

Conversational Echoes in Anne Fine, *Goggle-Eyes* (1989)

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Elements of conversation regularly enter literary texts both as subject-matter and narrative form. In creating an awareness of the mechanisms of conversation, literature can discuss its own discursive strategies. In children's literature this literary self-reflexion often features prominently and can be observed quite clearly.

One of the most frequent techniques of creating an awareness of discursive mechanisms is that of transferring elements of discourse from their usual place to an unusual one. To give a well-known example, I should like to refer to Beatrix Potter's *Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1902).¹ At the beginning Mother Rabbit admonishes her children (Quotation No. 1):²

'Now, my dears,' said old Mrs. Rabbit one morning, 'you may go into the fields or down the lane, but don't go into Mr. McGregor's garden: your Father had an accident there; he was put in a pie by Mrs. McGregor.'

'Now run along, and don't get into mischief. I am going out.' (10, 13)

Mrs. Rabbit's way of speaking is certainly familiar to most child readers. Mothers often warn children not to transgress certain boundaries, referring to accidents caused by the failure to obey certain rules. Certain words and phrases from children's everyday lives are transferred to a different environment: paradoxically, the garden, a safe area for human children, is a dangerous place for rabbits. A certain discursive pattern is 'quoted' and marked as a quotation,³ by being given not to a human family but to a family of rabbits; this is how the child readers can recognize the words and phrases as a speech pattern, and begin to analyse this pattern critically. In allocating 'educational discourse' to animals, the narrator strips it of its

threatening quality. Phrases of admonishment are placed at a distance and can become a target of satire.⁴

Satirical quotations of discursive and conversational patterns do not only occur in Beatrix Potter's books but are also central to other children's classics, such as Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and A. A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926). Words and phrases are taken out of their usual contexts and put to whimsical uses. Some of the phrases quoted conversationally are taken from printed texts known to children, such as fairy-tales and schoolbooks. This accounts for the surprisingly high degree of 'marked intertextuality'⁵ found in children's books.

In this article I should like to focus on a more recent text which also belongs to the category of children's or young adults' fiction but which takes place in the contemporary everyday world rather than an environment of talking animals or creatures of fantasy. In Anne Fine's *Goggle-Eyes* (1989)⁶ the teenage narrator, Kitty Killin, tells the story of her mother's involvement with a gentleman-friend, Gerald Faulkner, to a classmate, Helen, who is undergoing a crisis because of her mother's imminent second marriage. One morning at school, Helen leaves the classroom in tears, and Kitty is sent after her. She withdraws with Helen into the Lost Property cupboard and tells her how she used to hate Gerald and tried to stop him from calling, but then came to accept him as somebody who could exert a stabilizing influence on her mother as well as her younger sister Judith and finally as an indispensable member of the family. In telling her story she manages to calm Helen down. Helen doesn't change her views about her prospective stepfather but admits to feeling much better.

Peter Hunt's contention that "*Goggle-Eyes* . . . is concerned exclusively with coming to terms with divorce and the remarriage of a parent,"⁷ however, is quite mistaken: to a far greater extent it is concerned with language and conversational behaviour. As in other children's books a considerable proportion of the text is taken up by direct speech: Kitty reports her conversations with her mother and Gerald to Helen; and, of course, she reports her conversation with

Helen in the course of which she is telling her story, to the reader. Throughout the book it is the dynamics of conversation which make up the plot. Kitty first gets to know about her mother's new friend when she notices that her conversational behaviour has changed (Q. 2):

Then, one day, she met Gerald Faulkner. Don't ask me where and why and how. All I know is, one day my mother's her normal, workaday Oh-God-I-hate-my-job-I'm-going-to-resign-what's-on-the-telly self, and the next she's some radiant, energetic fashion plate who doesn't even *hear* when you tell her it's the last episode of her favourite series . . . (16)

