

MELANGES PEDAGOGIQUES 1970

L'APPRENTISSAGE DE LA LANGUE DE L'EXPOSE LITTERAIRE  
AU LABORATOIRE

C. JOCHUM

C.R.A.P.E.L.

Lorsque l'étudiant du certificat L ou du CAPES doit faire une explication de textes, une dissertation ou un commentaire en anglais, il emploie spontanément une langue littéraire calquée sur le français. Il n'en a d'ailleurs pas conscience. Il a surtout le souci de comprendre un texte, d'en analyser les idées et les thèmes. Il ne s'intéresse le plus souvent qu'au fond et néglige de travailler la forme. Nous avons pensé qu'il n'était peut-être pas inutile de lui donner un entraînement en laboratoire qui le sensibilise aux schémas lexicaux et grammaticaux fréquents dans la langue de la critique littéraire et lui fasse réemployer et automatiser par la répétition ces mêmes schémas.

Les objectifs de nos exercices se trouvaient donc ainsi limités et précis. Il n'était pas question de donner aux étudiants une méthode de dissertation ou d'explication de textes à laquelle ils sont entraînés par ailleurs. Nous devons leur fournir un moyen d'acquérir la langue littéraire c'est-à-dire l'outil qui leur permettrait de s'exprimer sans gêne dans les épreuves qui leur étaient demandées.

#### PRINCIPE DE BASE

L'idée de base est de fournir à l'étudiant un modèle à imiter. Un peintre apprend à peindre en copiant d'abord les maîtres avant de suivre sa propre fantaisie. Un musicien apprend l'harmonie en analysant l'oeuvre de ses prédécesseurs avant de composer. Nous ne faisons pas là oeuvre originale : Fénelon ne procédait pas autrement avec le Grand Dauphin. Nous pensions donc qu'il serait bon pour des étudiants de littérature d'écouter des commentaires modèles puis de les imiter. Ces commentaires étaient préparés conjointement par un professeur français et un professeur de langue anglaise mais ils étaient toujours rédigés et enregistrés par ce dernier. A la suite des commentaires nous posions des questions qui

demandaient en quelque sorte aux étudiants de résumer ce qu'ils venaient d'entendre en employant au maximum les structures intéressantes qu'ils avaient pu noter dans l'écoute de l'enregistrement. En un mot, nous avons opté pour la méthode du pastiche.

### OBSERVATIONS

En observant les étudiants pendant les séances au laboratoire nous avons vite vu surgir quelques difficultés. Malgré son apparente facilité la méthode n'allait pas de soi et les étudiants l'abordaient avec des attitudes variables.

- Certains étaient déconcertés par le principe. Une longue habitude faisait que dans un commentaire ils ne mémorisaient que le fond et que dans les questions ils tentaient d'exprimer leurs idées personnelles employant ainsi un vocabulaire qui leur appartenait et qui se trouvait être calqué sur le français.

- D'autres saisissaient la portée de la méthode et essayaient d'imiter le modèle anglais mais si leurs résumés parvenaient à rendre les idées de l'auteur, la forme n'était plus du tout la même. Involontairement l'étudiant oubliait les structures employées par le "native speaker" et transposait le message dans sa langue personnelle. C'est ainsi que l'anglais emploie souvent le passif dans l'énoncé d'une opinion (par ex : it is thought that...). Le français repassait au "We think that ..." bien moins employé. Nous avons essayé de couper le commentaire par les questions au lieu de les placer à la fin. Nous pensions réduire ainsi l'effort de mémorisation mais nous nous sommes bientôt aperçu qu'il ne s'agissait pas seulement d'un oubli des structures entendues mais d'une non-reconnaissance de celles-ci. Pris par le thème de l'exposé, l'étudiant ne remarquait pas la forme employée. Nous devons donc faire des exercices qui le sensibilisent au problème.

- Nous avons été également frappés, en écoutant les étudiants, des difficultés qu'ils avaient presque tous devant la prononciation des termes de critique littéraire. Beaucoup de ces mots ressemblent au Français. D'autre ont été appris visuellement au cours de lectures de critiques. D'où des erreurs très fréquentes sur la position de l'accent, en particulier dans les polysyllabes ; le déplacement de l'accent qui accompagne souvent un changement de classe n'était pas respecté : ex : a'nalysis, to analyse, a'contrast, to con'trast. Dans ce domaine également un entraînement systématique s'imposait. Nous avons donc envisagé de construire toute une batterie d'exercices qui alterneraient avec des commentaires sur des poètes modernes. Les exercices suivraient les commentaires. Ils porteraient sur les termes et structures remarqués par les étudiants pendant l'écoute du commentaire de la semaine

précédente. Ils offriraient des possibilités de ré-emploi et à force de répétition, d'automatisation. Nous aboutissions à

1. des exercices de phonétique
2. des exercices de lecture de textes et d'intonation
3. des exercices d'expression littéraire
4. des exercices plus spécialisés portant sur des procédés de la création poétique et la rhétorique.

### EXERCICES DE PHONETIQUE

- **Exercice de répétition** : l'étudiant entend un mot sur la bande et le répète dans le blanc qui suit. Il entend ensuite une phrase qui comprend le mot en question. Il répète alors la phrase. Nous avons constaté que très souvent les étudiants qui répétaient fort bien le terme isolé refaisaient inconsciemment l'erreur en contexte. C'est un exercice qui vise à attirer l'attention sur une difficulté mal perçue des étudiants.

- **Exercices de lecture** : nous avons donc introduit une autre forme d'exercice : l'exercice-test. L'étudiant doit lire un terme littéraire et généralement commet une erreur. Il entend la réponse correcte et peut se corriger. Le fait d'avoir à lire puis de reconnaître son erreur a fixé son attention bien davantage qu'une simple répétition. Il lira ensuite une phrase qui comprendra le terme en question et écouterait la correction.

- **Exercices de réemploi** : sous forme de questions sur le commentaire précédent exigeant l'emploi des termes dont on vient d'étudier la prononciation.

### EXERCICES DE LECTURE DE TEXTE

L'entraînement à la lecture d'un poème ou d'un texte de critique en prose était absolument nécessaire. Nous avons adopté la méthode suivante :

- les étudiants entendent le texte une fois pour le comprendre. Dans un deuxième stade on leur demande de noter sur le script l'accentuation, l'intonation, les ruptures de rythme. Le texte est ensuite lu par fragments. L'étudiant doit répéter chaque fragment dans les blancs.

- **lecture en surimpression** : il s'agit pour l'étudiant de lire en s'enregistrant en même temps que la piste maître se déroule. Au début l'étudiant donne une forte intensité à la voix du lecteur afin de se laisser porter par sa voix et d'en calquer avec exactitude l'intonation et surtout le rythme. Progressivement l'étudiant peut baisser le registre de la voix du lecteur. Sa propre voix domine alors mais elle est toujours soutenue.

Ce procédé est difficile mais donne d'excellents résultats dans l'apprentissage du rythme.

