the end of the play but they do not leave:

VLADIMIR: Well? Shall we go?

ESTRAGON: Yes, let’s go.

[*They do not move*] [6, p. 87].

As for the protagonists of “Words and Music” as well as “Casando”, they achieve desired outcomes – in both cases they produce an ideal, right piece of art.

One striking feature of the play “Words and Music” which makes it different from “Casando” is reliance on a reader familiar with Italian and Latin borrowings: “adsum” [6, p. 334; p. 335], “orotund” [6, p. 334], “fortissimo” [6, p. 335], “aperture” [6, p. 339], “expostulatory” [6, p. 339].

Conclusion. Thus, both radio plays share the same feature – behind mere, simple words there is a deep, hidden sense, which is an example of Beckett’s mastery. Beckett’s minimalistic but skillful use of rhetoric relies on numerous allusions to his previous works and is aimed at an intellectual reader who reflects on the text and is able to decode its unconventional symbolism.

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Бернар Глорія «Мистецтво слова Семюеля Беккета» (на основі радіоп’єс «Слова та музика» і «Каскандо»)

Анотація. Ця стаття присвячена риториці Семюеля Беккета в його ранніх радіоп’єсах «Слова та музика» і «Каскандо». Мета дослідження – проаналізувати мову драматурга в обох п’єсах з точки зору лінгвостилістики. Об’єктом нашої статті є мистецтво слова Беккета у двох радіоп’єсах, а її предметом є лінгвостилістичні засоби мистецтва його слова.

Обидві п’єси торкаються взаємодії між мовою та її звучанням, таким чином доводячи, що майстерність Беккета полягає у використанні простих, мінімальних, іноді недоговорених, слів для позначення глибокого, імпліцитного сенсу. Мінімалістичне, але майстерне використання Беккетом риторики передбачає численні алюзії на його попередні роботи («Очікуючи на Годо», «Кінець гри» та «Безіменний») та орієнтоване на інтелектуального читача, який рефлексує над текстом і здатен розкодувати його нетрадиційну символіку.

Основна ідея, задована драматургом, – показати неможливість вираження осмисленого висловлювання лише за допомогою слів – почуття, що презентують виразність, повинні бути інтегровані зі словами. Слова обмежені, на відміну від безмежних почуттів.

Серед типових лінгвістичних особливостей беккетівської мови, виявлених в обох п’єсах, – ономапотичні авторські ремарки, непряма характеристика, алюзії на інші твори та персонажів Беккета, емоційно забарвлена лексика, численні авторські ремарки «Пауза» та «Довга пауза», емфатичний синтаксис (окличні речення, апосіопеза, парцеляція та паралелізм), повтори (як лексичні, так і синтаксичні) та незвична символіка.

Не лише мова п’єс сприяє їхній складності та глибині, але й структура та місце дії також посилюють цей ефект. Беккет використовує невизначені місце і час, а також часто застосовує повторювані цикли реплік персонажів.

Ключові слова: радіоп’єси, мистецтво слова Беккета, неідентифіковане місце дії, алюзія, нетрадиційна символіка, інтелектуальний читач.

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