

3. Pragmatics: Cognitive roller coaster

3.1 Introduction

Sentences or paragraphs or entire texts come into existence through the basic cognitive categories and ideas. Despite the fact that we only can discuss these questions if we use practical terms in a specific language I'm presupposing that such a cognitive layer behind terms of an individual grammar point to communicative needs and possibilities of human beings that are valid in all languages. I'm thinking of the following main categories

illocution (modalities (predication + place + time))

I'll relate to *modalities*, a category which usually is treated in grammars rather incidentally. Modalities represent subjective filters that color the principal statement = predicate = some change in the external world.¹⁶ Such subjective filters can be combined in *one* statement.

»I think it would be fine to have a walk along the sea.«

In that clause the following elements can be differentiated:

KNOWLEDGE EVALUATION PREDICATE PLACE

There is not only an allusion to a »walk along the sea«, but additionally a speaker (»I«) has »the idea« that it would be »fine« to do this. This indicates that »the walk« didn't yet take place. So we are confronted with *two* elements that subjectively color (are modalizing) the central statement (»have a walk + along the sea«).

The topic of modal fields is a large one. Here it might be sufficient to say that in my view six fields (internally structured hierarchically) are discernible:¹⁷

– knowledge processing	Code EPISTEMOLOGY
– phantasy	Code IMAGINATION
– will / prohibition	Code INITIATIVE
– possibility	Code ENABLING
– evaluation	Code AXIOLOGY
– types of realization	Code ASPECTS

¹⁶ Such a semantic definition of *predicate* is of other kind than a definition simply by the question: where do we find a conjugated verb?

¹⁷ Cf. SCHWEIZER (1981), (1986), (1995) with only slight differences. Many practical illustrations are given in the book of 1995.

3.2 EPISTEMOLOGY and IMAGINATION

In chapter I of *Don Quixote* I will describe and interpret the forms of realization of the first two fields of modalities. A double question requires answers:

1. Which person *in* the text knows what when?
2. What process of perception does Cervantes employ to inaugurate his readers?

A figure *in the frame* of the text is the gentleman. Via his activities several further persons are mentioned – from *Don Belianís* to the emperor of Trapezunt. But all these persons have only a mental existence, known persons who don't become active in the text. They serve as ideals for Don Quixote.

Also detectible *in the frame* of the text are an author = narrator and a fictive reader. Both persons are not identical with the historical Cervantes resp. with us as real readers. There may be overlaps. But these are primarily *modelled* figures. Where there might be an overlap with the historical figures of author and real readers remains to be seen.

3.3 Knowledge and phantasy in textual fiction

Given the knowledge of the figures *in* the text chapter I can be subdivided into 6 paragraphs.¹⁸

1. In the opening section the real reader is confronted with multiple paradoxes and a chaos of knowledge within the text. So the question arises: Who actually knows what? (1.1 – 3.27)
2. Beginning with 4.1 the gentleman's desire for knowledge is awakened. The résumé is that he »lost his wits« (7.1–4).
3. The modal field of EPISTEMOLOGY has now been abandoned. The comprehension of impulses coming from the real world can no longer be expected. Now a transition to the modal field of IMAGINATION takes place. Even there the gentleman may use knowledge (e. g. 7.5). But such knowledge now is bound to the phantastic world, not to the real one. The result of Nr. 2 is confirmed several times: The gentleman has »lost his wits« (9.4). His failure to perceive the real world is the precondition for entering the modal field of phantasy (7.5 – 10.15).
4. Several activities (helmet / horse) confirm that the gentleman is relying on IMAGINATION and that he is regularly failing in the field of EPISTEMOLOGY. He does not recognize which empirical failure underlies his reveries and actions (11.1 – 12.6).
5. Under great efforts (an eight-day search for a name for himself) and by taking over preconceived knowledge (stereotypes, rumours, stories) the gentleman is making some progress even in the field of world knowledge. So he finally becomes able to begin his great project of the redemption of the world (»righting every kind of wrong« (10.9) – (12.7 – 14.1).
6. Familiarity with stereotypes leads to the knowledge that a knight needs a Lady. The gentleman neither knows himself nor does the real Lady learn of his love. He finds the Lady by dreaming such a relationship. An exchange of knowledge between the two is not reported. On the level of phantasy he is able to give her a name. – The paragraph shows once more that in chapter I a clash of the two modal fields is played through (14.2 – 15.27).