#### EXERCICES D'EXPRESSION LITTÉRAIRE

- Index : Afin de pouvoir construire des exercices de ce genre, nous avons décidé de faire avec quelques étudiants volontaires des relevés systématiques des structures de critique dans les commentaires déjà faits, puis chez diverses critiques de styles et de tendances variables (Eliot, D. H. Lawrence, Richards, Leavis, D. Day Lewis etc...) Nous nous sommes réunis chaque semaine pour classer ces relevés. Avec l'aide de 'native speakers' nous avons éliminé les mots trop marqués pour ne retenir que ceux dont l'importance s'est imposée à nous. Nous nous sommes appuyés surtout sur un critère de fréquence. Nous avons fait ainsi un index.

- Un terme n'y est jamais présenté isolé mais avec ses collocations ; un substantif par exemple est accompagné des adjectifs le plus souvent employés avec lui, et des verbes qui l'introduisent le plus fréquemment. Pour les verbes, nous avons toujours donné avec précision les formes passives, les formes impersonnelles nuancées par des défauts dont l'emploi est très important.

- Nous avons présenté également ensemble les mots de même racine ; ce qui offre des possibilités de changements de classe et toute une gamme d'expressions parallèles possibles lors de la rédaction d'une dissertation (par exemple : au lieu de répéter 'to emphasize' l'étudiant a à sa disposition des expressions comme 'the emphasis is laid on', 'there is very great emphasis on'). Certaines formes employées couramment par les étudiants français ne figuraient absolument pas dans nos relevés. Ainsi les verbes qui introduisaient les figures de style (allitération, métaphore, simili, image etc...) étaient toujours très simples : to use, to employ, there is alliteration ; par contre l'anglais avait toute une gamme de mots pour analyser l'effet produit par ces images. Certaines expressions apparemment fréquentes ne venaient jamais sous la plume d'un français, par exemple : 'Mention must be made of...'. L'index constituait pour l'étudiant une bonne sensibilisation et pour nous l'outil de base de nos exercices. En nous fondant sur les relevés du commentaire précédent et sur ceux de l'index nous avons construit toute une gamme d'exercices de répétition, substitution, transformation, transcription lacunaire sur les thèmes suivants :

- expression d'une opinion : emploi des verbes, substantifs, adverbes d'opinion, locutions impersonnelles, emploi du passif.
- manière de nuancer, d'intensifier ou d'atténuer une opinion. Emploi en particulier de 'Understatement'.

- emploi des mots de liaison qui articulent un raisonnement (exemple : travail sur les syllogismes)
- exercices sur la rhétorique de l'image et de la démonstration
- les exercices de transcription lacunaire ont souvent porté sur des passages tirés de critiques connus. Les 'blancs' portaient sur les termes que nous voulions faire remarquer : cette phase de sensibilisation est suivie d'une phase de ré-emploi sous forme de questions.

#### EXERCICES PORTANT PLUS SPECIFIQUEMENT SUR LA POESIE

Un poème doit être lu et entendu. La bande magnétique donne vraiment au poème toute sa puissance. Le travail en laboratoire s'adaptait parfaitement à l'étude de la poésie et de ses procédés. Une lecture pédagogique plus lente et plus accentuée peut mettre en valeur les allitérations, les onomatopées, le rythme du vers. Des exercices méthodiques de prosodie sont facilités et rendus plus attrayant par la perception immédiate de l'accentuation. Nous avons essayé souvent de faire de petites anthologies sonores sur le poète qui avait été étudié dans le commentaire précédent. Des questions faisaient remarquer après chaque extrait les thèmes, les figures de style, les images etc... Il y avait toujours sur la bande une réponse type qui devait être étudiée avec soin pour le fond mais surtout pour la forme.

Nous avons donc construit deux cours : un premier cours portant sur des auteurs assez classiques qui avaient été au programme du certificat L. Les commentaires se trouvaient accompagnés d'exercices de phonétique, de questions d'élucidation du texte, et de questions sur le commentaire lui-même. Nous avons ensuite fait un cours de poésie moderne (Yeats, Brooke, Owen, Housman, Eliot, Auden, R. Frost, W. Stewes). Les commentaires étaient présentés avec les exercices dont nous avons parlé.

#### DUREE ET FREQUENCE DES SEANCES EN LABORATOIRE

Nous avons eu l'habitude de donner des séances hebdomadaires. Une durée d'une heure est insuffisante. Au début il faut au moins deux heures. Par la suite lorsque l'habitude de la méthode est prise on peut raccourcir la durée si besoin est. Cette année nous avons fait une session expérimentale intensive de trois semaines au moins de novembre pour des étudiants volontaires du certificat L. Ils ont fait le cours de Poésie Moderne. L'expérience a été extrêmement fructueuse. Ordinairement les séances hebdomadaires sont trop espacées. En session l'effort de mémorisation se trouve facilité par le rapprochement des séances. Les étudiants sont très motivés

et voient bien plus rapidement l'intérêt de ce travail car pendant trois semaines ils voient les mêmes termes et structures revenir sans cesse. Ils étaient très encadrés : un professeur, un lecteur et trois monitrices pour 20 étudiants. Nous avons demandé à chaque étudiant d'observer ses difficultés. A deux exceptions près tous les étudiants ont trouvé les exercices très difficiles pendant quatre séances. Certains éprouvaient nettement une paralysie devant le magnétophone. D'autres avaient du mal à faire un résumé comprenant les structures importantes. La nécessité d'un encadrement à ce stade s'imposait vraiment. A partir de la cinquième séance ce stade est franchi et les étudiants peuvent progressivement travailler d'une manière autonome. Il serait catastrophique de laisser les étudiants travailler seuls immédiatement de manière autonome.

A l'heure actuelle nous travaillons dans une direction parallèle. Nous essayons de faire un cours sur des nouvelles avec les étudiants de CAPES. Nous gardons une alternance de commentaires et d'exercices. Dans ceux-ci nous cherchons à sensibiliser à la langue littéraire employée dans l'analyse de différents genres de nouvelles :

- récits linéaires (termes d'enchaînement temporel et causal, expressions décrivant le rythme du récit, le ralentissement ou l'accélération de l'action, le suspense, termes décrivant les procédés de création de l'atmosphère surtout dans les histoires fantastiques).

- nouvelles métaphoriques, impressionistes ou symboliques où l'action n'a plus la première place mais où l'étude des images, des métaphores, des symboles prime.

- nouvelles psychologiques

- nouvelles humoristiques

Dans chacune de ces catégories, nous entraînons également les étudiants au commentaire en leur faisant répondre à toute une grille de questions sur une nouvelle type. Ils peuvent ainsi ré-employer les termes qu'ils viennent d'étudier.

