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Journal Of Educational Research

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CONTENTS

- Tsakiridou Eleni, Kakalopoulou Georgia, Karamanidou Athina, Papadopoulou Ourania, Tziouvara Maria-Rafaela**
5-25 **ECONOMIC CRISIS AND EDUCATION IN GREECE**
- Andreas Andreou, Sofia Iliadou, Ioannis Mpetsas**
26-37 **EDUCATION FOR EXCELLENCE AND LEADERSHIP IN GREECE. THE “NATIONAL SCHOOL OF ANAVRYTA” FROM A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**
- Areti-Maria Sougari, Roxani Faltzi**
38-49 **EFL PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS’ SELF-BELIEFS AND PERCEPTIONS ABOUT TEACHING ENGLISH**
- Aikaterini Sarri, Evangelia Zikou**
50-63 **ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION: WHY, WHAT, HOW AND WHEN**
- Vassilis A. Foukas**
64-74 **INTERNATIONALIZATION OF PEDAGOGICAL THEORY AND THE REFLECTIONS ON THE GREEK CASE, 1830-1930**
- Adamos Anastasiou, Efthymios Valkanos, Gregoris Simos, Konstantinos Zafiroopoulos, Leonidas Karamitopoulos**
75-87 **PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS’ AND VICE-PRINCIPALS’ PERCEPTIONS OF COMPETENCE IN COMMON ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES: AN EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS FOR IDENTIFYING SUB-SCALES OF A QUESTIONNAIRE**
- Efthymios Valkanos, Konstantinos Fassoulis, Anna Saiti**
88-104 **PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS’ ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS THEIR ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**
- SOTIRIA, A. TRIANTARI**
105-112 **THE AESTHETIC DIMENSION OF RHETORIC ACCORDING TO FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE AND IMPLICATIONS IN EDUCATION**
- Angeliki Lazaridou**
113-129 **THE KINDS OF PRINCIPALS TEACHERS PREFER: A CROSS-NATIONS STUDY**
- Lindita Kaçani**
130-142 **THE PRESENT APPROACH TO GRAMMAR TESTING IN EFL COURSE BOOKS**
- Monika Rerak-Zampou**
143-164 **THE SCHOOL IMPACT ON BRIDGING AND BONDING SOCIAL CAPITALS: THE CASE OF 12 POLISH ADOLESCENTS IN ATHENS**
- Lorena Robo**
165-176 **THE USAGE AND ACQUISITION OF IDIOMATIC LANGUAGE BY THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF ECONOMIC FACULTY, FINANCE BRANCH IN THE UNIVERSITY OF KORÇA – A CORPUS BASED APPROACH**
- Maria Chanopoulou, Triantafyllos H. Kotopoulos, Anastasia G. Stamou, Vassiliki Nanou**
177-191 **THE USE OF NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES AND SPEECH STYLE IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF FEMALE CHARACTERS OF THE FAIRY TALE SERIES “HARA AND THE GOUDOUN” BY EUGENE TRIVIZAS**



THE USE OF NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES AND SPEECH STYLE IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF FEMALE CHARACTERS OF THE FAIRY TALE SERIES “HARA AND THE GOUDOUN” BY EUGENE TRIVIZAS

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ABSTRACT

The present article explores the way narrative techniques are used in the construction of female characters in the fairy tale series “Hara and the Goudoun” by Eugene Trivizas. Moreover, the particular speech style of these female characters is examined regarding the “feminine” vs. “masculine” stylistic dipole for the building of their fictional identity. From the analysis, it is shown that the Eugene Trivizas’s fairy tale series “Hara and the Goudoun” draws upon numerous narrative techniques which assign a signifying value in narrative practice. In addition, there is variety of female characters, each one with the role of contributing to the progression of the story. The female characters of the narrative present a wide range of personalities, albeit being generally static and flat, without remarkable variations to the advancement of the action. Sociolinguistic analysis confirms the static and flat nature of female characters as derived from narrative and character analysis, since, they all tend to adopt a feminine style of talk, characterized by mildness, hesitance and emotionalism.