18 See the appendix III.

The implicit author is eager to find the truth, the correct world knowledge – but he fails again and again. The same with Don Quixote: he very quickly leaves the domain of world knowledge and is totally captivated by IMAGINATION, where he can create his own world. One important mode of orientation lies in stereotypes found in »books of chivalry«. He wants to adopt the model of life he found there for his own life and wants to match it step by step. Don Quixote is convinced that he always has succeeded in doing this. But that is a phantasy. We as readers perceive at the same time the epistemological message that the helmet remains defective even after repair that the horse is overestimated that Don Quixote does not know who he is and that Dulcinea is unaware of her good fortune.

3.4 Implicit narrator

Cervantes is the real and historical author of the entire text. But *within* the text we do find traces of a figure reporting his/her knowledge, his or her relation to the reader and sometimes of his opposition to Don Quixote. Or at least we are able to infer such information.

The »Ego« of that implicit author can be detected in 3.1: the implicit author apparently knows the gentleman's village but refuses (why?) to name it. Whereas in the title the name of Don Quixote had been mentioned *definitely*, now another person is reporting – speaking *indefinitely* of the same figure.

The implicit narrator is relying on the knowledge of others (3.19 – 22); there is even an other group of authors. So the implicit narrator is not alone as writer. He or she makes his or her own inferences and then uses an irritatingly strong word (3.27; 13.5): the rendition to follow will consist of nothing else than *the truth*.

So not only Don Quixote is a problem, but the implicit narrator, too. Despite the fact that he / she is aware of further authors, i. e. other viewpoints, and that he / she sometimes has to use rumours, at the same time he / she contends to offer nothing than the whole truth. That is a contradiction. At that point the real author is unmasking the implicit narrator.¹⁹ Moreover: if someone feels pressed to explicitly confirm that he /she is telling »the truth«, in most cases we can be sure that he / she is reporting »falsehoods«.

Additional metacommunicative indications: 4.1 (»You must know«); valuations critical of Don Quixote (9.9 »whole fabric of invention and fancy«; »his wits being quite gone« 10.2; »strangest notion« 10.3; »madman« 10.4); »as has already been said 13.5; »so the story goes« 15.8; »so far as is known« 15.12.

The figure of the narrator integrated in the text is promising the whole »truth« about Don Quixote, which at the same time is devalued by the implicit narrator. But it does not become clear why he / she exerts himself / herself so intensely for that »madman«. Devaluation can even be seen in the different indications that the gentleman merely follows his own phantasies and chimeras. But that's exactly what the implicit narrator is extremely interested in – a paradox.

Such ruptures, lacks of sufficient information and inconsistencies show that we are confronted with a modelled figure that should not be confused with the real Cervantes. A stylistic function (which still has to be determined can be attributed to the implicit narrator. But he / she does not stand before us as a real, selfconsistent figure.

19 F. MARTINI: »Cervantes erhöht ihre innere Spannung noch durch den Wechsel von direktem und indirektem Stil, durch die Vervielfältigung der Erzählstimmen. Denn es gehört zu seinen Kunstmitteln, wie er den Leser bald mitten in die Situation zieht, bald in der Distanzierung des Berichts Abstand, Überschau, kritische Besinnung gewinnen läßt, also die ganze Polyphonie der Erzähltechnik einsetzt, deren sich der Roman bis heute zu bedienen weiß und aus der heraus er sich immer wieder erneuert.« (1119) – »Denn daß man alle Dinge von mehreren Seiten sehen kann, daß sie immer in Relationen sich darstellen, daß alles Leben ungeheuer vielfältig ist – dies ist seine große Entdeckung, die die Hierarchik des mittelalterlichen Denkens in die relativierende Vielstimmigkeit der modernen Existenz verwandelt. Er denkt in Umkehrungen, die sich in sich selbst vermannigfaltigen.« (1120)

3.5 The real, historic narrator: Cervantes

Cervantes is telling his story about Don Quixote by delegating that task to an implicit narrator. Cervantes is playing the role of an observer of the observer. Since both figures leave traces of knowledge, confusion and overestimation *within* the text the confrontation with these irritates the reader: Anyone reading Cervantes's text has – often abruptly – to switch the levels of perception (Cervantes / implicit narrator / Don Quixote). That entails all included modes of knowledge and evaluation (precise knowledge / uncertain knowledge / phantasy = IMAGINATION / knowledge restricted to the frame of phantasy / paradoxes / valuations). Through such stylistics the author prevents the impression from arising that the *plot* consists of a precise rendering of past events. Here the literary structure undermines the impression of dealing with the whole »truth«. In contrast, such stylistics suggests: everything may even have happened differently – or perhaps nothing happened. An ironic text of irritations – not only due to Don Quixote's invented adventures, but even more strongly due to the construction of the literary form: like a pneumatic drill that persistently perforates a concrete construction weakening it, loosening it – and finally causes its collapse.