## ANNEXE I

### Dictionary of English Literary terms and expressions.

#### Idea

the idea that 7  
.., an idea.. 4  
main idea  
abstract idea  
concrete idea 4  
complex idea 17  
clear idea  
central idea  
related ideas  
to convey this idea 7  
to embody this idea  
to introduce an idea 21  
to express an idea  
to define some idea  
to state an idea 21  
idea portrayed by 3  
the idea is introduced 21  
this idea is illustrated by 21  
this idea is brought home

#### To illustrate

to illustrate an idea  
to illustrate the definition 4  
to be illustrated in a series of episodes 19

#### Image

vivid image  
central image 17



predominant image 17  
recurrent image  
concentrated images  
concentration of images  
highly charged poetical images  
dull commonplace images  
the image is significant  
certain images recur  
to use an image  
the stock of images he used  
in his use of some images  
we have two images  
this image conveys a feeling of..  
the central images are presented as 17  
images drawn from 1  
images charged with emotion

#### Imagery

poetic imagery 19  
dominant imagery  
in the use of imagery  
the use of recurrent imagery  
employment of imagery  
through the medium of modern imagery

#### Imagination

vivid imagination 7  
precise imagination 7  
visual imagination  
flight of imagination  
imaginative  
imaginative powers  
imaginative subjects 4  
imaginative quality 19  
to imagine  
to imagine something as 1  
we are left to imagine 18

#### Impact

impact of the passage 15

to imply .

to imply that 6

to imply something 13

implied in such verbs as 18

the association implied in 22

**implication**

the implication is achieved by means of

## ANNEXE II

Modern Poetry in English.  
D.H. LAWRENCE (Lesson 7A)

### Bavarian Gentians

Not every man has gentians in his house  
in Soft September, at slow, Sad Michaelmas.

Bavarian gentians, big and dark, only dark  
darkening the day-time torch-like with the smoking  
    blueness of Pluto's gloom,  
ribbed and torch-like, with their blaze of darkness  
    spread blue 5  
down flattening into points, flattened under the sweep  
    of white day  
torch-flower of the blue-smoking darkness, Pluto's  
    dark blue daze,  
black lamps from the halls of Dis, burning dark blue,  
giving off darkness, blue darkness, as Demeter's pale  
    lamps give off light,  
lead me then, lead me the way. 10

Reach me a gentian, give me a torch  
let me guide myself with the blue, forked torch  
    of this flower  
down the darker and darker stairs, where blue is  
    darkened on blueness,  
even where Persephone goes, just now, from the frosted  
    September  
to the sightless realm where darkness is awake upon the  
    dark 15  
and Persephone herself is but a voice  
or a darkness invisible enfolded in the deeper dark

of the arms Plutonic, and pierced with the passion of  
dense gloom  
among the splendour of torches of darkness, shedding  
darkness on the lost bride and her groom.

#### Notes to the text

Lawrence's poem is based on the Greek stories about Persephone. The following account of these myths is based on *Mythology* by Edith Hamilton and *The Greek Myths* by Robert Graves.

For the most part the immortal gods were of little use to human beings, and often they were quite the reverse of useful ; but there were two who were mankind's best friends : Demeter, the goddess of the corn, and Bacchus, the god of wine. It was they who enabled man to live and enjoy life. But there was another connection between these divinities and man. While the other immortals dwelling on Olympus were immune to pain, Bacchus and Ceres knew heart-rending agony.

Demeter had an only daughter, Persephone, the maiden of the spring. She lost her, and in her terrible grief she withheld her gifts from the earth, which turned into a frozen desert. The green and flowering land was icebound and lifeless because Persephone had disappeared. Pluto, the lord of the dark underworld, the king of the multitudinous dead, had carried her off to be his bride and consort. In his chariot drawn by coal-black steeds he rose up through a chasm in the earth, and bore her away weeping, down to the underworld. The high hills echoed her cry and the depths of the sea, and her mother heard it. She sped over sea and land seeking her daughter, but no-one would tell her the truth. Nine days she wandered, and all that time she would not put nectar to her lips or taste of ambrosia. At last she came to the Sun and he told her all the story : Persephone was down in the world beneath the earth, among the shadowy dead.

Then a still greater grief entered Demeter's heart. She left Olympus ; she dwelt on earth, but so disguised that none knew her. That year was the most dreadful and cruel for mankind over all the earth. Nothing grew ; no seed sprang up ; in vain the oxen drew the plowshare through the furrows. Zeus tried to persuade Demeter to relent, but she refused until she had seen her daughter ; and finally Zeus dispatched his messenger to order Pluto to give up his bride. But on leaving the dark

realm of the dead, Pluto (or Dis) persuaded his wife to eat a pomegranate seed, knowing that if she did she would be forced to return to him. Thus it happens that each year Persephone must return to her shadowy lord, and when she goes, fruits, flowers, and leaves, all the fair growth of the earth, must pass like herself into the power of death. She did indeed rise from the dead every spring, but she brought with her the memory of where she had come from ; with all her bright beauty there was something strange and awesome about her. She was often said to be 'the maiden whose name may not be spoken.'

The Olympians were 'the happy gods', 'the deathless gods', far removed from suffering mortals destined to die. But in their grief and at the hour of death, men could turn for compassion to the goddess who sorrowed and the goddess who died.

Line 2 : Michaelmas is the feast of St Michael, celebrated September 29.

Line 15 : 'Sightless' normally means 'blind', but here it means 'invisible', because of the darkness.

#### Introduction to the author

David Herbert Lawrence was born in 1885 in a mining village near Nottingham, the son of a coarse and brutal father who worked in the mines, and an intelligent, sensitive mother. Though the child identified himself with his mother's aspirations, he was much influenced by his father's violence and rebelliousness, and throughout his life the image of the miner with his underground occupation, descending into the bowels of the earth, was for him a symbol of the mysterious and the passionate. Lawrence won a scholarship to University College, Nottingham, after which he became a school-teacher. In 1912, after several difficult love-affairs, he ran away with Frieda von Richthofen, the wife of a university professor and the mother of three small children, and married her two years later. The rest of their lives was spent wandering from place to place -- Italy, New Mexico, Australia -- for he had a naturally nomadic spirit. In an autobiographical sketch he tried to explain his lack of connection with any social body :

As a man from the working class, I feel that the middle class cut off some of my vital vibration when I am with them. I admit them charming and educated and good people often enough. But they just stop some part of me from working. ...

Then why don't I live with my working people ? Because their vibration is limited in another direction. They are narrow, but still fairly deep and passionate, whereas the middle class is broad and shallow and passionless. At the best they substitute affection, which is the great middle-class positive emotion. But the working class is narrow in outlook, in prejudice, and narrow in intelligence. This again makes a prison. One can belong absolutely to no class.

His highly successful marriage provided the refuge and stability which compensated for his lack of involvement in any fixed society. He provided for himself and his wife by means of his literary earnings.

**The bulk of Lawrence's better poetry may be divided into three groups :** the love poems, many of them dealing with his own relations with his wife ; the birds-beasts-flowers poems, in which he gives his reactions to concrete entities in the world outside ; and the poems written at the end of his life in which **death is a major theme**. The central theme in each of these groups, however, is the joy of being alive, the joy of being a sentient creature in a universe filled with wonders :

But how splendid it is to be substance, here !

Life, and especially the life of the moment, was of primordial importance to him ; other standards -- quality in poetry, morality in conduct -- were of secondary importance and either subsumed in the larger optic or ignored. Lawrence would have thought a good writer who was unhappy was an idiot, and he criticised Proust on these grounds. It is not surprising to find that with **this emphasis on 'life'** that his poetry and novels contain a good deal of its chaos, and are **loose rather than highly structured**. In poetry he was most at home in free verse, which he thought should be 'direct utterance from the instant, whole man.' 'In free verse we look for the insurgent naked throb of the instant moment. ... The utterance is like a spasm, naked contact with all influences at once. It does not want to get anywhere. It just takes place.' Lawrence's outstanding quality (in his poetry) is his **ability to give the raw, immediate feeling of experience** -- and often sensuous experience. Nor is it strange that Lawrence had little sympathy with philosophy and religion and their search for absolutes ; he was convinced that anything that was absolute was pegged down, and that anything that was pegged down was dead. For him 'life' was of supreme value, and life to him was a process of becoming, not a state of being. Because Lawrence's poems and novels reflect this basic belief, they blend together

to form a 'biography of an emotional and inner life.' In this biography love is of the utmost importance, and I shall deal first with Lawrence's treatment of that theme.