Kitty characterizes her mother's habitual mood by quoting words which summarize it in a concise way; and she refers to her mother's new self by commenting on her failure to respond to her daughter's reminder. Some days later, Gerald asks Kitty on the phone to tell her mother that he has got cinema tickets. Kitty is disappointed, as her mother had promised "to stay in and help with Judith's cardboard Roman amphitheatre" (17). It is with the 'baby-sitter,' Mrs. Harrison, that the girls have to complete the amphitheatre. Kitty, however, gets her revenge. When her mother returns, she overhears Mrs. Harrison's question (Q. 3):

. . . 'Have you had a nice evening out with your young man?'
'Young man!' Mum snorted with amusement. 'Mrs Harrison, Gerald is over *fifty*.' (18)

Next morning, the mother addresses Kitty (Q. 4):

'How did you get along with the amphitheatre?' she asked.
'Splendid,' I told her between gritted teeth. 'Mind you, the gladiator is a wreck. His face has shrivelled and his legs are wobbly, and that carpet fluff we stuck on for his hair keeps falling out. I tell you, he looks over *fifty*.'
The toast was blackening under the grill, but she eyed me very steadily instead.
'I hope you're going to be *polite* on Thursday,' she said. (20)

In echoing the phrase "over *fifty*" Kitty, who has not seen Gerald Faulkner yet, constructs her mother's friend as an ageing monster.

Her mother cannot reprove Kitty for her cheek without betraying that Kitty's conversational shaft has found its mark. Kitty thus expresses her jealousy towards her mother's new friend without placing herself at a disadvantage. She rather asserts her superiority by putting her mother in the defensive.

Gerald Faulkner, as it turns out, is an adept at ironical quotation himself. As he calls on Thursday, Kitty's mother has to put off going to the weekly Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament meeting. Kitty, however, who used to be dragged along to these meetings by her politically-committed mother, decides to go on her own; and it is on her commitment that she is taken up by Gerald (Q. 5):

'So,' he said. 'You're all mixed up in it as well.'

Though I had no idea what he was talking about, I got the feeling he was speaking to me.

'Mixed up in what?'

'You know,' he said, grinning. 'The Woolly Hat Brigade. Close Down the Power Stations. Ban the Bomb.'

Fine, I thought. Lovely. Jolly nice for me. My mum's busy upstairs turning herself into some simpering Barbie-doll for the sort of man she'd usually take a ten mile hike to avoid, and I'm stuck downstairs with the political Neanderthal.

'I'm in the campaign for nuclear disarmament, yes.' (25-26)

Gerald ironically quotes the campaigners' slogans, thus asserting his superiority; and Kitty holds her own by frostily stating the bare fact of her political position. To the reader, the terseness of her reply is emphasized by its contrast to the metaphorical language she uses to describe her thoughts.

In spite of his reactionary views, Gerald accompanies Kitty, her mother and sister on a trip to a political demonstration at a submarine base, ostensibly to "reclaim" land fenced in by the Ministry of Defense. During the bus ride the campaigners amuse themselves singing songs like (Q. 6) "*What Shall We Do with the Nuclear Waste?*" (68) and "*Oh, Little Town of Sellafield*" (72), to the tunes of "*What Shall We Do with the Drunken Sailor*" and "*O Little Town of Bethlehem*," presumably, thus proving their sense of community and superiority. They do not impress Gerald, however, who sneers at the campaigners'

linguistic inventiveness and tries to assert his own superiority by quoting the campaigners' language in a challenging way. He tells a boy who wants to look at his newspaper (Q. 7): "Do you mind if I finish reading it before you recycle it?" (68); when they reach their destination his comment is (Q. 8): "'I don't fancy reclaiming that lot,' he said, peering over Mum out of the window. 'It looks pretty boggy'" (73).