4. Don Quixote and modern Hermeneutics

The character of the famous gentleman in chapter I conveys a pathetic impression:

That not only includes his poverished way of life, but the information that as an excessive reader he is going to lose all his remaining property as well. Don Quixote is digressing in fictional worlds of phantasy. Within the harsh, everyday reality he fails. An explicit speech contribution within a conversation is not reported. But a quarrel with the curate and the barber is alluded to. As presented in the text the gentleman has no personal relationship. That is underlined by the fact that he would have given his housekeeper and his niece away – if he would have had the opportunity of kicking that traitor Ganelon. The world of phantasy is more important than real persons. Therefore Aldonza Lorenzo is but a »lady of his Thoughts« (15.16). In real life that has no correspondence. When he feels to have been »never sufficiently extolled« – so we are confronted with strong symptoms of an inferiority complex that creates feelings of omnipotence.

Psychoanalytically we should characterize Don Quixote as highly neurotic, as someone, who needs help to show him the way out of the increasing encapsulation within his world of knights.

But that person is a literarily modelled one. Therefore no one has to propose a therapy. Instead, we can combine several additional pieces of information to finish the characterization of that extreme, tragic and at the same time ridiculous person.

Despite all the defeats – the gentleman was able to read and he used to read so intensely »that he almost entirely neglected . . . the management of his property« (4.7). One gains the impression that reading has been a lifesaver for him. Surely, he failed again and again even in this field – but modern readers quickly become aware that they aren't more intelligent when confronted with the same nonsensical statements (4.18 – 6.4). The gentleman was eager to detect meaning. The only ground for criticism is his simple-minded assumption that all written texts principally convey deep ideas that books never contain nonsense.

Don Quixote shows an attitude which is basic and typical for the three world religions of Jews, Christians and Muslims. And it should not be forgotten that mainly in Spain these three religions in the Middle Ages had a sometimes fruitful and peaceful, sometimes a difficult coexistence. According to these religious traditions ideas are found in books, in »Holy Books«, in »Holy Scripture«. Hearing and reading are decisive in the search for individual redemption. Therefore it is consequent and at the same time subversive that Cervantes transfers that honorable attitude from »Holy Scripture« to any book, even to books of chivalry. Cervantes is generalizing: Every book now attracts attention.

And as a countermove it is equally subversive when he demonstrates: in books it is possible to be confronted with nonsense. He does not contend explicitly, but he does insinuate that even the Holy Scripture is touched by that experience. Perhaps even there is no sense: »what Aristotle himself could not have made out or extracted had he come to life again for that special purpose.«

But such frustrations do not restrain Don Quixote from reading. And a new world is emerging in himself (9.5ss). It may well be that such a world has passed and is anachronistic – anyway, the gentleman gains a new inner horizon, an inner world, in which he wants to live spiritually, and then even really. His own life gains a sense of purpose, ideals, a task, and therefore the gentleman is becoming active. And – surprisingly – he wants to have a personal relationship. The instigation for that development consists of stereotypes. But in any case the gentleman is learning something that changes his life positively. Without reading Don Quixote would have perished definitely and dully.

Surely, given the dominance of that encapsulated phantastic world the neurotic deformations of the gentleman cannot be reduced. His permanent failure is inevitable and is dragged out literarily throughout the entire book. The manifold variation of that basic idea slowly tends to tire the reader. The narrative details are picturesque and of great variety. In the course of time even the most stubborn reader will understand that phantasy and real world do not converge (in the life

of Don Quixote) – according to Cervantes. The reader comprehends that résumé long before the end of the book on page 1103 (German edition). But nevertheless, the basic hermeneutical idea is contemporary and modern: Reading, perceiving, the intense penetration of worlds which at first are foreign/strange to me, in which firstly I have to learn to live – all that is a way to break down the individual mental horizon. Anyone who reads is searching. He/she knows that the personal mental equipment does not represent a final horizon. Anyone who reads knows that he/she is not omniscient – and that is not only meant in a rational-empirical sense. But it is meant even concerning aspects that touch the development of the individual personality and the development of a good life. One might ask whether »books of chivalry« are suited for such a reading project. But at least Don Quixote gained a basic knowledge about necessities of life that he was lacking for his conduct – whatever the reasons may have been.²⁰

What the author presents needs an explanation. The question is: What pushed Don Quixote to read so intensely? Cervantes does not give an answer. But his model of the extreme reader raises the question: What led Don Quixote to have the presentiment that heavy reading could be helpful for the personality of the gentleman? And what on the basis of that presentiment put him in motion so that such intense reading actually took place?