Lawrence's idea of love is a very particular and rather unusual one. In the first place it is highly sensuous. Consider 'December Night' :

Take off your cloak and your hat  
And your shoes, and draw up at my hearth  
Where never woman sat.

I have made the fire up bright ;  
Let us leave the rest in the dark  
And sit by the firelight.

The wine is warm in the hearth ;  
The flickers come and go.  
I will warm your limbs with kisses  
Until they glow.

Lawrence used to say that man ends at his fingertips, and certainly the sensory element is primary in this poem, as well as in his conception of love. Secondly, he was persuaded that love was not an absolute state to be attained, but a progression, involving changes and developments for both persons involved.

It is no use thinking you can put a stamp on the relation between man and woman, to keep it in the *status quo*. You can't. You might as well try to put a stamp on the rainbow or the rain. If the one I love remains unchanged and unchanging, I shall cease to love her. It is only because she changes and startles me into change and defies my inertia, and is herself staggered in her inertia by my changing, that I can continue to love her. If she stayed put, I might as well love the pepper pot.

Thirdly, love creates the opposite sensations of union and individuation simultaneously. 'In pure communion I become whole in love. And in pure, fierce passion of sensuality I am burned into essentiality -- into sheer separate distinction.' Lawrence, with his fear of stability and habit, had a horror of what was familiar ; the feeling of separateness engendered by love is essential to his conception of it. This is especially clear in 'New Heaven and Earth'. One of Lawrence's favourite theories about love,

enunciated in *Lady Chatterly's Lover*, his final major work, is that the ills of modern society are due to the lack of genuine physical-spiritual love from which it suffers: industrialism produces a passionless man, and only a passionless man can put up with the dreariness of industrial society. It is clear from 'Bavarian Gentians' that the idea of love even penetrated his conception of death.

In *Birds, Beasts, and Flowers* (1923) Lawrence's main theme changes considerably but not completely. His sensitivity is reaching out to the flora and fauna of Italy, trying to discover their hidden life, their secrets which are normally inaccessible to man. So in 'Cypresses' he asks :

Tuscan cypresses,  
What is it ?

Folded in like a dark thought,  
For which the language is lost,  
Tuscan cypresses,  
Is there a great secret ?  
Are our words no good ?

The hummingbird comes from 'some otherworld, primeval-dumb', and the Sicilian cyclamen take him back to

Greece, and the world's morning  
Where all the Parthenon marbles still fostered the roots of  
the cyclamen.

Lawrence is pursuing novelty and at the same time returning to the sources of life and history, always through the medium of the senses. But in 'The Mosquito', 'Fish', 'Man and Bat', and 'Snake' another element is added : interaction between himself and another being. The snake which comes to drink at his water-trough is seen as coming from a totally different world, as a king in exile coming 'from out the dark door of the secret earth', an emissary from the unknown. But his fear leads him to throw a log at his guest, who disappears 'convulsed in undignified haste' back into the earth. We are left with Lawrence, frustrated with himself and self-incriminating. This is the other side of his desire for individuation, for separateness, for here we see Lawrence the man without home or social class, rejecting the world and being rejected in turn. For though he was passionate about life,



life did not necessarily include other people. It was more often solitary exploration, as in his journey to Hades in 'Bavarian Gentians'. For this reason he was attracted by his 'birds, beasts, and flowers'; they held the keys to forgotten mysteries, but since they were separated from him by an impassible gulf, there was no danger of the boring familiarity which often overtakes human relationships.

The third group of Lawrence's poems is made up of poems written shortly before his death in the south of France. They show his expanding consciousness, in a burst of creative energy, taking account of the last fact in a man's life, a fact which Lawrence was highly aware of. He was ill with tuberculosis, and knew he would not survive the winter of 1929-30. He was forty-four years of age. If the poems have a **somber tone unusual in his earlier poetry**, they nonetheless share its central beliefs. Death is not seen as an ending but as the period of purification prior to recreation. Just as Lawrence maintained that love-relations must progress and alter, and that union must be preceded and followed by separation, so in death

I must know that still  
I am in the hands of the unknown God,  
he is breaking me down to his own oblivion  
to send me forth on a new morning, a new man.

As in his beast and flower poems, where Lawrence uses the subject as a clue to a hidden realm and forgotten magic, he thinks of death as a voyage to a distant, unknown bourne, a journey by ship into the darkness which must envelop the soul before it is bathed once again in the light of day :

Have you built your ship of death, O have you ?  
O build your ship of death, for you will need it. ...  
There is no port, there is nowhere to go  
only the deepening blackness darkening still  
blackier upon the soundless, ungurgling flood  
darkness at one with darkness, up and down...

The richest of these final poems is 'Bavarian Gentians'. In its marvellous rhythms Lawrence presents death as part of the rhythm of the seasons, as a journey to the depths of Hades, into the unknown darkness. But here Lawrence incorporates the fire of torches into the blackness, and the

theme of sexual love (of which fire was his symbol) is associated with death. Here is a union of opposites which permits Lawrence, even in the face of his own death, to remain faithful to the central tenet in the philosophy which had shaped his life and work : 'the marvel of being alive in the flesh' and the joy of sharing love with another being.

#### Recorded exercises

1. Reading of the text.
2. Reading exercise (lines 10 - 14)
3. Comprehension questions.
  - (i) What is the relevance of the myth of Persephone to the poem ? What is the story it recounts ?
  - (ii) What does 'ribbed and torch-like' and 'down flattering into points' in lines 5 and 6 describe ?
  - (iii) Why is Persephone only a voice in line 16 ?
4. Critical approach to the poem. Formal analytic criticism encounters considerable difficulties in coming to grips with Lawrence's poetry. It succeeds by its immediacy rather than by specific formal qualities, although *Bavarian Gentians* is far less inchoate than some of his work. Nevertheless it is far from being without structure altogether, and we may begin by summarizing the thought of the poem section by section.
  - (i) The first two lines of the poem introduce the gentians and the setting -- a house in the autumn, the season of aging and slow decline toward death. In the second verse-paragraph, what is the salient characteristic of the gentians, and what connection is established between them and Greek mythology ? What contradiction is repeated several times in this v-p ? In the third v-p, how is the connection between the gentians and the underworld strengthened ? What is the link between our world and the underworld ?

The poem is based on the fusion of two ideas or images which are normally opposites, blazing light and darkness. Normally anyone who spoke of a blaze of darkness would be considered insane, or at the very least light-headed ; but Lawrence manages to use this oxymoron to express a strange and mysterious state of mind. Stopping the tape recorder, make a list of all the words in the poem which are connected with the idea of darkness,

and beside it a list of all the words indicating light or blazing. Join by a line any words which are syntactically associated, as are the words 'blaze' and 'darkness' in 'blaze of darkness' (l. 5). Compare your list with the one given on the other side of this sheet.