The campaigners' metaphorical language lends itself to ridicule as its failure becomes obvious. As the bus is half-empty the "phone tree" (68), which should have ensured massive participation, has turned out to be "more like a blasted phone stump" (69), as Kitty admits. The "snowballing" (76) which replaces the "reclaiming" objective does not work out either. In snowballing, some of the campaigners volunteer to do deliberate damage to the wire fence around the military base: "Two people cut a fence, and the police arrest them. Next time it's four who do it. Then eight, sixteen, thirty-two, sixty-four —" (77). This time, sixteen of the campaigners are supposed to cut the fence and get arrested. The rest, as Inspector McGee has already been informed, "are just dying quietly" (80), i.e. lie down together in front of the gates in order to mimic the probable effect of an atomic explosion. The phrase "dying quietly" constitutes a macabre trivialization; in signifying a particular form of protest it has become part of an insiders' slang: Kitty's sister Judith warns Gerald that dying quietly might mean ruin to his best suit (80). Kitty's Mum, however, is prodding the other campaigners: "'Come on,' she said to everyone. 'Let's get moving. If we die quietly and they don't hang about at the fence, we could be home by tea-time'" (80-81). In this view she is supported by the police inspector who complains of having had to wait for the campaigners to arrive. The repetition of the phrase "dying quietly" pinpoints the discrepancy between its original meaning and its signification in the present context, which is, in fact, to both the campaigners and the police, that of a rather inconsequential outdoor game.

Part of the game is getting arrested. Of the sixteen people supposed to take part in the fence cutting one is incapacitated because of an

accident with the wire-cutters. Kitty's Mum tries to get a replacement (Q. 10):

Everyone glanced at one another with those helpless little I-would-if-I-could shrugs that make it clear they have an important engagement, or their mother-in-law happens to be staying, or, just this once, their yoga class has been changed to Sunday.

'Come on,' cajoled Mum. 'It's only a couple of hours down at the station. Your court case won't come up for weeks.' (93)

Kitty translates the campaigners' non-verbal communication into phrases quoted, quoted ironically, that is. The discrepancy between the discourses of political protest and of private engagements becomes obvious.

As no one is volunteering, Kitty's Mum finally steps forward to cut the fence. It is only after she has done so that she realizes that she has two children with her. Gerald and Kitty are horrified (Q. 11):

'Oh Kitty!' she said. 'I'm so sorry!'

'It's all right,' I told her. 'It doesn't matter. It's only a couple of hours down at the station. Your court case won't come up for weeks.' (97)

In echoing her mother's previous words ironically, Kitty brings to the fore her mother's thoughtlessness.⁸ Her rhetorical strategy is that of pinning her opponent down by using her opponent's words and showing their inappropriateness: In the mother's case it is not just a matter of herself spending a couple of hours at the police station, as three other people are involved without having been asked about it: Gerald is obliged to look after the girls till their mother gets back; and Kitty feels "shaky": "It's not so nice to watch your mother being driven off by the police, especially when your dad lives a hundred miles away" (100).

This incident serves as a turning point in the plot. On the one hand it leads to a tremendous row between Gerald and Kitty's mum, and to a temporary suspension of their relationship. On the other hand this incident marks a change in Kitty's attitude towards Gerald; she learns to appreciate him as a reliable friend and as a stabilizing factor in the

family. As Gerald explains to Kitty the evening after her mother has been arrested, his steadiness and predictability may be a side of him which her mother likes. It certainly is in the case of Judith, who is repeatedly lulled to sleep by Gerald's reading (Q. 12):

She had her arm around his neck the same way that she used to cling to Dad, and he was reading her the Stock Market report.

'The FT-SE share index finished a volatile session nursing a 44.9 points fall at 1,658.4 yesterday,' he droned. 'At one time it had been down 105.3 points.'

Jude's thumb slid in her mouth, and her eyes closed. (64)

To Judith, the Stock Market report (which sophisticated readers will consider ludicrously boring) is probably completely meaningless. What matters to her, however, is that Gerald is reading to her, thus assuring her of his presence and protection. Because of this reassurance she can fall asleep. In Roman Jakobson's terminology, the "phatic function" of language is paramount.⁹ The Stock Market report, which was intended to convey information takes on a completely new function within the interaction of a young girl and her prospective stepfather. This change of function is of course bound up with a certain amount of satire.

