

The linguistic values of the French Christmas chant *Petit Papa Noël*

Yasena Chantova

University of Library Studies and Information Technologies, Sofia, Bulgaria
y.chantova@unibit.bg

Abstract: The character of *Petit Papa Noël* represents linguistic values which are shared by a community of speakers allowing the popularity of this character within the community. In order to provide an explanation for this sharing of linguistic values, we discuss the chorus in *Petit Papa Noël* lyrics. This approach allows observing the linguistic values in their socio-cultural and collective dimension. In order to achieve this aim, Saussure's values and Jung's archetypes are related to the notional and the empirical. However, what is defined here is a semantic approach which belongs to the science of language and because the archetypal entities are discussed in terms of Saussurean values, these archetypal entities are therefore treated as linguistic ones.

Keywords: LINGUISTIC VALUE, ASSOCIATION, RECURSION, REFLEXIVITY, LANGUAGE USERS

1. Introduction

According to the *Course* [1], the linguistic value is a differential phenomenon. Following the concept of the negativity of the linguistic value, the differential principle is at the heart of the universal principal of organization of languages. The fragment 29j of the manuscripts "*On the dual essence of language*" [2, 3], however, presents the linguistic value as a double phenomenon, differential and post-elaborational at the same time. As a recently discovered and discussed notion [4] within the Saussurean manuscripts, the post-elaboration has implications for the concept of the linguistic value: the differential principle is always the first operating one and results in the differentiation of linguistic units, but is imperatively followed by the operation of post-elaboration. This operation consists of the classification and the association of the differentiated linguistic units according to common and shared entities and allows languages to describe themselves. The autodescriptive operation has also a social dimension as it is unseparated from the language users within their linguistic community. As a result, the linguistic value appears to be a social phenomenon with autodescriptive capacity and associative nature. We thus aim to study the associations of linguistic values in the French Christmas chant *Petit Papa Noël* to reveal the social and autodescriptive nature of the phenomenon of linguistic values.

2. Associations and linguistic values: discussion and results

The Saussurean legacy presents a fundamental thought and ideals about languages, but not a standalone finite theory. This lack of theory therefore opens the way to the development of theoretical and methodological approaches [5]. We refer thus to Saussure's concept of associative series, and in order to make further precisions on the social aspect of the linguistic values and their associations, we resort to associations in the way they are considered in some of Jung's works.

2.1. Saussure's associative series

In order to emphasize the relationships of every speaker and entire collectivity of speakers with the use and understanding of words, Saussure prefers to refer to the term of *association* during his lectures with students [6] and *association* remains a distinct concept from *parallélie* in Saussure's works [7]. Saussure's associative series thus have a conventional and social aspect as they are agreements between speakers and are psychic entities which exist within the collectivity of language users [8].

Associations are also relations between linguistic values out of discourse while syntagmatic relations between linguistic values are formed within discourse. Associations thus are relations *in absentia* and syntagmatic ones are relations *in praesentia*. Both types of relations, however, are highly interdependent and operate simultaneously: when French says *marchons!* '(let's) walk !', they must choose from more than one associative series, because there is the associative series *marchons!* '(let's) walk !', *marche!* '(you singular) walk !', *marchez!* '(you plural) walk !', but there is also

marchons! '(let's) walk !', *montons!* '(let's) go up !', *mangeons!* '(let's) eat !'. Any linguistic value in discourse results from some differential operation within several associative series *in absentia*. Linguistic values thus differ in their identities: there are values which are common and constitutive of associative series; there are values which are presented in discourse; and there are values which remain *in absentia*. These three types of identities of linguistic values allow from an Aristotelian perspective [9, 10] to define numerical, specific and generic values.

2.2. Jung's associations

In order to learn more about the way socio-cultural conditions influence his patients, Jung [11, 12] studies associations of words made by members of many families (about the relation family – type of word association, see also [13]). He then classifies these word associations into fifteen categories as follows: 1.Coordination; 2.Sub- and Supraordination; 3.Association by contrast; 4.Subjective predication; 5.Predicative association; 6.Association expressing the relation of the verb to its subject or to its complement; 7.Designation of place, time, means, goal, substance, etc.; 8.Definition; 9.Coexistence; 10.Identity; 11.Motor-verbal association; 12.Compound words; 13.Word complement; 14.Assonance; 15.Defective reactions (for further details on the classification of word associations, see [14]). Associations fall into the fifteen categories according to linguistic criteria and their classification therefore relates to facts of language. Jung then relates the fifteen categories of word associations to some of his patients' cultural and social characteristics. He remarks that not so intelligent people and those who are aware of their inferiority make word associations of 8.Definition-type, while intelligent and well-educated people use 11.Motor-verbal association, 12.Compound words and 14.Assonance. Elderly people and especially elderly women prefer the 5.Predicative association-type. The type of association formed by children within their family is closer to the type of the mother than that of the father and parents have a tendency to agree the type of associations they prefer to use. It also happens that after the marriage, the wife changes her type of word association and starts unconsciously, at least in Jung's time, to use the same type as her husband. The choice of the linguistic type of word associations therefore is influenced by the intelligence, education and family environment of language users and also can vary from generation to generation. The formation of word associations thus is a dynamic socio-cultural phenomenon as intelligence, studies, family and generations are conditions of the variety of association types.