- (ii) What is the effect of Lawrence's use of this oxymoron linking the torch-flame to the notion of darkness? In what way is it central to his unusual attitude toward death?

We now move on to particular, and then general questions of style. Listen to the following lines as they are read, and mark above them the stressed syllables (with an oblique stroke) and the unstressed syllables (with a cup). Then try to divide the line into feet. (Not all the lines are regular, and some have feet made up of single stressed syllable.)

Not every man has gentians in his house  
in Soft September, at slow, Sad Michaelmas.  
lead me then, lead me the way.  
Reach me gentian, give me a torch

Now check the results you have obtained against the possible result given on the other side of this sheet.

- (iii) What is the effect of the three stressed syllables in succession in line 2? How does line 11 pick up the rhythm of line 10, and what might Lawrence have intended by this imitation? Find two examples of alliteration in the poem. What kind of verse is used in the poem?
- (iv) What are the main characteristics of the style of the poem, and what connection can be seen between the style and the subject-matter? (Here the answer will be given before the blank.)

Finally, since Lawrence himself thought of his poetry as a kind of emotional autobiography, we may turn to the connection between this poem and the rest of his life and works.

- (v) How might one argue that 'Bavarian Gentians' comes as a fitting conclusion to Lawrence's life, and how are the themes which he has dealt with in earlier works taken up in this late poem ?

#### Darkness- and light-imagery

Images, words involving darkness	Images, words involving light
dark (twice) 1. 3	daytime 1? 4
darkening 4 -----	torch-like 4
gloom 4	torch-like 5
darkness 5 -----	blaze of 5
	white day 6
of darkness 7 -----	torch-flower 7
dark-blue 7 -----	daze 7 ('daze' means 'stupify', and is connected with 'dazzle')
black 8 -----	lamps 8
dark blue 8 -----	burning 8
darkness 9 -----	giving off 9 (this verb is normally used with 'light')
	pale lamps give off light 9
darker, darker, darkened 13	torch 11, 12
darkness, dark 15 -----	awake 15 (normally associated with light)
darkness, deeper dark 17	pierced 18 (usually light pierces)
dense gloom 18 -----	splendour of torches 19
of darkness 19 -----	shedding (usually sg. sheds light)
darkness 19 -----	

#### D. H. Lawrence : Possible Answers

3. (i) For the story of Persephone, consult page 2. Lawrence, who was on the verge of death, compares himself to Persephone who descends each year to her husband in the underworld. Lawrence implies by this comparison that there is some affinity between death and the act of love, and

that death is only a temporary state, that he will return again to earth.

(ii) Here Lawrence is describing the flower.

(iii) Persephone is only a voice because of the total darkness. The realm is 'sightless', i.e. one cannot see, so she is a 'darkness invisible'.

4. (i) **The salient characteristic** of the gentians is their dark blue colour, which for Lawrence **represents** the Greek mythological underworld, ruled by Pluto, its king. The **logical contradiction** which is repeated several times in the poem is **the identification** of the idea of a torch with the idea of darkness, as in 'blaze of darkness' and 'black lamps'. In the second v-p Lawrence merely presented the gentian and **showed its association with** death and the underworld. In the third he connects the world (where the gentian blooms) with the realm of Pluto or Dis by the annual journey of Persephone, who makes her way from one world to the other. Lawrence, who is about to die, imagines himself doing much the same thing.

(ii) Lawrence knows that he is about to die, but he does not want to **present death as** something totally negative, totally black. On the other hand it is definitely mysterious and puzzling, and as such darkness suits it. So the poet attempts something utterly unconventional, **that is, he introduces the idea of** a 'torch of darkness'. By itself this would seem ridiculous, but the flower serves as an intermediary and the incessant repetition of the idea in a variety of forms ingrains it in the mind of the reader until he is almost forced to accept it. The effect, if complete, is staggering. It forces one to rearrange one's categories of light and darkness in such a way that a lamp of darkness is **conceivable**, and it allows Lawrence to present a striking and unusual notion of death. Death for him is not complete dissolution nor the blinding light of a heavenly city. It is a journey into the unknown, in which one is guided by a black torch to a mysterious consummation which has definite affinities with physical love. **The latter is suggested by the fact that** Persephone is about to be reunited with her husband, and also by the fact that it is fire -- albeit black fire -- which leads the poet to the kingdom of the dead : fire was one of Lawrence's symbols for passion.

(iii) The three stressed syllables make line 2 heavy and mournful, which fits its sense. Lawrence began 'The Ship of Death' with the following lines, which are similar to the opening of 'Bavarian Gentians' :

Now it is autumn and the falling fruit  
and the lone journey towards oblivion.

It is known that Lawrence worked hard at the rhythms of his poems, trying

to obtain the effects he desired. The rhythms of lines 10 and 11 are almost the same, the only difference being the extra trochaic foot in line 11. The two lines also have the same structure, each containing a single idea which is repeated twice. The lines are linked because it is to be the torch that will lead the poet to the underworld, Line 10 is in a minor key, and in line 11 we move into the relative major : line 11 has greater amplitude and increased strength. In it the poet seems determined and even eager ; instead of being led he is going to guide himself. There is alliteration on 's' in l. 2, on 'p' in l. 18, and on 'fr' in l. 14. The verse is free verse.

(iv) There are a number of things to remark in the style of Lawrence's poem **The most obvious** is the constant repetition of words, phrases, and ideas within the loose form of free verse. It is like a series of hammer-blows on the consciousness of the reader, though no two phrases are exactly the same. The repetition and the rhythms **recall** the Authorized Version of the Bible, and especially the **Song of Songs** -- which is fitting for a poem with an essentially religious meaning. One might also remark the gradual crescendo in the poem, which **begins** with the gentian, expands to include the underworld, and finally ends with the image of Persephone descending to her mysterious lover. Nothing is left behind. In the last line the flower, the underworld, the bride and the groom are all present. **This crescendo corresponds** to the progress from the relatively calm, ordered first line (regular iambic pentameter) to the increasing length of the last four lines ; it is as though the poet were descending into an overwhelming chaos -- and this is precisely Lawrence's idea of death.

(v) 'Bavarian Gentians' unites a large number of Lawrentian themes. Firstly, his conception of what is situated beneath the earth. Ever since his childhood in a coal-mining town he was possessed by the mystery and the irrationality which he associated with the miners who worked underground. This appears in many of his novels and in the poem 'Snake', where the snake comes out from 'the burning bowels of the earth', 'from out the dark door of the secret earth'. In 'Bavarian Gentians' Lawrence sees himself, following his father and the snake, as it were, into a new and mysterious kingdom beneath the surface of the earth. Secondly, his conception of sex and love, and its association with fire. **It is clear that** Lawrence was interested in and had great respect for the passions, especially that associated with sexual love ; and almost every time the latter is described, fire imagery enters the description. In

'Bavarian Gentians' fire imagery abounds, and the conclusion he reaches finally is that death is to be compared to the first night of love between Persephone and Pluto; it is a kind of consummation. Thirdly, the theme of the need to be led. Lawrence had a horror of the possibility of ordering one's life completely, of creating one's own world, as does Stevens' singer in 'The Idea of Order'. Instead Lawrence prefers to be in contact with new things, things which are different from himself. Hence his nomadic nature, his theory of progress and change in love, and his poem, 'Song of a Man who has Come Through' :

Not I, not I, but the wind that blows through me  
 A fine wind is blowing the new direction of time.  
 If only I let it bear me, carry me, if only it carry me !  
 If only I am sensitive, subtle, oh, delicate, a winged gift.