Kitty first realizes that her attitude towards Gerald is changing when she finds herself mentally echoing his words. When during their trip to the military base her mum expresses her exasperation with Judith's wish to go home, Gerald tells her (Q. 13): "'Do you know what you are, Rosalind? . . . You are almost *unbelievably* bossy.'" (85). Later one of the 'snowballers' gets hurt by the wire-cutters, and Kitty's mum sees to the victim (Q. 14):

Mum's good with accidents. She's got that perfect mix of being both calm and—well, yes, he's quite right—almost *unbelievably* bossy.

'Show me,' she ordered him. And when he had: 'Oh, that is nasty!' she echoed the policewoman. (Two real professionals.) (92).

In comparing her mother's bossiness with that of the policewoman Kitty not only expresses her growing emotional distance to her mother but also reduces ostensible kindness to its roots in character;

demonstrating that people like her mother and the policewoman may find themselves on opposite sides but are basically very similar. From Kitty's and the implied reader's points of view political differences turn out to be comparatively insignificant if compared to the much more interesting topic of human nature.

It is when Kitty and Judith return to their flat, with Gerald but without their mother, that the relationship between those three is brought to a crisis. The characters' habit of echoing each others' words leads to surprising discoveries: Gerald suggests that Judith should help with the dishes before going to bed. As Judith has never helped before, Kitty finds herself defending her sister, in the way her mother usually does (Q. 15):

'Can't we just leave the dishes till the morning?' I asked. (Another of Mum's great standby lines.)

'No,' Gerald said. 'No, we can not. Only sluts and drunks leave the dishes till morning.'

(I made a mental note to tell Mum this.) (110)

Kitty realizes that she is echoing what her mother uses to say to her, and she anticipates quoting Gerald's words to her mother. Gerald insists on his proposition (Q. 16):

'... And Judith doesn't need your help, you know. Everyone round here treats her as if she were still a baby, but in fact she is perfectly capable.'

Now that was *definitely* my line. If I've said that once, I've said it well over a thousand times. I had my mouth wide open when he turned to Jude.

'Aren't you?' he demanded.

...

'Yes,' she said firmly. 'And I don't need a stool. I can reach.'

'There's my girl,' Gerald said. 'I knew you could do it!'

I was left speechless, honestly I was. When someone else steals your lines, what can you say? (111)

The discussion between Gerald and Kitty about Judith's participation in the household work mirrors previous discussions between Kitty and her mother about the same topic, but unlike Kitty Gerald, who has already been accepted by Judith as a father substitute, has the

authority to enforce his views. In noticing conversational echoes Kitty realizes that Gerald could strengthen her own position in the household, and this new awareness certainly contributes to her change in attitude with regard to Gerald.

In telling the story to Helen, and in telling the story of this story-telling to the reader, Kitty displays her literary abilities. It was through the medium of literary composition that Kitty told her English teacher, Mrs. Lupey, of her problems with Gerald, working off part of her resentments and earning praise which boosted her self-confidence (Q. 17):

I'd got a really good mark for this essay. 'I hope that some parts of this, at least, spring from your very vivid imagination!' she'd written at the end. It was the essay we had to write on *Something I Hate*, and I had really gone to town. *Something I hate comes round to our house regularly*, I wrote. *Flabby and complacent, it acts as if it owns the place. When it breathes, all the little hairs that stick out of its nostrils waggle. Its teeth are going yellow from encroaching old age, but under its thinning hair, its scalp is mushy pink, like boiled baby. It has a really creepy way of looking at people, like a dog drooling hopefully over its food bowl. That's why I think of it as 'Goggle-eyes'.* (38)

This essay Kitty leaves around for Gerald to read, successfully provoking him into showing his anger, for once. The literary effect of this essay is due to the fact that Kitty sticks to the conventions of the school essay while applying them to a seemingly inappropriate topic. In parodying the genre of school essay, and in applying the pronoun *it* of its title to a person, assuming the attitude of a biologist describing an animal, Kitty manages to express her own personal attitude to Gerald, which she could not have done in any conventional way. As she admits to her father on the phone she cannot explain why she finds Gerald horrible (34-35). It is only the literary technique of parodic quoting from pre-texts which allows Kitty to verbalize her feelings and, probably, to become aware of their unreasonableness in the long run. Furthermore, literature allows Kitty to treat her situation as a game or a joke; while she is suffering from Gerald's presence she can still derive pleasure from treating it in a literary way.