The categorization of word associations into fifteen types has a double aspect, metalinguistic and socio-conventional. The metalinguistic aspect results from the recursive nature of some linguistic phenomena, criteria and categories such as predication, word-formation, adverbialization, etc., which are found among word associations. The socio-conventional aspect results from the recursive nature of some social conditions, such as generation, age, family, education, etc., in a given collectivity. The word associations thus become agreements within members of a

collectivity. The two aspects of word associations, metalinguistic and socio-conventional, interact and are inseparable.

2.2.1. Associations as a method and some archetypal entities

Word association is one of the methods [15] that allow studying archetypal entities. The archetypal entities are of three types, archetypes, archetypal representations and archetypal qualities. The archetypes, such *la Mère* ('Mother archetype') [16], *l'Enfant* ('Child archetype') [17], *l'Esprit* ('the Spirit') [18] et *l'Ombre* ('the Trickster-Figure' or 'the Shadow') [19] belong to the psychic layer of the collective unconscious and are only observable through their representations, such *ciel* ('heaven') of the Mother archetype, *père* ('grandfather'/'father') of the Spirit archetype, *enfant* ('child') of the Child archetype and *pape des bouffons* ('the bishop of buffoons') of the Shadow archetype. The archetypal representations appear at superficial psychic layers and are of infinite variety. Finally, archetypes are their qualities among which are *sauveur* ('savior') of the Shadow archetype, *discernement* ('insight'), *illumination* ('enlightenment', 'reflection'), *ruse* ('surreptitiously'), *connaissance* ('knowledge'), *serviabilité* ('readiness to help'), *bienveillance* ('goodwill'), *méchanceté* ('wicked aspect') of the Spirit archetype, *protecteur* ('protection'), *alimentation* ('fruitfulness'), *renaissance* ('rebirth') of the Mother archetype, *impuissance* ('inability to do otherwise'), *insignifiant* ('insignificant'), *bisexués* ('bisexual nature') of the Child archetype (for the archetypes, archetypal representations and archetypal qualities in German, see [20] and in English, see [21]).

3. The associations in Petit Papa Noël

The linguistic values PAPA NOËL, CIEL and JOUETS are values in *praesentia* as they occur in discourse of the lyrics in the chorus of the French Christmas chant *Petit Papa Noël* [22]:

Petit PAPA NOËL,
Quand tu descendras du CIEL
Avec tes JOUETS par milliers,
N'oublie pas mon petit soulier.

Their presence in the discourse defines them as generic values which are the first ones of every association below:

(1) PAPA NOËL – papa – FAM. ÉTYM pape – pape – catholique – FAM. ÉTYM sauf (sauveur)

(2) PAPA NOËL – noël – Père Noël – certain, aine – FAM. ÉTYM certes – discerner DE (discernement)

(3) PAPA NOËL – noël – Père Noël – inspirer – FAM. ÉTYM soupirer – esprit (illumination)

(4) PAPA NOËL – noël – Père Noël – inspirer – cause – FAM. ÉTYM chose (ruse)

(5) PAPA NOËL – noël – Père Noël – respect – reconnaître – FAM. ÉTYM connaître (connaissance)

(6) PAPA NOËL – noël – Père Noël – réserve – FAM. ÉTYM servir – serviable DE (serviabilité)

(7) PAPA NOËL – noël – Père Noël – condescendance – bienveillant, ante DE (bienveillance)

(8) PAPA NOËL – noël – Père Noël – condescendance – bienveillant, ante DE – bienveillance CONTR. (méchanceté)

(9) CIEL – aspect – « regarder » – regarder – FAM. ÉTYM garder – à l'égard de (protecteur)

(10) CIEL – visible – FAM. ÉTYM voir – visible CONTR. (secret)

(11) CIEL – au-dessus de – haut, haute – FAM. ÉTYM haut (alimentation)