Surely, every answer is a kind of hypothesis depending on the individual conceptions of the human. In my view the force that drives Don Quixote to an activity that helps him and gives a sense of purpose to his life – even in a rather distorted way – must be assumed as an unconscious but central force. That power can neither be reduced to the activity of the brain nor to feelings alone. It's impossible to give precise definitions of that level. But a powerful domain in the mental equipment of anyone has to be assumed. It steers the individual – sometimes in opposition to rationality and feelings.

Cervantes forces the reader to parallel Don Quixote in the reading process. The artificial person of the »implicit author« detests the intense reading of »books of chivalry« by Don Quixote. He thinks of it as a waste of time. But with his lengthy book the real author Cervantes calls on us to do exactly what the »implicit author« detests: to read extremely much about a knight – even if he is a pathetic character. Another paradox! Together with all the others it conveys a mood of humour to the book. What is detested in the explicit text the reader is expected to do.

So it is not sufficient to say that in his own book Cervantes is ridiculing the medieval romance. Such an analysis is too closely connected with the literal sense. But that fictional world – according to modern hermeneutics²¹ – has to be destroyed in order to become aware of the motifs and interests of the real author. In our case the result could be: The author forces us to read excessively. Many narrative details and the stylistic structure do keep the reader in suspense. The readers are not bound to a concrete and clear imaginative world. Through paradoxes, contradictions, different perspectives and viewpoints a »certainty of knowledge« is avoided. The feeling of suspense is identical with the mood of humour. Defeats may occur. But indefatigably life can go on.²² It is true, Cervantes reanimates the world of knights. For us as modern readers the distance or nondistance to that old world is no longer a great problem. But despite that the novel is not out-of-date. That demonstrates: it's of second importance which fictional world (literal sense; *what* is he describing?) an author is outlining. Much more important is *how* the novel is written:

20 F. MARTINI: »Denn ungeachtet der ihn beständig widerlegenden und höhrenden Wirklichkeit hält er am Flug des Idealischen fest; unbeirrbar, mit einer Tapferkeit der Hand und des Herzens, die von einem echten Rittertum, von Mut, Adel, Stolz, von der rührenden Einfalt und der stolzen Ehre einer männlich starken Seele zeugt.« (1122)

21 Theology has the same problem: Can the »holy texts« only be read literally? Normally, religious institutions affirm that position – otherwise it would be impossible to formulate dogmas. Or can such old texts (like any other text) be read on a second level of meaning, where elements of fiction are loosing their influence and insights into stylistics and motifs of the author come to the foreground? Cf. SCHWEIZER (2002).

22 At the end of the film »Alexis Sorbas«, as I remember roughly, we hear the explanation: »I never saw anything collapse so beautifully«. But it is not depression that follows the failure, but a dance of joy. – The citation fits the assumed motifs of Cervantes (second meaning), it does not characterize Don Quixote (literal meaning).

Which stylistic features and literary structures can be seen? What are the motivations and interests of the author to write in such a way?

To put it in other words: For modern readers it is no problem to enter that anachronistic world of knights (literal sense). Manifold amusement and entertainment can be experienced even today. Decisive for a full comprehension is the second level of meaning in the background. And there it could easily happen that the world of knights is turning into a symbol, now meaning any possible mental world, e.g. ideologies, religious beliefs that are dogmatically or confessionally restricted, or other philosophies of life that are too unilateral or fixed.

The irritations provoked by Cervantes's special stylistics form a contradiction to the feudal world of the Middle Ages that has been dominated and controlled by church and hierarchy, guaranteeing the relation to the *one* and exclusive *truth*, a *Christian* truth. Cervantes rejects that seeming clarity and replaces it with a plurality of perspectives.²³

Seen in this way today even a novel about knights may subversively help to weaken ideological strongholds.