Kitty keeps handing in literary work to Mrs. Lupey, including her (Q. 18) *Ode to An Unwelcome Guest* and her notes on the topic *Divorce Should be Forbidden Until the Last Child has Left Home* (38). When the relationship between Gerald and her mother is disrupted, however, she writes a sonnet, "Gerald—A Lament" and an essay on "The Person I Miss Most" (127). Kitty makes use of discursive patterns of various literary and textual genres to give voice to her change of mind. As she realizes it was her experience and literary abilities which made Mrs. Lupey send her to comfort Helen, rather than Helen's best friend, Liz. Kizzy interrupts her story to address the reader (Q. 19):

Helen hugged her knees to her chest, and stared at me. The tears on her cheeks had dried, unnoticeably, to pale little stains, and her eyes were nowhere near as pink and swollen as before. In fact, she was looking a whole lot better.

'What happened?' she asked. 'Don't stop. Go on. Tell me what *happened*.'

That's how I like my listeners — craving for more. Mrs Lupey isn't Head of English in our school for nothing. She can't have forgotten that the tears rolled down her cheeks when she read my collection of sixteenth century limericks entitled *Go Home, Old Man, from Whence Thou Camest*. She must remember that she chewed her nails down to the quick reading my essay *Will She, Won't She Marry Him?* She begged for the last instalment of my serial *Tales from a Once Happy Home*. Oh, yes. Mrs Lupey knew one thing when she passed over Liz for Mission Helen, and sent me out instead.

When it comes to a story, I just tell 'em better. (46)

Kitty's justified pride in her story-telling abilities makes her keep in view her aim, which is to comfort Helen and to reconcile her to the situation of soon having a stepfather. Even though she has so far only told of the horrors of Gerald, she has succeeded in making Helen stop crying; obviously by means of making a good story out of bad reality. Kitty then manages to engage Helen's sympathies in favour of Gerald. Helen, who Kitty thinks is waiting for a "fairy-tale ending" (120) still maintains that "Toad-shoes" (120), her own mother's gentleman-friend, is quite different from "Goggle-eyes," but Kitty thinks otherwise (Q. 20):

'Go on, then,' Helly said (rather imperiously for her, I thought). 'Quick. Get on with the story. What happened when Gerald turned up on the doorstep with armfuls of flowers? Did your mum forgive him, or did the poor old sausage get the Big Freeze?'

Inasmuch as it's possible to stare at someone through dimly-lit murk, I stared at Helly Johnston. So Goggle-eyes had been transmuted into 'Poor Old Sausage' now, had he? Honestly! If her sweet nature could, in the space of a morning, turn Gerald Faulkner into an object of tender sympathy, it probably wouldn't be more than a couple of weeks before Toad-shoes, creeping warily through the back door, found Helly's arms wrapped round him in cheerful welcome. My mission, clearly, was all but accomplished. It had been easier than I thought. (122-23)

Gerald wisely does not appear with armfuls of flowers, but he keeps writing postcards to Judith, and he attends court when Kitty's mum defends her case. At Kitty's insistence she phones Gerald afterwards and invites him back.

Kitty's literary competence becomes evident in her ability to critically analyse her interlocutor's language. This literary competence turns into social competence: Kitty's strategies of narration make Helly feel better about her own situation. In a similar way Kitty's and Gerald's habit of quotation constitutes a kind of game which helps them to defuse tension and to come to terms with one another. The element of play is certainly a decisive factor. Kitty playfully quotes from phrases which belong to literary convention; and so does Mrs. Lupey, the teacher, to whose roll-call Helen refuses to respond (Q. 21):

'Twenty-one?'