Keywords: *Trivizas, narrative techniques, character, feminine and masculine style of talk*

1. INSTEAD OF AN INTRODUCTION – THE MATERIAL OF THE STUDY

Literary representations, either as a grid of points, ideas, conventions or symbols through which concepts, feelings, social stereotypes, cultural achievements, experiences or desires are linguistically expressed, or as an essential identification with the "fantasies" of the subject of writing (Baudry 1990: 54-90), comment in each

case social reality "out there" and control the relationship between fiction and reality, by utilising the symbolic use of language and referring to complex processes of fictional coding (Hawthorn 2002: 170 -171). This article aims to examine the narrative techniques used in the fairy tale series "Hara and the Goudoun" by Eugene Trivizas and the use of speech style in the representation of the female characters of the series regarding the "feminine" vs. "masculine" stylistic dipole, as well as the role the latter has in the plot and advancement of the story.¹

The fairy tale series "Hara and the Goudoun", written by Eugene Trivizas and belonging to the category of Children's Literature, was chosen as the material of this study. This particular series mainly addresses children in preschool and early school age. Firstly published in 2002, the series comprises twelve (12) books and is noted for the promotion of contemporary concerns by adopting the children's point of view into a fictional context of imagination and surrealism.

The main characters of the story are Hara, a young girl characterized by spontaneity, altruism and cheerful personality, and the Goudoun, a strange little creature with an unusual appearance and playful character, which, while caring for its friend, causes difficult situations, which Hara is ultimately called to solve. As for the villain, the hostile Goudoun-eater, who, as its name indicates, eats Goudouns, always makes various plans, inevitably thwarted by the main characters' actions. Hara hides and protects the strange Goudoun creature, which has neither a tail nor a right ear, from the Goudoun-eater, who wants to gobble it. The two main characters get to know each other and gradually become close friends who help and protect each other from various dangers and threats made by the Goudoun-eater, while travelling together into several magical and imaginary worlds using the Goudoun's flying colander.

2. METHODOLOGY

A composite method of approach and of interpretation analysis of the series books was used for the aims of the present study. More specifically, the literary text is examined using the methods of content analysis, character theory and narratology (G rard Genette's model of typology). For the study of the speech styles employed by female characters, we draw upon the distinction made by sociolinguistics between 'feminine' and 'masculine' styles of talk, which refers to the social dialects indexing gender (e.g. Holmes 1995, Malz & Borker 1982). Moreover, the present study is situated within the context of relevant research on the mediation of sociolinguistic style in fictional discourse, part of which is children's literature (e.g.

¹ Eugene Trivizas has taught Forensics and Comparative Criminal Law at the University of Reading and directs the Department of Criminal Justice Studies of the same University. He is the author of over 100 books for children. A great number of his literary works have been awarded in Greece, America and England, have been transmitted by the BBC, have been included in Greek and American language books and have been translated into English, German, Japanese, Spanish and other languages. *Biblionet*. recovered in November 10, 2013 from the website: <http://tinyurl.com/nq5unkl>. It is worth noting that the illustration of the books was done by the artist Vangelis Eleftheriou.

Stamou 2012). Conceptualizing fiction as a construction rather than a reflection of sociolinguistic style, the aim of such an endeavor is to acknowledge the ideological framework upon which fictional discourse operates, which builds a particular version about language and social reality (for more details, see Stamou in press).

3. ANALYSIS

3.1. Narrative Techniques

The series narrator engages into the performance of various functions, whose vast majority plays a determinant role in the creation of female characters. Quite expectedly, the transmission of the story, namely the narrative function, was the most prominent one.: *"It was pouring outside and there were thunders and a terrible commotion. In her room, Hara was wearing her striped pyjamas and was sleeping tucked under a feather comforter when suddenly..."* (Trivizas 2009: 4). The directing function is also documented in every book of the series, as the narrator embarks upon the construction of the narrative material aiming to ensure its utmost effectiveness: *"Hara glimpsed into the room. It was full of scattered toys: a wind-up frog, a teddy crocodile, a kite with blue earrings, a train with seven passenger cars, a piggy bank, a rattle, a clown, a torn teddy bear and a ball with red and pink patches"* (Trivizas 2002: 7) The communication function that ensures the uninterrupted contact with the narratee is often encountered: *"So, as you see, the Goudoun managed to acquire a tail made of carnival ribbons and a fine ear of azure conch"* (Trivizas 2007: 34), while in some books the narrator intervenes in the form of brackets and attempts to undermine plausibility, thus accentuating the artificial character both of the text and its structural models: *"The Goudoun initially had only one ear and Hara made for it a second one using an azure conch. (Read the story in the second book of the series, published with the title "Three carnival ribbons")* (Trivizas 2003: 6), where the narrator encourages the reader to read the book *Three carnival ribbons* (2007) in order to find out the way that the Goudoun acquired its new ear.