(12) CIEL – tête – corps – FAM. ÉTYM. corps – corps – → réincarnation (renaissance)

(13) JOUET – enfant – naissance – indépendant, ante – DE l. in- (impuissance)

(14) JOUET – enfant – naissance – indépendant, ante – DE l. in- (insignifiant)

(15) JOUET – enfant – naissance – organisme – FAM. ÉTYM organe – organe (bisexués)

3.1. The metalinguistic aspect of the associations

While the occurrence of the generic values PAPA NOËL, CIEL and JOUETS is discourse based, the specific and the numeric values of the associations come from the lexicographical signified [23] of each generic value. For example in the first association above, the lexicographical signified of the generic value PAPA NOËL holds the specific value papa and the latter holds in its signified the specific value pape, while the signified of catholique holds the numeric value sauf. This inclusive operation of formation of the association defines the common nature of the numeric values: each numeric value is a shared value by generic and specific values in each association and in many associations (see the cases (13) and (14) above). As shared and common linguistic units, the numeric values become metalinguistic units: they act as metalinguistic categories as they class and associate the other linguistic units. This inclusive operation therefore correlates with the recursive aspect of the metalinguistic units. This metalinguistic operation also is an oriented one as it always starts from the generic values and finishes in the numeric ones. The metalinguistic phenomenon finally has a qualitative character as the numeric values belong to the signified of (sauveur), (discernement), (illumination), ... and (bisexués) and as sauveur, discernement, illumination, ... and bisexués are qualities of the Mother, Child, Trickster and Child archetypes. The metalinguistic phenomenon thus is inclusive, oriented and qualitative one. As the metalinguistic operation takes place in the signified in the linguistic values, this operation also has semantic nature.

3.2. The socio-conventional aspect of the associations

The associative types of the series of linguistic values of *Petit Papa Noël* also are defined by the following lexicographical remarks:

FAM. ÉTYM., DE, →, CONTR.

These lexicographical remarks allow some empirical and notional parallels with Jung's fifteen types of word associations.

3.2.1. Associations by etymology

Etymons [24, 25] indicate etymological relations between the lexical units they refer to. In the associations of *Petit Papa Noël*, FAM. ETYM indicates the etymological relationship between the associated values and thus ensures continuity between these values. Jung's 9th category of word associations is *Coexistence* and defines relations of continuity or simultaneity ("Der Zusammenhang der Koexistenz ist die Kontiguität oder Simultaneität, [...]“ [26]. The examples of *Coexistence* provided by Jung *table – chaise, plante – pot, couteau – assiette* [27] and *Tinte – Feder, Heft – Messer, Tisch – Suppe, Weihnachten – Christbaum, Sonntag – Kirche, Schüler – Lehrer, Tisch – Stuhl, Lampe – Familie, Mutter – Kind, Anstalt – Wärter, reiten – Pferd, Auge – sehen; Bleistift, Papier, Heft, singen, rechnen, Schule – schreiben, reiten – Sattel, Ohr – hören* [28] do not, however, hold etymologically related linguistic units and the rapprochement between etymological family associations and coexistence ones thus remains partial as it is limited to the notional.

3.2.2. Associations by derivation

The lexicographical remark **de** preceding a form in an etymology section means that the word is formed by derivation (« Tableau des termes, signes conventionnels et abréviations du dictionnaire », see [29]). The lexicographical remark **de** thus refers to a morphological operation of word formation. Jung's 13th category of word association is *Word complement* and involves obtaining a new lexical unit from a word, which is considered to be a word-stimulus, by adding a non-autonomous linguistic form, which is considered to be an answer. The lexicographical remark DE in the associations (1) – (15) above and the associations by *Word complement* therefore are related to the notional.

Following Jung's examples [30] the lexicographical remark DE and the associations by *Word complement* are also related to the empirical:

(16a) *fleur – iste*

(16b) *fil – er*

In the first case, the derivation is by suffixation and is attested by the dictionary (see *fleuriste* in [31]). The morphological form *– er* in the second case is a characteristic one for 1st group verbs in French according to the same dictionary (see *conjugaison 1* in [32]). The examples for *Word complement* in Deutsch [33]

(17a) *Wunder -bar*

(17b) *Herz -ig*

(17c) *bescheiden -heit*

(17d) *Freund -lich*

are also to be considered as derivation by suffixation as the dictionary [34] offers hyphenation in syllables of words:

(18a) *wun|der|bar*

(18b) *her|zig*

(18c) *Be|scheiden|heit*

(18d) *freund|lich*.