Everyone looked towards Helen, who was still trying to bury herself in her desk lid.

'Mission Control calling Twenty-one,' said Mrs Lupey. She was watching Helen closely. 'I know you're out there, Twenty-one. Speak to me. Please.'

(2)

In imitating the language of Science Fiction, Mrs. Lupey gives a playful touch to her task of calling her pupils to attention. In the present case, this technique is not sufficient; the Science Fiction discourse, however, later helps Kitty to complete her story-telling. At a break

between lessons Mrs. Lupey addresses Kitty and Helen who are hidden in the Lost Property cupboard (Q. 22):

'Mission Control calling Lost Property Capsule. How are things going in there? [...] Intergalactic time passes. Whole lessons are being missed. What are the chances of a dual return to base?'

I peered at Helen, who shook her head like a small child who thinks it's being a right daredevil.

'Not yet,' she whispered. 'I want to hear what happened to *you* first.'

'Delicate mission under way,' I yelled. 'Briefing not yet fully accomplished. This capsule needs more time before it's ordered to return to base.'

(I reckon if you play along with them, you can get anything you want.) (64-65)

The parodic use of the Science Fiction 'discourse' allows Kitty and Mrs. Lupey to communicate about the case of Helen without embarrassing her, and Mrs. Lupey can allow the two girls to miss even more lessons without losing face. As so often in Kitty's story itself, quoting helps the participants in a conversation to defuse potential tension and to come to terms with a situation.

Quoting may indicate a sense of superiority as in the case of Kitty's ironical echoes of her mother's phrases, but it may also indicate an awareness of other persons' ways of speaking and thinking, as in the case of Gerald's echoes of Kitty's words or in the case of Kitty's story as a whole. When Mrs. Lupey asks Helen in the Lost Property cupboard how things are going on she answers (Q. 23):

'I'm feeling *ever* so much better, Mrs Lupey.'

'What?'

(Helen's voice just doesn't have the same wood-penetrating qualities as mine and Mrs Lupey's.)

'She says she's feeling ever so much *better*!' I yelled. (65)

Helen is using a phrase which is both infantile and old-fashioned. Kitty would probably never use the words "ever so much" on her own, but she quotes them faithfully in order to indicate to Mrs. Lupey Helen's current state of mind.¹⁰ Her literary awareness also allows Kitty to take a tolerant attitude when her mother refers to her and Judith as "poor little toddlers" (Q. 24):

'Dragging around bleak military outposts, carrying rain-sodden placards and trailing my poor little toddlers behind me!'

I ignored 'poor little toddlers'. I took it to be what Mrs Lupey always calls 'a rather unfortunate rhetorical flourish' (96).

In quoting Mrs. Lupey, Kitty shows her knowingness and her appreciation of her teaching; in applying the phrase quoted to her mother's spoken words rather than a school essay, however, she is being ironical and patronizing.

If we survey the material discussed, we become aware of a vast range of types and functions of quotations to be found in this one children's book. The table at the end of this article is an attempt to provide a tentative classification of the conversational quotations found in *Goggle-Eyes*, with the help of Roman Jakobson's model of verbal communication.¹¹ Basically, they can be divided into two groups: There are echoes of other characters' spoken words, and there are quotations from generally-available (written) discourse. The first group includes quotations for the purpose of characterizing the mood of the original speaker (such as the mother's "Oh-God-I-hate-my-job-I'm-going-to-resign" self: quotation 2, cf. 10, 20, 23) as well as ironical echoes thrown back to the original speaker for the purpose of satire (like the phrase "over fifty", 4, cf. 11). Echoing other persons' words might also imply an unconscious similarity of attitude (Kitty's mother echoing the policewoman, 14) or an equally unconscious adoption of somebody else's role (Kitty taking over the place of her absent mother, 15). Echoing may also imply conscious assent (Kitty mentally echoing Gerald or planning to quote Gerald to her mother, 14, 15, or Gerald taking up Kitty's role in educating Judith, 16) or an ironic distancing (Kitty's mother echoing her ex-husband's guess about Kitty's Science lessons, 25). If the quotation is conscious it usually implies a change in the function of language, according to the pattern provided by Jakobson: If, for example, the predominant function of the original utterance was emotive, it can become referential when quoted; if it was referential, it can become conative, i.e. it changes its focus from the context to the addressee.