23 MARTINI: »Vernimmt man nicht auch die Stimme des künstlerischen Menschen, der, aus bitteren Erfahrungen um die Hoffnungslosigkeit der Träume und Ideale wissend und diese Bitterkeit in einer fast übermenschlichen Distanzierung von sich selbst überwindend, ironisch und skeptisch sich selbst gegenüber, den Idealismus der Phantasie schildert, der sich im Narrentum verstecken kann, so daß hinter dem Humor die Tragik aufscheint – die Erfahrung, daß das Lächerliche nur die andere Seite des Schmerzes ist?« (1123)

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7. APPENDIX III

COGNITION	transition	IGNORANCE
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author: 2.1 »famous« gentleman, *definit* ≅ well-known, without being introduced literarily. Anticipation of chapter I / of the whole book. Refined self-fulfilling prophecy: this gentleman really is becoming very famous . . .

reader: for him it is an *unknown* gentleman. Reader feels to be an ignorant: production of excitement

→ → SUPPRESSION OF KNOWLEDGE → →

3.1f – **author** refuses to know anything about the village. He does not call it, because he well knows the negative valuation attached to it. **author** is tailoring himself to the **reader**: *a* ≅ *indefinit* still unknown gentleman (3.3)

Harald Schweizer

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Solidarity with the reader stopped:
author knows exactly
the poorly pursuit and the servants: 3.7–18.

Uncertain knowledge. Rumours
about the name: 3.19–25.

author promises the whole truth in his story.
Omniscience.

reader does not know how the author gained the pretended knowledge.

Paradoxes and chaos of knowledge: Who really is knowing what?

COGNITION	transition	IGNORANCE
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← ← THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE ← ←

The gentleman is reading books of chivalry, but practically he is doing nothing, is loosing his possession (4.2–7.9): no change in outside world (= no *predicate*).

← ← THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE ← ←

Thirst for knowlegde (4.8); description of the books of chivalry (4.10–6.4).

result: gentleman without intellect (7.1–4).

Presupposition from here on: gentleman without intellect / refuses to live in our world

COGNITION	transition	IGNORANCE
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gentlemans critics of Don Belianís (7.5)

positiv negativ
paradox (7.13), paradox in irrealis (7.14–19)

uncertain knowledge: argument about
the better knight
between curate – gentleman – barber
(8,1–14)

← ← THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE ← ←

result: as 7.2–4: intellect lost

phantasies = *counterfactiv*
(Code IMAGINATION).
9.5–12.13 repeated attacks
(Cid, Rui Diaz, Bernardo,
Morgante, Rinald)

result: as 7,1–4; 9.4: intellect lost (10.2)

phantasy: knight errant,
righting every kind of wrong,
Emperor of Trebizont (10.9–11).

reader knows: such an empire has gone; asks: why
Constantinople is not mentioned? knowledge of details
by the gentleman; phantasy should be realized.

Change: EPISTEMOLOGY → IMAGINATION

COGNITION	transition	IGNORANCE
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11.3–5: Gentleman knows some armour has been forgotten = paradox = knowledge on an eccentric level.
 11.9–29: Closed helmet (\cong medium of perception) is needed, being constructed and tested.

Second repair.

1. Test: insufficient knowledge.

Without test: Uncertainty whether the closed helmet is suitable.

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Uncertain knowledge: Testing the hack.
 Intervention **Author:** hack has no value.
 12.1–6. **reader** by **author** against gentleman brought in opposition.

Gentleman: The hack is »better than . . .«

Chaos of knowledge

COGNITION	transition	IGNORANCE
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← ← THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE ← ←

4 days: search for a name of the hack
(12.7–35).

→ **reader** perceives word play
(spanish and german):
roc/s and **roc/sinante**

← ← THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE ← ←

8 days search for a name of himself
(13.1).

44 → **author** is remembering the reader 3.20
»as has been already said«: 13.5
That sounds as certainty of knowledge.

but it has been rumour.

Gentleman knows his example Amadís
»of Gaul«: 13.13

Harald Schweizer

14.1 résumé for the reader: preparations for the campaign

COGNITION	transition	IGNORANCE
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← ← THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE ← ←
Lady and love: 14.2

Gentleman knows the stereotype:
knight and love (14.3–17)

Don Quixote »never sufficiently
extolled« (14.18)

Gentleman finds Lady (15.1–12)

Uncertain knowledge: rumour (15.12):
Gentleman fallen in love,
Lady isn't aware of that

Unclear: Name of the Lady (15.17–27)

Namegiving: Dulcinea (15.21)

Implicit author (search for the truth)	\Leftrightarrow	Gentleman (living in fictitious world)
EPISTEMOLOGY	\Leftrightarrow	IMAGINATION