

Branje dramskega besedila: primer empirične raziskave

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Recepcijska estetika in teorija bralčevega odziva sta tisti dve smeri literarne vede, ki sta izpostavili bralčevo aktivno vlogo v bralnem procesu in izdelali različne konstrukte bralcev, hkrati pa sta z novim raziskovalnim poljem dali spodbude tudi gledališkim teoretikom, ki so se začeli intenzivneje zanimati za procese branja in razumevanja dramskega besedila ter zlasti v postmoderni multimedijski civilizaciji postali pozorni tudi na zaznave gledalcev. Članek prikazuje rezultate empirične raziskave, ki na različnih ravneh bralčevega odziva preučuje konkretni stik bralcev z dramskim besedilom, hkrati pa njihove recepcijske odzive primerja z zaznavami gledalcev uprizoritve in njihovim dožemanjem, kako je besedilo brala režija.

Ključne besede: dramatika / recepcijska estetika / dramska besedila / bralci / gledališko občinstvo / empirične raziskave

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Uvod

Branje je ena najkompleksnejših človekovih dejavnosti, kar dokazujejo številne študije – ki so se odmevneje začele pojavljati od sedemdesetih let 20. stoletja naprej, ko je bila bralcu vrnjena aktivna vloga pri tvorbi pomena –, ki kažejo, da je bralca možno opisati na vsaj tri načine. Prvi pristop je teoretičnega značaja in razmerje med bralcem in besedilom prikazuje s pomočjo različnih modelov hipotetičnih bralcev, med katerimi so implicitni bralec Wolfganga Iserja, modelni bralec Umberta Eca, informirani bralec Stanleya Fisha, idealni bralec Jonathana Cullerja idr.¹ Raziskovalci postavljajo bralca v širši družbeno-kulturni kontekst in raziskujejo mehanizme produkcije in recepcije, ki usmerjajo bralčevo tvorbo pomena. Bralca prikažejo tudi z vidika posameznika, njegovega dela in užitka pri branju, pri čemer se naslanjajo na spoznanja psihoanalize. Druga možnost je opis bralca iz zgodovinske perspektive – gre za analizo bralcev, njihovih bralnih navad in okusa skozi zgodovino oziroma v določenem zgodovin-

skem obdobju, in sicer v odvisnosti od družbene strukture, kulturnih in psiholoških navad, političnih in ekonomskih vplivov ipd., pri čemer raziskovalci izhajajo iz različnih arhivskih virov. Tretji, eksperimentalni pristop izhaja iz teoretičnih spoznanj, ki jih raziskovalci aplicirajo na analizo konkretnega občinstva. Zbiranje gradiva najpogosteje poteka s pomočjo različnih vprašalnikov, intervjujev in meritev bioloških funkcij bralcev, za analizo zbranega gradiva pa pogosto uporabljajo empirično metodo. Tretji pristop je torej tisti, ki daje prednost konkretnemu, vsakdanjemu, neprofesionalnemu bralcu, ki ga lahko opišemo s kvantitativno natančnostjo, ugotovljene znanstvene sodbe pa niso abstraktne, temveč se nanašajo na določeno občinstvo (in ne na bralca, ki bi bil model sofisticiranega učenjaka ali ahistorični konstrukt), zato Peter Dixon zanj uvede izraz »statistični bralec« (Dixon idr. 10). Primer takšne empirične raziskave, ki na različnih ravneh bralčevega odziva preučuje konkretni stik bralcev z besedilom, bomo prikazali v tem prispevku, in sicer se bomo osredotočili na branje dramskega besedila.

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Glavna razlika izhaja iz samega predmeta raziskovanja, saj je literarna komunikacija pri drami drugačna kot pri proznih ali lirskih besedilih: drama zaradi svojega dvojnega eksistenčnega statusa predvideva več vrst naslovnikov. Tako bralec bere dramatikovo besedilo, gledalec pa gleda uprizoritve, katere sestavni del je dramsko besedilo, a prebrano skozi oči režiserja in igralcev ter aktualizirano glede na pričakovanja in navade gledalcev. Iz tega izhaja, da je sprejemnik drame trojen: sestavljajo ga bralci drame, režiser in igralci (oziroma celotna gledališka skupina) ter gledalci uprizoritve.⁴ Tako bralčeve kot gledalčeve recepcijske zmožnosti upošteva dramatik že pri pisanju drame. Patrice Pavis (»Teze« 119) zapiše: »[D]ramska besedila so vedno samo sled določene uprizoritvene prakse. Problem je v tem, da jih je treba brati tako, da si predstavljamo, kako so jih

med nastajanjem oblikovale omejitve igre in uprizoritve.« V postmoderni multimedijski civilizaciji pa je gledalec tisti element gledališke komunikacije, ki je postal predmet zanimanja najrazličnejših znanstvenih disciplin.