The narrator adopts zero focalization, characterised as omniscient, knowing the actions of every person of the story: *"While the three dwarf pirates were giving out orange juice straws, colourful paperclips and red pencil leads, over to the laundry room the firefighter was eating kourabiedes [a Greek sweet] and the doctor was examining Manthos the Panther, who had got an anemone on the tip of his tail"* (Trivizas 2006: 5). The narrator is covert and heterodiegetic, as he does not participate in the story he narrates, while often utilising the metalepsis phenomenon. This means that the lines among the narrative levels are blurred, without though disturbing the progression of the story, as the metalepsis is presented in the form of a reference: *"If you'd like, paint a black despair and send it to me for inspection. Otherwise, if you prefer it, draw a red despair in yellow slippers"* (Trivizas 2003: 6). Using this neoteric technique, the author succeeds in

bringing forward his humouristic approach on his themes. This is also achieved with the use of reported speech in most of the narratives: *"Ha ha ha ha! I got you!, he cawed and laughed out loud. You fell into my trap! Nobody can save you now! – What will you do to me?, the Goudoun faltered. – I'll stuff you. – What will you stuff me with, the Goudoun asked, as it didn't like being stuffed with whatever. – I'll tell you in just a minute! Here I 've got the recipe."* (Trivizas 2002: 4). At the same time, the narrator's narrative comments are often quoted in the reported speech, aiming to describe the speaker in detail, or to provide information about the characters' quality of speech with comments about prosody, such as intonation and voice pitch: *"What can I get you?, the waiter asked. – Two sour cherry juices for me and a kataifi [a traditional sweet] noodle thread for the Goudoun!, Hara gave her order. – Here it comessss!!! The waiter yelled."* (Trivizas 2006: 16).

The author also ingeniously exploits the relationship between the events of the story and their discourse layout). The forms of anachrony that are of greater interest are the prolepsis ones, where even though the reader is predisposed to the way the story continues, at the same time he anxiously anticipates with interest the unravelling of the plot: *"At another time I'll tell you what happened when the Goudoun-eater suffered from amnesia and totally forgot that he loved eating Goudouns"* (Trivizas 2009: 46). A characteristic example is the dwarf pirates' "warnings" on which places the two main characters will have to cross in order to reach their destination, the Mount of Luck, while searching for four-leaf clovers: *"How do we get to the Mount of Luck? Hara asked. – With difficulty! The red-capped pirate said. With great difficulty. You have to pass through the forest of red nettles... - And the jungle of poisonous cacti!, the forked-bearded pirate added. – And the worst: You have to pass through the Land of Mishap!, the feather-capped pirate said. A thousand mishaps will happen to you if you set foot in that land."* (Trivizas 2010: 12 – 13). The use of first person in the prolepses enables a different time setting which subverts the logical sequence of past – present – future into I - here – now, imposing a chronotope that directly links the narrator with the reader. At the same time, by changing the narrative person, the narrative action becomes more lively and vivid, surprising the reader through its direct communication and presentation of an achronous existential present: *"Something tells me that right at this moment your ear is itching you too. So scratch it, it probably won't fall off and later I am going to tell you what happened when the postman delivered a letter to Hara"* (Trivizas 2003: 34)².

Regarding the duration of the narration that deals with the relationship between the story time and the text time, the dialogue parts (isochronies - scenes, in which the event-story ideally has the same duration as the stage narration), in which the times of the story and the narration are the same, offer to the narration vibrancy,

² Akritopoulos, A. N. (2007). The modern fairy tale of Eugene Trivizas: Fiction and Speech. *Texts: Laboratory of Speech and Culture of the University of Thessaly, Volume 6*. Retrieved on November 17, 2013 from the website: <http://keimena.ece.uth.gr/main/t6/arhra/tefos6/downloads/akritopoulos..pdf>