The same applies to quotations from written discourse: Texts can be read with a new purpose (as the Stock Market report, 12), phrases learnt at school can assume a new function (the "unfortunate rhetorical flourish," 24), the repetition of political slogans can express a sense of belonging (9), considered satirically by the narrator, or it could indicate an ironic distancing (5, 7, 8). Quite a few literary discourses are quoted: These include popular songs parodied ironically (6), the forms of the school essay and biological description (17), literary titles (18, 19), and motifs and phrases from Science Fiction (21, 22). The predominant function of language changes from purely referential or poetical to emotive, conative or phatic. Quoting can also mean that words and phrases are taken into discursive environments where they do not properly belong, just as in *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* where a rabbit speaks to her young as a human mother to her children, or in the appropriation of folksong titles by the CND campaigners, or in the Science Fiction discourse used by the teacher to encourage the students to cooperate.

Goggle-Eyes can serve as an illustration of the linguistic fact that the adoption of existing speech patterns ('echoing' or 'quoting') is not an exception but the very basis of language, narration, and literature: Our powers of communication increase not only in proportion as we learn new words and phrases but also in proportion as we become aware of the origins of these words and phrases, and acquire the ability to indicate this awareness in talking to one another. It is at this point, I should like to contend, that conversation becomes literary. *Goggle-Eyes* appears to be a perfect illustration of the way in which literature evolves out of everyday conversation. Just as the characters echo one another to get a conversational upper hand, Kitty the storyteller establishes an ironical distance to her characters (including herself) by quoting them, and Anne Fine the author creates an awareness in her readers of distinctive speech patterns which represent attitudes which could be questioned. Kitty begins to question the aims and methods of the CND campaigners when she becomes aware of the hollowness of their language. Gerald as the political antagonist of

the campaigners, however, does not fare any better. In quoting the language of the political antagonists to her readers, conversationally, as it were, Anne Fine shows the limitations of any one side. She also states that political partisanship may be a matter of personal self-indulgence.

In taking language and conversation as its main topics, *Goggle-Eyes* is part of a rich tradition of English children's books. I should like to suggest that creating an awareness of language is one of the main features of fictional literature in general, and that texts such as *Alice in Wonderland*, *Winnie-the-Pooh* or *Goggle-Eyes* show this feature in its most basic form. It is for this reason that I think that analysing children's literature is a most rewarding task for literary scholars and critics.

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NOTES

¹Beatrix Potter, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1902; London: Warne, 1989).

²The numbers refer to the table at the end of this article.

³In using the term 'quotation' to denote the use of existing speech-patterns I do not wish to imply that the act of quoting is necessarily a conscious one. My use of the term is inspired by Julia Kristeva's well-known essay on intertextuality, in which Kristeva (following Bakhtin) contends that every text is a "mosaic of quotations" from other texts ("tout texte se construit comme mosaïque de citations, tout texte est absorption et transformation d'un autre texte"; Julia Kristeva, "Bakhtine, le mot, le dialogue et le roman," *Critique* 23, no. 239 [1967], 438-65; 440-41, translated into English as "Word, Dialogue, and Novel," in Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* [New York: Columbia UP, 1980] 64-91; 66). Kristeva stresses the fact that human expression is limited by the discursive material available to the individual. We are 'quoting' all the time, and we may or may not be aware of it.

⁴On satiric aspects of Beatrix Potter's picture-books cf. e. g. Humphrey Carpenter, "Excessively Impertinent Bunnies: The Subversive Element in Beatrix Potter," *Children and Their Books*, ed. Gillian Avery and Julia Briggs (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989) 271-88, and Peter Hunt, *An Introduction to Children's Literature* (Oxford: OUP, 1994) 87-89. Hunt contends that Potter's "contribution to the language of

children's literature is that of irony pitched at a level that the youngest can understand"; 87.