The notional and the empirical relation between the derivation word associations in *Petit Papa Noël* and Jung's associations of the type *Word complement* however stays partial as Jung's associations are only examples of derivation by suffixation, while the associations in *Petit Papa Noël* also have cases of derivation by prefixation in (13) and (14) (concerning different types of derivation, see [35]):

(19a) **indépendant, ante** – **DE I. in-** (impuissance)

(19b) **indépendant, ante** – **DE I. in-** (insignifiant, iante)

3.2.3. Associations by analogy

According to the dictionary (see « Tableau des termes, signes conventionnels et abréviations du dictionnaire » in [36]) the lexicographical remark **→** followed by a word in bold, presents a word that has a relation of meaning with the word that precedes. The associations of values by analogy in *Petit Papa Noël* thus belong to the semantic axe and have empirical relation with Jung's 10th category of word associations that is *Identity*:

(20a) *tuer – massacrer,*

(20b) *prairie – pré.* [37]

According to the dictionary [38] *massacre* and *pré* refer by analogy to *tuer* and *prairie*. Jung's examples [39]

(21a) *großartig – prächtig,*

(21b) *aufpassen – aufmerken (im schweizerdeutschen Gebrauche wesentlich synonym),*

(21c) *zanken – Streit,*

are also attested by the dictionary [40]:

(22a) *prächtig* (Adj.)

mit großer Pracht ausgestattet; vortrefflich; herrlich, großartig; Sy prachtvoll;

(22b) *aufpassen*

1. (V. i.) *achtgeben, aufmerksam sein; [...]*

(22c) *Streit* (m.)

1. [...]; *Zank, [...].*

The relation between the associations by analogy in *Petit Papa Noël* and Jung's word associations by *Identity* is limited to the empirical and thus remains partial.

3.2.4. Associations by contrariety

The linguistic values associated by contrariety in *Petit Papa Noël* come from the contrary terms indicated by CONTR. in the final section of the lexicographical articles. It is possible to empirically relate these associations to ones in Jung's 3rd category *Association by contrast*:

(23b) *vite – lent*

(23b) *lourd – léger*

(23c) *dormir – veiller*

(23d) *sale – propre* [41]

These examples are found in the final part of the lexicographical articles in the dictionary [42] where the opposite terms are presented:

(24a) *vite*

CONTRAIRES : *Lent. [...].*

(24b) *lourd, lourde*

CONTRAIRES : [...], *Léger, [...].*

(24c) *dormir*

CONTRAIRES : *Veiller. [...].*

(24d) *sale*

CONTRAIRES : [...], *propre, [...].*

Some of Jung's examples in Deutsch *Schmerz – Lust, sauer – süß, freundlich – zornig, gut – lasterhaft, Tier – Pflanze, Rache – verzeihen*, [43] however cannot be found in the dictionary. On the other hand, the following

(25a) *Leid – Freude,*

(25b) *gut – böse,*

(25c) *hell – dunkel,*

(25d) *Verstand – Dummheit,*

necessitate lexicographical definitions and examples to be illustrated:

(26a) *Leid* (n.)

Freud und ~ miteinander teilen

in Freud und ~ zusammenstehen

(26b) *böse* (Adj.)

wenn es im Gutem nicht geht, dann im Bösen

im Gutem wie im Bösen

jenseits von Gut und Böse

(26c) *dunkel* (Adj.)

1. nicht hell, lichtlos, finster

(26d) Dummheit (f.)

1. (unz.) [...] : ~ und Stolz wachsen auf einem Holz
(Sprichw.) *Unverstand u. Dünkel gehören zusammen*

The relation between the associations by contrariety in *Petit Papa Noël* and Jung's word *Associations by contrast* thus remains of a general character.

4. Conclusion

As the associations of linguistic values differ according to the language users' social and cultural environment, the Christmas festivities thus define the collective socio-cultural framework of the associations of values in *Petit Papa Noël*. This guarantees the conventional aspect of the linguistic values associations formed within the community of French speakers: the linguistic values and their associations appear to be social and collective agreements resulting from a collective language, but also a socio-cultural activity. These socio-cultural agreements assure the mutual understanding and language communication within the speakers' community.

The character of *Petit Papa Noël* also appears as a cultural phenomenon combining some features coming from the archetypes of the Mother, the Child, the Spirit and the Shadow as some qualities of these four archetypes are related to the associations formed within the chorus of the French Christmas chant *Petit Papa Noël*.

This language and socio-cultural activity of formation of values associations nevertheless remains outside the language users' immediate knowledge and is only accessible by linguistic observation.

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