vividness and directness, as for example the dialogue between the Goudoun and its teacher on numbers: *"So as we were saying, the numbers...- Miss, Miss. - What's wrong again, Goudoun?-I have a question. How many are all the numbers? – Too many. - And do we need them all? – Of course. – Well, let's say, number 677, what use has it got? Can you tell me what do we need it for? - I don't know exactly what we need 677 for, but someone some day may need it. Let's leave arithmetics though and let's move on to..."* (Trivizas 2009: 39). In the speed up tempo of the text, the ellipsis, a technique of asynchrony, offers a rapid progression of the narration: *"When a long time had passed, they ran full of hankering, opened the rubbish bin and bent down to see what had happened"* (Trivizas 2003: 16), whereas through summary, a succinct report of the story is achieved, speeding up its progression: *"They went to the Magic Square, in the Land of Lost Kites, broke the pomegranate and started counting its grains"* (Trivizas 2003: 29). With the slowing down tempo, the reader's anticipation of what happens next becomes sharper, while at the same time the narrator finds the opportunity to "stage" more comfortably the setting. For example, the description of the Goudoun's bed as the prettiest and best bed of the whole world: *"It was made of rosewood. It had a pillow made of swan feathers, an upper sheet weaved with moon thread, a blanket knitted with rainbow ribbons and a canopy embroidered with the galaxy jasmines!"* (Trivizas 2006: 38).

As it can be observed, the ellipsis and summary demote the relevant parts of the story, in contrast to the slowing down and the pause, which stress them by making them the centre of the semantic function. In addition, these duration phenomena have also an aesthetic function, as a result of the change of pace and speed, since the narration becomes more vivid and active, without being monotonous. The scenes constitute the central parts of the narrative. In relation to the narrative frequency of events, which defines the relationship of the appearance of a certain event in the story and its presence in the narration, there is the singulative narration, which happened only once in the story, and the exceptional and remarkable iterative narration, which denotes only once something that in reality was repeated a lot of times.

It is worth mentioning the importance of the repeating narratives that are implemented in the narrative act. In every repetition that takes place, except for the characters who act on the repeated actions, different characters participate. A characteristic example is the Goudoun-eater's effort to collect ingredients for his stuffed Goudoun's recipe, during which he visits various stores, as the watch shop, the slippers shop, the bicycle shop and the umbrella shop (Trivizas 2002:17, 18, 21, 22). The characters' actions and discourse in these repeated processes are similar. The repeated processes constitute a stylistic device characteristic of the author and function as the semantic centre of the narration, through which the reader's interest is attracted by heightening his anticipation, while at the same time a humorous overtone is given.

Another element that characterizes this particular series as well as the whole of

Trivizas's works is intertextuality. It is part of the artificial communication devices between the author and the reader, according to which the latter actually gives meaning to the text through already read texts that he needs to recall, , relate and "commenti" while reading the given text. Intertextuality is a characteristic of Eugene Trivizas's literary style, as the reader is referred to his other works through names of people and places. The references to Delicacystan (Lichoudistan), the Sugara (Zahara) desert, the Fearzon (Tromazon) jungle and Fruitopia are place names that the author uses widely in this particular fairy tale series, so that the reader is referred to his other works. For example, in the fairy tale *The great itch* (2003), it is the appearance of the castaway, of the deserted island and of the sea of Plops: "*they passed over the White Coconut jungle and the land of pink cacti and the sea of Plops and in a short time they landed on a deserted island in the middle of the ocean [...] That castaway*" (Trivizas 2003: 24) refers the reader to Trivizas's *The red-bearded castaway* (1991).

3.2. The female characters

In an attempt to analyse the female characters in the fairy tale series *Hara and the Goudoun*, we used, as previously mentioned, a composite method that addresses the characters as personalities and as textual constructions (Papantonakis& Kotopoulos 2011: 77-85). The female characters in our case are differentiated by distinctive characteristics, where each one of them contributes in its own way to the progression of the story. It is worth mentioning though that the reader perceives the heroines' personality traits through their actions, as these are manifested in the dialogue and narrative parts. It was beyond the scope of the present study to provide an in depth psychographic profile of the heroines. It should be though taken into account that they address mainly children as readers, with cognitive limitations due to their age. Their psychological dimension is set on the background, without though totally dissipating.

The protagonist and main character of the fairy tale series is Hara, whose different personality facets emerge during the progression of the story, without though tracing important changes to her character analysis. Hara could be a role model for the reader, as she is characterized by altruism, she is polite towards all the other characters, she is active, she loves her friend and she does not take into account the material goods, giving emphasis to emotions. She is a flat and static character, as her personality does not alter significantly. Her name (Hara = Joy in Greek) predisposes the reader to her virtuous elements, as she is cheerful, sensitive and altruistic. Her habits and interests like her desire for games or chewing gum coincides with the child and student age. In that account she could be seen as a collective character (Nikolajeva understands this kind of character as a literary deception that is used for strictly pedagogical reasons (pseudo-collective character) (2002:80-82)). From the start, there is an emphatic highlighting of her altruistic nature, with her helping and showing an interest in others, even strangers, as it is