In 'Bavarian Gentians' Lawrence repeats both his desire to be led, and his belief in continual change : death is not dissolution but a new beginning, a descent into the chaos from which he will emerge a new man.

## Modern Poetry - Exercises on D. H. Lawrence

### 1. Phonetics Exercise.

A. Repeat the following words and sentences in the blanks.

1) to remark

There are a number of things to remark.

2) to recall

The repetition and the rhythms recall the Bible.

3) to begin

The gradual crescendo begins with the flower.

4) to present

In the second line Lawrence merely presents the gentian.

5) to express

He expresses a very different opinion in the second stanza.

6) to introduce

He introduces the idea of a torch of darkness.

7) constant

The most obvious is the constant repetition of words and ideas.

8) **series**

It is like a series of hammer-blows.

9) **chaos**

It is as though the poet is descending into chaos.

10) **details**

There are many interesting details in the description.

- B. Listen to the following excerpt taken out of the commentary on Lawrence (Answers 4 iv). Note the stresses on the script during the reading.

There are a number of things to remark in the style of Lawrence's poem. **The most obvious** is the constant repetition of words, phrases, and ideas within the loose form of free verse. It is like a series of hammer-blows on the consciousness of the reader, though no two phrases are exactly the same. The repetition and the rhythms **recall** the Authorized Version of the Bible, and especially the **Song of Songs** -- which is fitting for a poem with an essentially religious meaning. **One might also** remark the gradual crescendo in the poem, **which begins with** the gentian, **expands to** include the underworld, and **finally ends with** the image of Persephone descending to her mysterious lover. Nothing is left behind. In the last line the flower, the underworld, the bride and the groom are all present. **This crescendo corresponds to** the progress from the relatively calm, ordered first line (regular iambic pentameter) to the increasing length of the last four lines ; it is as though the poet were descending into overwhelming chaos--and this is precisely Lawrence's idea of death.

- C. Listen to the same passage noting the rising and the falling of the intonation on the script.
- D. Repeat in the blanks the elements you have just heard on the tape.
- E. Questions on the same passage .
- 1) What is the most obvious thing to remark about the style of Lawrence's poem ?



The most obvious is the constant repetition of words, phrases and ideas.

- 2) What do the repetitions and the rhythms recall ?  
They recall the Authorized Version of the Bible.
- 3) Analyse the crescendo in the poem.  
It begins with the flower, expands to include the underworld and finally ends with the image of Persephone.
- 4) What is the effect of this crescendo ?  
It is as though to poet were descending into an overwhelming chaos.

## II. Phonetics Exercise on the poem 'Bavarian Gentians' by Lawrence.

Answer the following questions then repeat the correct answers in the blanks provided.

- 1) What part of speech is 'dark' ?  
It is an adjective.
- 2) What parts of speech are respectively 'darkening' and 'darkened' ?  
The first is a present participle and the second is a past participle.
- 3) What is the word 'darkness' ?  
It is a substantive.
- 4) What does Lawrence do when he passes from 'dark' to 'darkened,' 'darkening' and 'darkness' ?  
He makes a verbal transformation, keeping the same idea and changing the part of speech.
- 5) What are 'gloom' and 'darkness' ?  
They are synonyms.

## III. Syllogisms.

A syllogisme is an argument containing premisses and a conclusion, and it may be couched in one of a number of grammatical patterns. Here you are given two premisses and a conclusion. Repeat the entire syllogism six times, each time using a different set of link words. Notice that usually one of the possible positions for a link word is left blank.

- |       |       |   |
|-------|-------|---|
| (i)   | _____ | the word 'poetic' designates an elusive quality rather than rhythm or rime. |
| (ii)  | _____ | some prose contains this quality.   |
| (iii) | _____ | there is such a thing as poetic prose.                                      |

Possible combinations of link words :

(i)	(ii)	(iii)
Since	and	---
Because	and	---
---	moreover	therefore
---	now	therefore it may be concluded that
---	and	so
---	---	hence
If	and	then
As	and	---

#### IV. Exercises on the Vocabulary of Demonstration.

- 1) Repeat the following sentence five times, substituting the following words for the blank. Notice that although each word can replace any other in this context, the resulting sentences have not all the same meaning.

Idea, conception, notion, view, feeling (about)  
 Brooke's \_\_\_\_\_ of honour is embodied in the  
 image of the king.

- 2) Idem.  
 Reflections on, attitude toward, account of, feeling for  
 (or about), conception of  
 Owen's \_\_\_\_\_ death is/are given in concrete  
 terms.
- 3) Repeat the following sentences, paying particular attention to the phrases underlined.
  - (i) The **point** of 'Anthem for Doomed Youth' is the pity of death.
  - (ii) An unemotional, scientific approach is not necessarily the best **approach** to poetry.
  - (iii) Eliot gives a particularly revealing **account** of the process of religious conversion.
  - (iv) Whitman's **conception** of democracy is clearly illustrated in **Leaves of Grass**.
  - (v) The **idea of** weight in 'Birches' is emphasized by the use of words such as 'heaps' and 'avalanching.'
- 4) Repeat the following sentences, noticing the various uses of the word 'point.'

### ANNEXE III

#### NOUVELLES : Deux cours sur les nouvelles symboliques

JOYCE : *Araby*, *Clay*, *the boarding House* (Dubliners)

#### PLAN

- 1° 1ère partie : Commentaire et questions (1ère semaine)
- 2° 2ème partie : Exercices (2ème semaine)

#### 1° 1ère partie : Commentaire et questions

##### General Introduction :

The use of words such as symbol, symbolic, symbolism, allegory, image and imagery is a fairly vexed question in English criticism. These terms are used by different critics, in different periods, in relation to differing genres - for all these reasons it is very difficult to give conclusive definitions. Surprisingly, not many critics or estheticians have spent much time working on this problem - (one of the few perceptive studies in depth of the meaning of these terms occurs in George Whalley's **Poetic Process**).

These terms are used most often in criticism of poetry - and here the problems of definition are most acute. One might suggest - in what is clearly an over-simplification, that an image is something that comes to 'stand for' or represent something else. This relationship is static, does not change, is clearly defined... thus in this definition the cross is an image of Christianity. A symbol is an image in which the relationship between word and object represented is not static, is developing, is often vague or even undefinable. Thus, to pick three examples at random : the whale Moby Dick in *Moby Dick*, the hat in 'The Garden Party' K. Mansfield and clay in 'Clay' all represent something which we get closer and closer to as the work proceeds, but in relation to which we can never finally say : 'Oh

yes, the whale is or represents the implacable force of Nature, or the clay represents death. It is just this element of development in the relationship of the symbol to what it represents that makes symbolism such a powerful literary technique. For with it various qualities of thought or emotion can be related, held in contact or juxtaposition until we can perceive whatever new relationship the author has discovered. Thus we become aware of the subtle complexities of Laura's life as we gradually discover just what the hat is and means to her. Or we come to realize the profound complexities of **Moby Dick** as we discover the various emotions, thoughts, obsessions etc. which are centered in the whale, or which the whale comes to represent.

two notes : these suggestions are **not** to be taken as final. Obviously even daily usage contradicts them. i.e. we usually talk of the crown as the 'symbol' of kingship, or the rose as the 'symbol' of England. In terms of the above they should be called images. The definitions are suggested simply to clarify literary distinctions that are often made.