⁵This corresponds to the concept of intertextuality outlined by Ulrich Broich, "Formen der Markierung von Intertextualität," *Intertextualität: Formen, Funktionen, anglistische Fallstudien*, ed. Ulrich Broich and Manfred Pfister (Tübingen: Francke, 1985) 31-47.

⁶Anne Fine, *Goggle-Eyes*, Puffin Books (1989; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990)

⁷Peter Hunt, *Children's Literature*, Blackwell Guides to Literature (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001) 64.

⁸On the rhetorical figure of ironic *simulatio* cf. Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik: Eine Grundlegung der Literaturwissenschaft* (München: Hueber, 1960) 447 (§ 902). Kitty not only pretends to agree with her mother but also uses her mother's words.

⁹Roman Jakobson, "Linguistics and Poetics," *Selected Writings*, vol. 3: *Poetry of Grammar and Grammar of Poetry* (The Hague: Mouton, 1981) 18-51; 24.

¹⁰In an earlier passage, literal quoting of words just heard to a third party has a function quite different from that of Kitty's quotation: Kitty's mother complains to her ex-husband on the phone that Kitty is doing "care of the hair" in her Science lessons (Q. 25):

'Don't be so silly, Rosie,' said my father. 'She must be doing hair shafts, and follicles, and sebaceous glands and the like.'

Mum put her hand over the phone, and bellowed at me:

'Are you doing hair shafts, and follicles, and sebaceous glands and the like?'

I put my hand over the extension, and bellowed back:

'No. Just greasy hair, and normal hair, and dry, permed and damaged.' (8)

Kitty's Mum is ironically quoting her ex-husband (who has been quoting biological language to assert his superiority) to counter his calling her 'silly' and to maintain her assertion that the standard of Kitty's school is rather poor.

¹¹According to Jakobson, a set of agents in any act of verbal communication corresponds to a set of functions (22, 27):

ADDRESSER	CONTEXT	ADDRESSEE
	MESSAGE	
	CONTACT	
EMOTIVE	CODE	CONATIVE
	REFERENTIAL	
	POETIC	
	PHATIC	
	METALINGUAL	

APPENDIX

Functions of conversational echoes in *Goggle-Eyes*

passage quoted above	original pre-dominant function	predominant function when quoted	function in narrative context	discursive environment
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I. Echoes of spoken words:

1 by Mrs. Rabbit (by narrator)	conative	conative referential/poetic	satire	changed changed
2	emotive	referential	characterization	
4	referential	emotive/con.	satire	
10 ("I-would-if-I-could")	emotive	referential	characterization	
11	conative	emotive	irony/satire	
14a) ("bossy")	emotive/con.	referential	assent	
14b) ("nasty")	referential	referential	unconscious assent	
14b) (quoted by narrator)		ref. (change of referent)	irony	
15a) ("can't we just")	conative	referential	assuming role	
15b) ("tell Mum this")	emotive	emotive/conative	assent/triumph	
16 emotive/con.	emotive/con.	emotive/con.	assent/potl. harmony	
20	emotive	referential	ironic characterization	
23	emotive	ref./emotive	characterization/ tolerance	
24	metalingual	ref./emotive	irony	changed
25b) (qtd. by mother)	conative	emotive	irony	

II. Quotations of written discourse:

5	poetic/con.	ref./con.	irony	
6	poetic	emotive/phatic	irony	changed
7	referential	conative	irony	
8	conative	referential	irony	
9	emotive	referential	assent	
12	referential	phatic	satire/harmony	changed
17	poetic/ref.	emotive	superiority/ playfulness	changed
18, 19	poetic/emotive	emotive	irony	changed
21, 22	poetic/ref.	conative	playfulness	changed
24 (see above)				
25a) (quoted by father)	referential	conative	self-assertion	changed