demonstrated in her first encounter with the Goudoun, where she allows it to hide from the Goudoun-eater: *"Hara took out the pillow from the pillow case and put inside the Goudoun"* (Trivizas 2009: 10) and to stay at her home. Meanwhile, Hara's interest in the Goudoun is demonstrated from the help she provides in its quest for food, as she travels with it to the Mount of Luck in order to find out the way four-leaf clovers grow (Trivizas 2010). She tries to fulfil the Goudoun's every need, like finding for it a left ear, making a tail for it (Trivizas 2007), and relieving it from its itch by taking it to the doctor (Trivizas 2013), as well as to make every wish, like helping the main character in his quest for the best bed in the whole world (Trivizas 2006). Another of her traits is her honesty since she does not hesitate to express her dissatisfaction and criticises her friend's behaviour when it is indecisive or overreacting: *"Come on, for God's sake, will you scratch it or not? Hara fumed. I am sick to death with you"* (Trivizas 2003: 17), *"You are so capricious, Hara said, this bed is too narrow, that bed splashes you. This one smells, that one pricks you."* (Trivizas 2006: 28). The heroine trusts the Goudoun and asks it for help in order to overcome her difficulties, for example her inability to sleep, and despite the fact that its advice is not feasible, she is not discouraged and continues to ask its opinion (Trivizas 2003). In another case, Hara asks the Goudoun to support her, when she confides that the reason of her sadness during her birthday was that not one of her beloved gave her his wishes. The Goudoun manages to change her mood by offering her various presents, with no monetary value, like an ice cream cone, a peach pit, a dustbin, and others (Trivizas 2010). At the same time, Hara shows her solidarity towards Goudoun, as she supports it to overcome the difficulties caused by the Goudoun-eater like when she helps her friend during its abduction by the Goudoun-eater, defying every danger.

Her wit is shown in the imaginative way she deceives the Goudoun-eater about the Goudoun's appearance: *"Besides, if it was hidden in the pillowcase, its tail would remain outside"* (Trivizas 2009:16). Her spontaneity and resourcefulness are characteristic traits that are traced even when she spontaneously conceives and implements a plan to save the Goudoun: *"Hara chewed the gums and made a thick red gum-pillow. She deposited the gum-pillow on the saddle of the goudoun-bicycle. She then perforated the tyres with the pins; [...] Hara grabbed the pillow and turned tail."* (Trivizas 2002:34). She likes playing, as there are many moments when she plays with the Goudoun and the dwarf pirates. Hara has a playful behaviour, doing mischief, like when she changes the doorknobs in her house with magic, unwittingly causing a lot of troubles to her father (Trivizas 2006). Her impetuous behaviour is also highlighted by the fact that she has the habit of leaving her home without previously informing her parents, even during the night (Trivizas 2003: 24), or by just leaving them a letter: *"Mum, don't worry I've left. I am going to the soap bubble festival in China and then to the penguin dance in North Pole and then to the Queen's party at Delicacystan, Many Kisses/Hara"* (Trivizas 2010:22)

Evlambia is a secondary and flat character. As the heroine's mother, she plays a

crucial role in the advancement of the story. Her name (meaning a person who shines in Greek) denotes and incarnates the traditional mother, who takes care of her home and her child. She loves her husband, Iordanis, but often nags about the situation at home, like when the doorknobs were replaced by magic (Trivizas 2006). Her character aids the progression of the story, like when she misinterprets the Goudoun-eater's visit to her house as a nightmare, and subsequently she does not notice her daughter's removal from the house (Trivizas 2002:30). Evlambia is the kind of a mother and housewife reminiscent of the traditional Greek woman, at least till the last decade of the 20th century, who wants to know where his/her child is, takes care of him/her, gets anxious about him/her, scolds him/her when he/she is being naughty and reminds him/her to go to school, while at the same time she wants to hold the control of the house and to order her husband around for indoor and outdoor chores. Many times though she disagrees with her husband in a sharp and imprudent way, highlighting a feminist point of view. The humorous dialogues between Evlambia and her husband make the reader laugh and attract his attention.