Tako smo si tudi sami zastavili cilj, da z raziskavo osvetlimo konkreten stik med bralcem in dramskim besedilom ter gledalcem in gledališko uprizoritvijo pa tudi prikažemo razlike in podobnosti med besedilom in uprizoritvijo, kot se kažejo na različnih ravneh bralčevega/gledalčevega odziva. Bistvo raziskave torej ni usmerjeno v analizo dramskega besedila in gledališke uprizoritve oziroma v primerjavo in vrednotenje teh dveh, saj gre za dva avtonomna medija z njima lastnimi zakonitostmi. Zanimata nas odziv sprejemnikov in razlike v njihovih predstavah, nastalih na podlagi branja dramskega besedila (tj. razlike v besedilnih svetovih bralcev) oziroma ogleda gledališke uprizoritve in branja uprizoritvenega teksta, tj. režije celotnih odrskih sistemov, med katere prištevamo dramsko besedilo: branje uprizoritvenega teksta implicira, da dojamemo način, kako je besedilo brala režija, kajti branje besedila je potekalo pred režijo, ki je tako odrska realizacija tega branja (Pavis, »Od besedila« 152). Raziskava se torej loteva vprašanja, kako dobi besedilo oziroma uprizoritev pomen za sprejemnika oziroma katere jezikovne znake besedila dekodirajo bralci in katere jezikovne ter nejezikovne znake uprizoritve zaznavajo gledalci. Z empirično raziskavo pa smo preverili tudi praktično uporabnost nekaterih teoretičnih pojmov.

Problem in metoda

V skladu s cilji raziskave smo izdelali vprašalnik s kvantitativnimi in kvalitativnimi vprašanji (odgovori DA/NE, obkrožanje na petstopenjski lestvici, razvrščanje elementov, izbiranje med ponujenimi možnostmi, samostojno tvorjenje odgovorov tipa: razloži, opiši, naštej, ovrednoti, utemelji). Vprašanja so se nanašala na različne ravni bralčevega/gledalčevega odziva, in sicer:

- zaznavanje različnih elementov drame, kot se kažejo skozi besedilo in/ali uprizoritev: dramska oseba (značaj, zunanja podoba, mimika in kretnje, kostum, odnosi med osebami), dramski govor (zaznavanje jezikovnih posebnosti dramskega govora, idiolekt in sociolekt, način govora, jezikovne ponovitve ...), prostor in čas (čas in kraj dogajanja, prizorišča, scenski elementi, materiali in barve, predmeti in rekviziti, zvoki, šumi in glasba);
- razumevanje in interpretacijo (zahtevnost drame za razumevanje, manj razumljivi prizori, temeljna ideja, sporočilnost drame ...);
- vrednotenje in všečnost (splošna ocena všečnosti besedila/uprizoritve, najljubši prizor, dramaturško šibek prizor ...);

– primerjavo besedila in uprizoritve (v kolikšni meri se uprizoritev ravna po besedilu drame, razlike v predstavah, nastalih ob individualnem branju in konkretno odrsko realizacijo ...).

Raziskava je bila sestavljena iz dveh delov: prva skupina anketirancev je prebrala dramsko besedilo in si nato ogledala gledališko uprizoritev, druga skupina pa si je najprej ogledala uprizoritev in nato prebrala dramsko besedilo; tako smo primerjalno preučevali, v kolikšni meri je na zaznavanje elementov uprizoritve vplivalo predhodno branje in obratno. V raziskavi je sodelovalo 60 študentov 1. letnika slovenistike s končano gimnazijsko izobrazbo, starih med 19 in 20 leti, večinoma ženskega spola in iz različnih delov Slovenije, kar je predstavljalo starostno, izobrazbeno in interesno homogen vzorec. Kot gradivo je služila drama Dušana Jovanovića *Ekshibicionist*, za katero smo predvidevali, da bo tematsko in idejno zanimiva za izbrani vzorec anketirancev,⁵ hkrati pa je bilo to igro v času izvedbe raziskave možno prebrati in videti uprizorjeno na odru. Drama je bila krstno uprizorjena v sezoni 2001–2002 v SNG Mala Drama Ljubljana v režiji Dušana Jovanovića in istega leta je bila objavljena v pripadajočem gledališkem listu, v knjižni izdaji pa je izšla leta 2004.