The question is much more complex than the above would suggest. A study of the French 'symbolistes' or the English 'imagists' would -certainly- require much more expanded definitions of these terms.

Question : What difference exists between symbol and image ?  
What give a symbol its particular potency or potential ?

Joyce.

In **Araby** Joyce succeeds admirably in presenting us with the consciousness of the young boy. The description of the boys playing... "The cold air stung us and we played until our bodies glowed. Our shouts echoed in the silent street. The career of our play brought us through the dark muddy lanes behind the houses, where we ran the gauntlet of the rough tribes from the cottages..." catching as it does, the atmosphere of that age prepares us for the adolescence of what follows. And yet while it is clearly adolescent, (c.f. the paragraph where every morning he follows the girl to school... or 'my body was like a harp and her words and gestures were like fingers running upon the wires.") this love is more than merely adolescent. When the boy in the market says 'I imagine that I bore my chalice safely through a throng of foes. Her name rang to my lips at moments in strange prayers and praises which I myself did not understand. My eyes were often full of tears (I could not tell why) and at times a flood from my heart seemed to pour itself out into my bosom. I thought little of the future. I did not know whether I would ever speak to her or not or, if I spoke to her, how I could tell her of my confused adoration.' this quotation

makes the reader realize that this love is, for the boy, a mixture of the courtly tradition of romantic love : 'My eyes were often full of tears', the pining away of the sonneteers, religious imagery 'I bore my chalice safely through throng of foes,' and sensual or sexual attraction.

And it is this complex mixture of which the word 'Araby' becomes the symbol. For while Araby is on one level merely a bazaar, it is also, for the boy, the place where he feels he will be able to translate these vague, inchoate longings, this melange of spirituality and sensuality, into some concrete object. '"If I go, "I said, "I will bring you something."' The something, the present, will be the simple object which will sum up and articulate (c.f. 'I did not know how I could tell her of my confused adoration!') his vague, imprecise emotions. It is the word Araby which becomes a symbol of the realization of all that he feels. 'The syllables of the word Araby were called to me through the silence in which my soul luxuriated and cast an Eastern enchantment over me.'

Question : Of what does the word 'Araby' become a symbol ?

It is the success of this presentation of an adolescent passion which gives the conclusion its power. It is finally the very real contrast between all the youthful ideals summed up for the boy in 'Araby' and the ordinary, everyday, matter-of-fact-world- the uncle, the salesgirls and their conversation etc. which creates the pain of the final paragraph. For the everyday world destroys Araby and knowing as we do how much Araby means to him, how much, that is, it has become a symbol of, we can understand and sympathize with 'Gazing up into the darkness I saw myself as a creature driven and derided by vanity ; and my eyes burned with anguish and anger.'

n.b. The foregoing has been an examination of the way the symbols work in 'Araby'--- it is not offered as a full criticism of the story.

Question : Would you agree with this commentary on 'Araby' ? Is there anything you would want to add ? Subtract ? Why ? Why not ?

In 'Clay' Joyce's control and skill is, I think, even more sure. The title of the story remains a mystery until towards the end when Maria, playing the children's game, picks the saucer filled, as a joke, with clay. It is then, in one moment, that various impressions, ideas, and emotions coalesce to give us an inescapable vision - summed up in the symbol of the clay - of what Maria's life is. Just as the ring means you will get married, the prayer-book that you will become a nun, so the clay sums up Maria's

future ; and in so doing, that sums up as well, her past. The clay means death – the wet clay of a grave – the clay to which the body returns. But it means more than that. For somehow this action : Maria good-naturedly taking part in a children's game and accidentally putting her hand into the bowl of mud seems to sum up very accurately her whole life. Her good-nature, her meekness, her love for Joe and Alphy.. all these are seen with a very subtle irony by Joyce. Seen in a way that merely emphasizes the hollowness and sadness of Maria's life. Look for instance, at the way in which the promise of Joe's love, (Joe, who used often to say "Mamma is mamma, but Maria is my proper mother,") is later undercut by the presentation of Joe as a selfish, silly and bullying drunk who does not care enough for Maria to either listen to her words about Alphy, nor to not give her a drink when she doesn't want one. Joe likes and uses Maria because she is so pliant and useful. But the impression we get from all the scenes is simply one of Maria being used, of an internal life which is only one of 'disappointed shyness', a superficial air of acceptance which masks a sad lack of any real life or joy. And this sadness is driven home by the very real pathos of Maria's song – her unself-conscious yearning for not only love but also for a real esteem and affection. That pathos is re-affirmed totally by Joe's reaction to the song : 'he was very much moved... so moved in fact that his eyes filled up with tears, and he had to ask his wife to tell him where the corkscrew was.' It is the corkscrew – more booze – that has really got Joe's attention. Such is the human response to Maria's kindness, love and pathos.

Question : What does 'clay' come to symbolize in the story ?

Joyce's central theme up to and including. **A portrait of the Artist as a Young Man** is the necessity of an artist or a person to escape from the ties that limit him if he is to make his own life. The ties of family, of church, of Irish Nationalism, all these for Joyce were the enemy which must be destroyed to allow a person to develop properly. **'The Boarding House'** is interesting because it is one of the very few places in Joyce where the problem of being trapped by these ties is seen as humourless. Certainly the ties are the traditional Joyce ones : it is the priest who had drawn out every ridiculous detail of the affair, and in the end has so magnified his sin that he was almost thankful at being offered a loophole of reparation. The harm was done. What could he do now but marry her or run away ?', and it is the mother (the preserver of the Irish family...) who so adroitly 'cooks his goose'. But the mood of the story is throughout light-hearted. The story delights in Mrs. Mooney's skilful control of the situation : the tacitly permitted affair between Mr. Doran and Polly, the careful placing of Mr. Doran in a corner from which there is only one

possible exit. The whole atmosphere of the boarding house - very skillfully presented - is felt to hem in Mr. Doran... the other lodgers' knowledge of the affair confirms his guilt, the brother Jack is a very real threat should he be tempted to consider not 'doing the right thing.')

The reason the story is comic rather than tragic (cf. Eveline) is because we get the impression that this fate is quite apt for Mr. Doran. He has no particular ambitions, no need to develop on his own. His very comic nervousness :

'Mr. Doran was very anxious indeed this Sunday morning. He had made two attempts to shave, but his hand had been so unsteady that he had been obliged to desist. Three days' reddish beard fringed his jaws, and every two or three minutes a mist gathered on his glasses so that he had to take them off and pluck them with his pocket-handkerchief.' reinforces our judgement of him as a man eminently suited to be the victim of this trap. We feel, I think, that he won't really suffer very much anyway. His freedom is not really a necessity for him.