The fairy tale series *Hara and the Goudoun* comprises a variety of secondary female characters, who play different roles and contribute variously to the progression of the story. In the fifth fairy tale *The Mount of Luck* (2010), two flat characters appear, slowing down the progression of the story, as they do not help the heroes to find the seeds for four-leaf clovers, but instead they mock and laugh at them. The first is a white fox who usually knits jumpers made of boiled pasta. She hides the truth for the existence of the seeds from the main characters, she mocks at them by repeating everything they say. The other character is the turkey that wears a striped waistcoat and sits in a glass mortar drinking with delight an icy drink. She presents herself as more arrogant and ironic in comparison with the fox as she laughs louder and repeats things more blatantly. The presence of these two characters aims at the heightening of suspense for the reader, of his interest in the conclusion of the story and also of his curiosity about the residents of the Mount of Luck.

In the ninth book of the fairy tale series *The Goudoun goes to school* (2002), three types of teachers are presented, each one of them striving to do the best they can. All three characters lie to the category of flat characters and they are respectively the firefighters' teacher, the dwarf pirates' teacher and the Goudouns' teacher. The firefighters' teacher is presented as a character that wants to succeed in her educational work but has difficulties because of her students' indiscipline and low educational level. She tries to elicit from them the correct answer by giving them a lot of information, but they are still unable to find it. In addition, in a practical level, she is unable to teach her students, as they cannot even put out a lighted match, creating as a consequence uproar in her class. Her role is supportive as her presence is conducive to the Goudoun's reaching a decision to go to school. She is a comic role as her reaction causes the reader to laugh. The dwarf pirates' teacher is presented as unable to impose upon her students in class. She tries to

attract her students' attention in the teaching of the division process by giving examples of the pirate life. This approach fails; however, when during the reference to certain practical examples, a lot of students have misunderstandings with each other, causing turmoil. This teacher's presence is also supportive, as she helps the Goudoun decide to go to school. Her presence gives a happy tone to the read and her reactions make the reader laugh. The third Goudoun's teacher wishes to give lessons as anthropology, language –and mathematics. This teacher accepts both the Goudoun's right and wrong answers and explanations, thus making it apparent that she does not have the prerequisite knowledge. What's more, she is unable to keep the Goudoun – main character under control, when it wants a break and stubbornly creates uproar. The Goudoun's behaviour and the teacher's reactions have a negative impact on the lesson's realisation. She is rather naïve, as she accepts every one of the main character's reactions, despite her attempts to impose upon them. Her role is supportive to the progression of the story and her presence gives a humorous overtone to the narrative. The teachers' impotence and the students' indiscipline are biting examples, while many of the problems that the contemporary educational system faces are dealt here in a humorous way.

There is a smaller role for the two witches that are encountered in the twelfth book of the fairy tale series *The witch with the doorknobs* (2006), but they are not included in our study since, even though they function either to slow down the progression of the story heightening the suspense or to speed up avoiding narrative ramblings, the author does not let them talk.

3.3. The female characters' speech style

The sociolinguistic analysis of female characters in Trivizas's fairy tale series was performed in the dialogical parts of the books, in which the characters' speech styles could be revealed. Sociolinguistics has always sought to determine the social variety signaling gender identity, namely 'genderlect' (Tannen 1990). By employing the terms 'women's' and 'men's language', early research has compiled a list of lexico-grammatical features (e.g. Lakoff 1975) and of conversational phenomena (e.g. Zimmerman & West 1975), considering to characterize genderlect in an Anglo-Saxon cultural setting. However, under the influence of social constructionism and the adoption of a performative conception of gender as something that people achieve through talk rather than something they are, more recent sociolinguistic studies have reconceptualised genderlect as a symbolic resource upon which actual women and men draw in order to construct their gender identity during their interactions. Adopting a fluid conception of gender as displayed through interaction, it is possible to find cases in which women talk like men, and the reverse, so that we can refer to a "masculine woman or to a feminine man" (Behm 2009: 25). The reconceptualization of genderlect has been signaled by the replacement of the terms 'women's' and 'men's language' with the labels 'feminine' and 'masculine' speech styles, respectively. These terms express two idealized constructs which

inscribe the established normative attitudes of what is considered to be prototypically 'feminine' and 'masculine' in a given sociocultural context. They also mark a shift from the determination of genderlect on purely linguistic grounds to one on broader interactional stances, communicative strategies and pragmatic meanings.

A well-known distinction made between feminine and masculine talk is that the former is managed on a collaborative floor, while the latter is organized on a competitive one (e.g. Holmes 1995, Malz & Borker 1982). Moreover, according to Tannen (1990), feminine communicative style is a 'rapport-talk' whereas masculine one is a 'report-talk'. The former focuses on the interpersonal functions of the interaction, such as emotional connection and intimacy, with the aim to maintain social relationships. The latter focuses on the referential functions of the interaction for the exchange of information, with the aim to stress independence, status and hierarchy.