Rezultati raziskave⁶

Zaznavanje sestavnih delov drame

Zaznavanje različnih elementov, povezanih z dramsko osebo, jezikovnimi značilnostmi in časovno-prostorskimi dimenzijami drame, je z odgovori pokazalo, da so se anketiranci v našem primeru osredotočali predvsem na dramsko osebo (oznaka, značajske lastnosti, mimika in kretnje, kostum, problemskost ...), saj so bili ti odgovori najštevilčnejši. Odgovori tistih, ki so predhodno brali dramsko besedilo, so bili pri naštetih kategorijah na občutek izčrpnější, natančnejši in bolj poglobljeni, vendar vprašanja niso bila zastavljena dovolj odločevalno, da bi to lahko z vso gotovostjo trdili, nakazujejo pa razmišljanje, da so bili ti anketiranci manj zaposleni s samo zgodbo, tako da so lahko več pozornosti posvečali navedenim uprizoritvenim elementom. To pa ne velja za zaznavanje jezikovnih posebnosti in predmetov, rekvizitov in drugih scenskih elementov, kakršni so materiali in barve, ter glasbe; ti elementi so bili na splošno slabše zaznavani in niti predhodno branje in s tem poznavanje zgodbe ni povečalo pozornosti tem segmentom uprizoritve. Najopaznejši so bili vulgarni izrazi paznika Jimmyja in pogosta raba strokovnih terminov v govoru psihiatrinje Eve. Večino preostalih jezikovnih značilnosti je opazila manj kot polovica ozi-

roma manj kot tretjina anketirancev, rezultat za preostale osebe je še nižji, četrtna anketirancev pa je zapisala, da odgovora ne pozne, se ne spomni, ni bila pozorna na jezikovne značilnosti, ali pa odgovora sploh ni bilo. Zato so imeli bralci/gledalci tudi težave pri določanju pomenskih funkcij naštetih elementov in njihove soodvisnosti znotraj uprizoritve, tako da se pri teh vprašanjih večkrat pojavi odgovor *ne vem* oziroma odgovor ni bil zapisan. Glede usmerjanja gledalčeve pozornosti se v našem primeru potrjujeta obe osnovni predpostavki, ki ju navaja Marco de Marinis v študiji »Dramaturgija gledalca« (189–204), enem redkih prispevkov, ki se ukvarjajo s tako temeljnim problemom, kot je ta, kako gledalec iz raznolikih in razpršenih elementov sestavi uprizoritev, ki je skladna in nosi pomen, torej s problemom percepcije. Ker je gledališka umetnost tista, ki sprejemnikove čutne sposobnosti najbolj zaseda, je gledalec prisiljen zavreči ali celo izrazito izničiti del množice dražljajev, ki jim je simultano in sukcesivno izpostavljen. In kot ugotavlja de Marinis, gledalec tako avtomatično in nezavedno uporablja dva modela – pozorno fokusiranje in selektivno pozornost –, pri čemer si zastavi temeljno vprašanje, kaj privablja gledalčevo pozornost k neki stvari in kaj jo hkrati odvrča od druge. Najprej navedimo primer pozornega fokusiranja in selektivne pozornosti: dobra polovica gledalcev je kot sestavni del kostuma Daniela Parkerja navedla natikače; ti so pritegnili gledalčevo pozornost, saj jih Daniel obuva in sezuva, nosi po prostoru ipd., hkrati pa so natikači odvrnili pozornost od drugih elementov kostuma, denimo od čepice, ki jo je navedel en sam gledalec, četudi jo ima Daniel ves čas uprizoritve na glavi. Druga misel je, da mora predstava najprej gledalca presenetiti, vzbuditi njegovo zanimanje, začudenje, če hoče pritegniti njegovo pozornost. To se je pri nas pokazalo na več ravneh. Navedimo dva zgleda. Na seznamu predmetov, ki so si jih gledalci zapomnili, prva mesta zasedajo tisti predmeti, ki so nenavadni, presenetljivi in s tem fascinirajo gledalca (na primer predmet z bucikami, pisoar, drog z lučjo, žival); podobno se je pokazalo tudi pri prizorih, ki so gledalcem ostali v spominu, tj. pri prizorih, ki so pritegnili njihovo pozornost s šokantnostjo, smešnostjo, čustveno nabitostjo ali izjemno igralsko prepričljivostjo.