It is this ability to take a delight in the variety of people around him, to see how and where the ordinary person finds the strength to withstand trials which may well defeat the highly self-conscious that enters in so largely to Joyce's *Ulysses* and makes that novel one of the few of the twentieth century that seems to be able to confront fully the chaos of modern experience and find in it something which allows, even necessitates, a final re-affirmation... a final 'YES' to life.

Question : What fundamental themes of Joyce's are dealt with in 'The Boarding House' ? What is significant about the mood of the story, and how is that mood created ?

## 2° 2ème partie : Exercices

### 1. Pronunciation exercise.

Read the word then listen to its correct pronunciation. Do the same with the following sentence.

symbol : Symbol appears as a term in logic.

symbolic : It has a symbolic significance.

recurrence : Snow becomes symbolic through its recurrence.

to compare : In a comparison you compare two things.

to suggest : This simile suggests a visual relationship between a sail-boat and a sea-gull.

analogy : The idea of analogy between sign and signified was present.  
 complex : The image presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time. (E. Pound)  
 complexities : We are aware of the subtle complexities of Laura's life.

## II. Reading exercise

"Symbol appears as a term in logic, in mathematics, in semantics, and epistemology. It has also a long history in the world of theology, of liturgy, of the fine arts and of poetry. The shared element in all these current uses is probably that of something standing for, representing something else. But the Greek verb, which means 'to throw together, to compare,' suggests that the idea of analogy between sign and signified was originally present." (Warren and Wellek)

"As its root meaning 'a throwing together' indicates, the symbol is a concentration, one of felt meanings." (Frakes and Traschen)

This passage will now be read to you again.

- a) During the second reading and the third reading by two different readers, try to note on the script the rising and falling intonation, the breaks, etc...
- b) Read after the reader trying to imitate him.
- c) Reverse the tape and re-read the passage at the same time as the reader.

## III. Transcription.

Write in the blanks what is missing on the script. Then answer the questions.

N.B. Les mots soulignés ici n'apparaissent pas sur le script donné à l'étudiant.

A. "In realistic fiction, the writer's vision gradually emerges from a selected but recognizable segment of reality, while in symbolic fiction his vision is imposed in reality --he plumps the symbol in the middle of it or sometimes he even distorts it. The symbolic writer does not submit altogether to ordinary reality. He uses it as the scene for his symbolic action." (Traschen)

- Explain these words using as examples a linear story and a symbolic story you have studied. eg. **The White Silence, Clay.**

B. "There is much in the human consciousness for which plain statement is not only inadequate but impossible."



- In what way does this statement justify the use of symbols ?

#### IV. Vocabulary exercises.

"A symbol is usually defined as that which stands for something else."

A. Words and Structures expressing the relationship between two words summed up in a symbol.

1. Repeat the following sentences.

- We can perceive whatever new **relationship** the author has discovered.
- We become aware of the **relationship** between clay and death.
- We become aware of the **complexities** of Laura's life.
- When sound, music, colours and form are in a musical **relation**, a beautiful relation to one another, they become one sound etc...
- The image presents an intellectual and emotional **complex** in an instant of time, a **unification** of disparate ideas.
- The symbol is a **concentration**
- The idea of **analogy** between sign and signified was present.
- Its efficacy comes from its being a **relic** or a **representation** of sensation. (Richards)

2. One adjective is given to you. Read the whole sentence replacing the first adjective with its contrary.

- This relationship is static. (developing)
- This relationship seems precise. (vague)
- This relationship is clearly defined. (undefined)

3. Question : Is the relationship between word and object represented, the same in an image and in a symbol ?

(Answer : "An image is something that comes to stand for something else. This relationship is static, clearly defined. A symbol is an image in which the relationship between word and object represented is not static, is developing, is often vague or even undefinable.")

4. Repeat the following sentences.

- Various qualities of thought or emotion **can be related, held in contact or juxtaposition**.
- What gives an image efficacy is less its vividness as an image than its character as a mental event **peculiarly connected** with sensation. (Richards)

- Various impressions, ideas and emotions are **summed up** in the symbol of the clay.
- Yeats maintains that a symbol may **stand for** an idea.
- An image **represents** something else.
- He **Identifies** a thing with what it resembles.
- The visual image is a sensation or a perception but it also **stands for**, **refers to** something invisible. (E. Pound)
- The individual bard **becomes** a symbol of universal longing.
- While Araby is **on one level** merely a bazaar, it is **also** the simple object which will sum up his vague emotions.

5. Make a short analysis of **Clay** or **Araby** by Joyce, trying to show what relationship was expressed in the symbols of clay or in the word 'Araby.'

B. Words and Structures expressing the effect of a symbol.

1. Repeat the following sentences.

- What **gives** a symbol its particular **potency** or **potential** ?
- Fitzgerald **builds up** the **power** of the Babylonian symbol.
- **To see** the symbol in its full **significance** .
- **Its efficacy comes** from its being a representation of sensation.

2. Write the missing words in the blanks.

- He identifies a thing with what it resembles for after all this **conveys** more fully than its name can.
- All sounds and colours **evoke** undefinable emotions.
- This symbol **calls up** a world of violence and war.

3. Listen to the following statement on Yeats. Try to read it again changing the words that are underlined.

"All sounds, all colours either because of their preordained energies or because of long association evoke undefinable and yet precise emotions. Or as I prefer to think, call down among us disembodied powers whose footsteps over our hearts we call emotions and when sound and colour and form are in a musical **relation**, a beautiful relation to one another, they **become** one sound, one colour, one form and **evoke** one emotion that is made out of their distinct evocations and yet is one emotion."

V. Symbol / Image.

Read the following passages at the same time as they are read to you--paying particular attention to the intonation.

- Is there any important sense in which symbol differs from image and metaphor ? Primarily we think in the **recurrence** and **persistance** of the symbol. (Wellek)
- Snow becomes symbolic **through its recurrence**.
- The **controlling** symbol is a metaphor.
- Metaphor is particularly fitted for symbolic use. It is an image alien to the scene, suddenly brought in and plumped down as it were in a familiar setting. (Traschen)
- A symbol is an image in which the relationship between word and object represented is developing.
- Fitzgerald deploys the symbol with great precision.

VI. Answer the question on the following statement on Joyce by F. O'Connor.

"How do you arrive at organic form ? Joyce does so by the use of metaphor and symbol. This was already an old device and one that H. James frequently adopted. Joyce's original contribution to the technique was to use metaphor in a dissociated form, to conceal and disguise it as it is disguised in dreams so that the whole story might be read without the reader's becoming aware of it.

Question : Have you noticed this technique in the short stories by Joyce you have studied ?

Cette série d'exercices présentait un vocabulaire d'analyse de nouvelles symboliques. La semaine suivante l'étudiant devra analyser, en répondant à toute une grille de questions, une nouvelle symbolique assez caractéristique du genre : "**A fragment of stained glass**" de D.H. LAWRENCE. Il pourra réemployer alors d'une manière autonome le vocabulaire auquel il aura été précédemment sensibilisé.