Hara is distinguished by a variety of features, for example she is very kind and always wants to help others, like the Goudoun, which she wants to protect and hide from the Goudoun-eater. Hara in her search to calm the Goudoun down in order to find a hiding place says in an assertive and decisive tone that it cannot hide to the places proposed by the main character: "*–Should I hide to the keyhole? – You do not fit. – Under the bed? –No way. –Why? –Three dwarf pirates are staying under the bed. – If I hid behind my tail? –But you don't have one*" (Trivizas 2009:7). Hara's style of talk is characterized here by categorical assertives through which she shows her direct disagreement with Goudoun's sayings. In general, Hara resorts to a masculine speech style when the Goudoun is gripped with anxiety and insecurity, caused by the life-threatening mood or presence of the Goudoun-eater, which is why Hara takes decisions highlighting a decisiveness which is reflected in her speech.

However, in most of the cases, Hara draws upon a feminine speech style, by adopting a communicative stance characterized by mildness, deference and hesitance. For example, at her meeting with the doctor she mitigates the face threatening act directed to the doctor asking him to examine the Goudoun, through the use of negative politeness (e.g. the second person in plural, 'please'): "*Can you look at this Goudoun here, please? Hara asked*" (Trivizas 2003: 8). Moreover, in many instances, her talk is oriented to the interpersonal aspects of the interaction, by expressing her emotional support and gratitude to the Goudoun: "*Really, my dear Goudoun? You cannot possibly know what a joy you bring to me! I love you so much!*" (Trivizas 2010: 6). On the other hand, her speech style is often hesitant and insecure by mitigating the assertiveness of her sayings via a question of confirmation: "*I saved you though. Didn't I?*" (Trivizas 2002: 36), or by expressing her disagreement in an indirect manner: "*You are right, I am not arguing. But just think about the good things too*" (Trivizas 2002: 8). Moreover, she usually holds a supportive role in conversations with others. For instance, when she talks with the three dwarf pirates, she repeats the central part of each pirate's utterance, showing

her interest in the descriptions they deliver about the places they have visited during their journeys"-*You will find the Island of Oblivion! The red-capped dwarf pirate said. -And where is the island of Oblivion? -It is beyond the Island of Savour, where thousands of cooks cook thousands of goodies all day! The forked-bearded pirate said. -And where is the Island of Savour located? -Beyond the Island of Non-stop Damage, where thousands of cats always cause damage, the dwarf pirate with the esteemed wing in hat said -and where is the island of non-stop Damage located?*"(Trivizas 2006: 13).

Evlambia has a twofold presence, the role of mother and the role of housewife. At the same time, there are some distinct elements in her role which correspond to a feminist character, as in many discussions with her spouse Iordanis, she opposes to his views, and she challenges him and orders him around. More specifically, in her role as a mother, she usually adopts a masculine speech style, in order to scold her daughter for her behaviour and habits. For instance, she reminds Hara to go to school and not to throw her chewing gum around in the house, as she usually does, by adopting a sharp and imperative style, through directive speech acts, categorical assertives, and the elongation of sound in her name ('Hara::') for emphasis "*Hara::! Time to go school! Mum's voice was heard. And stop letting chewed gum here and there. The gum you had left on the couch stuck in your uncle Ermolaos's pants and we had a difficult time removing it!*" (Trivizas 2002: 9). On the other hand, in the absence of Hara, she sometimes displays a feminine style of talk, showing her emotionalism and involvement, which she wishes to hide from her daughter. For example, when Iordanis urges her not to talk about his nightmare to their daughter, Evlambia refers to Hara through the diminutive term of endearment 'my little angel', indicating her affection for her daughter: "*No way! say anything to my little angel? Never*" (Trivizas 2002: 32).

In her discussions with her husband Iordanis, Evlambia constructs herself as a (house) wife through the strategic use of a feminine speech style. Specifically, she adopts a mild and hesitant style in order to disagree while avoiding a direct confrontation with him. For instance, she expresses her indirect disagreement with Iordanis through statements in the form of questions: "*Which bathroom, Iordanis?, mom was baffled. What are you saying? Here it is the North Pole! Don't you see the icebergs? Don't you see the igloos? Don't you see the seals playing flute? Don't you feel the polar chill?*" (Trivizas 2006: 24)., "*and who is to blame for this situation, please? [...] -Of course. Didn't you buy the refrigerator?*" (Trivizas 2006: 38). However, she sometimes displays a more imperative masculine style of talk, in order to signal her control over the housework, and thus confirming her identity as housewife: "*Before leaving for vacations do not forget to paint the chimney! she told him*" (Trivizas 2006:46)

The Goudouns' teacher displays a feminine style of talk by adopting a communicative stance characterized by tolerance, lack of authoritativeness and hesitance, e.g. through orders in the form of questions: "*would you like to come to*

the board to write your name?" (Trivizas 2009: 39). However, through this speech style, she fails to have control over her students, while she receives their ironical comments. For instance, the Goudoun playfully teases her through a repair for the term of endearment ('my little darling'; literally meaning 'my gold') she uses to address it: *I didn't say "gold", I said "red"* (Trivizas 2009: 31). Nevertheless, when she loses her temper because of the Goudoun's indiscipline, she resorts to a masculine style, in order to indicate her decisiveness and assertiveness: "what you did was not right. The teacher said. It is not correct to splash your classmates with red paint" (Trivizas 2009: 32). Consequently, the teacher's oscillation between a feminine and masculine speech style highlights the various modes she implements in order to achieve her main objective, which is the successful continuation of the lesson, despite the difficulties she has to face because of the Goudoun's behaviour.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, it is shown that the Eugene Trivizas's fairy tale series "Hara and the Goudoun" draws upon a variety of narrative techniques which assign a signifying value in narrative practice. The reported speech that is widely used in narrative practice gives the narrative vitality, action and vividness, as it helps the reader follow with interest the progression of the story. In addition, there are various neoterisms, such as the phenomenon of metalepsis, surprising the reader and placing him in constant contact with the narrative. The use of the phenomenon of metalepsis adds a humorous style and contributes to changing the relationship between chronotopes of the reader and the narrative. Intertextuality holds a special importance, as in this the fictitious world of the author's narratives can be built. Through intertextuality, the reader finds himself in a continuous dialogue with the author's other narratives. The duplication of similar situations is widely used in the story and gives a humorous mood in the narrative. They also attract the reader's interest, because they intensify his anticipation about the progression of the story. In addition, there is variety of female characters, each one with the role of contributing to the progression of the story. The female characters of the narrative present a wide range of personalities, albeit being generally static and flat, without remarkable variations to the advancement of the action. Hara displays elements of altruism and innocence, wants to protect the people that surround her. At the same time, Hara is honest, that's why she does not hesitate to criticise the Goudoun's inappropriate behaviour. Through the role of Hara, the children's innocence, imagination, openness and playful behaviour are reflected, elements that induce the interest and identification of the reader with the character. In addition, the role of modern woman is reflected in Evlambia's character which is at the same time housewife, mother, has personal desires, wants to be aware of all the events taking place at home, orders her husband around and expresses her strong opposition to several of his views. In this way, the position taken by woman in modern society is depicted, by displaying a dynamic female presence. With the appearance of

teachers, major issues of the educational system are presented in a humorous way and teaching approaches that have been implemented over the years in education are ridiculed, thus giving the opportunity to the reader to critically reflect upon them.

On the other hand, sociolinguistic analysis confirms the static and flat nature of female characters as derived from narrative and character analysis. Specifically, they all tend to adopt a feminine style of talk, characterized by mildness, hesitance and emotionalism. Given that feminine and masculine styles of talk presuppose a patriarchal social organization in which men and women assume traditional gender roles, the Trivizas's picture books analysed here seem to resonate the dominant gender ideologies. Interestingly, a masculine speech style, characterized by assertiveness, authoritativeness and decisiveness, is only occasionally and exceptionally adopted by female characters (e.g. when Evlambia wants to scold Hara, or when the teacher attempts to impose her authority over the Goudoun). In such cases, female characters do not wish to sound like men (i.e. display a male identity), but want to be associated with values (e.g. dynamism) stereotypically assigned to men and dissociated from those (e.g. passiveness) linked to women. In other words, they are represented as imitating the dominant group (i.e. men) by adopting its values (i.e. masculine style of talk). Hence, Trivizas's books depict the strategy of 'assimilation' on the part of female characters, which refers to the strategy of having a superior group as a role model and not being able to shape a positive distinct identity (Tajfel 1981). This sociolinguistic representation echoes cases in which women attempt to resist hegemonic female identities and are found to distance themselves from prototypically feminine speech stylistic resources and converge to masculine ones.

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