Razumevanje in interpretacija

Anketiranci po lastnih ocenah na splošno niso imeli težav z razumevanjem dramskega besedila in gledališke uprizoritve. Med manj razumljive prizore je več kot polovica bralcev uvrstila konec 23. prizora, ko je treba hkrati sestavljati dva vzporedna pogovora, nekateri pa so imeli težave tudi

pri Dorothyjinih dolgih monologih. Pri uprizoritvi se je za glavni problem izkazalo to, da so zaradi hitrega dogajanja gledalci prezrli določene informacije – v našem primeru je bilo tako denimo s Fredovim otroštvom in Evino preteklostjo –, torej tisti deli, ki imajo epsko dimenzijo. Potem ko so si bralci ogledali predstavo in ko so gledalci prebrali besedilo, so poročali, da dramo v celoti bolje razumejo in da so jim posamezna nejasna mesta zdaj jasnejša, kar nas nedvomno napeljuje na misel, da je za celovito razumevanje drame potrebno tako branje kot tudi ogled odrske uprizoritve, če je ta le možen.

Bralci in gledalci niso imeli težav z razbiranjem sporočila drame, res pa je, da so odgovori nekaterih zelo enostavni in sporočilo drame nekoliko poenostavljajo; vendar se v »pravilnost« interpretacije nismo spuščali. Bralci so najpogosteje pristopali k besedilu iz perspektive ene od dramskih oseb in njenih težav, zato je zanje sporočilo vezano na spoznanje, da ima vsak človek težave ne glede na svoj socialni status, izobrazbo, razlika je le v tem, da si nekateri pred težavami zatiskajo oči in si jih ne priznajo, tako da se navzven kažejo popolne, navznoter pa so polni konfliktov. Gledalci so k tej perspektivi dodali tudi širši pomen drame, torej njeno osnovno idejno sporočilo, ki kaže na osamljenost in odtujenost v sodobnem svetu. Besedilo je sicer pomensko odprto in omogoča različne pomenske poudarke, vendar se odgovori izbranega vzorca v večini primerov gibljejo znotraj navedenih dveh pomenskih polj.

Vrednotenje in vsečnost

Tako besedilo kot uprizoritev so anketiranci na lestvici všečnosti ocenili izjemno visoko (na petstopenjski lestvici je predstava dobila oceno 4,67, dramsko besedilo pa 3,97). Gledalci so zlasti pohvalili igralsko zasedbo, prikaz resnih problemov na komičen način in aktualnost same tematike oziroma prikaz realnosti sodobne družbe, bralci pa tudi odlične dialoge, kompozicijo, nekateri tudi rabo različnih ravni jezika. Kot dolgočasne so najpogosteje označili Dorothyjine monologe na začetku drame in nekatere pogovore med Dorothy in Evo. Gledališka uprizoritev omogoča tudi več različnih vrst komike, kar se je pokazalo tudi v našem primeru, saj so gledalci komičnost uprizoritve ocenili z višjo oceno kot bralci komičnost besedila (za predstavo 3,83, za besedilo 2,87). Pogosta raba kletvic in vulgarnih izrazov je anketirance presenetila, a se jim je zdela v kontekstu tega besedila/uprizoritve smiselna in učinkovita.

Primerjava besedilnih svetov bralcev z odrsko realizacijo

Primerjava dramskega besedila in gledališke uprizoritve v naši raziskavi temelji na podobnostih in razlikah med besedilom in uprizoritvijo, kot jih zaznavajo in interpretirajo sprejemniki. Gre torej predvsem za primerjavo tega, v kolikšni meri se ujemata dramsko besedilo in verbalna komponenta uprizoritve ter v kolikšni meri se ujemajo besedilni svetovi, nastali na podlagi branja bralcev in ustvarjalcev uprizoritve. Uprizoritev se razen redkih izjem, ko je izpuščena kakšna vrstica in dodan stavek, v celoti ravna po besedilu drame in vanj ne posega. Predstave anketirancev, nastale na podlagi branja, se v marsičem razlikujejo od odrske realizacije. Bralci so dramo doživljali bolj problemsko in resno, medtem ko je bila perspektiva uprizoritve lahkotnejša in bolj komična. Različno so si predstavljali tudi dogajalne prostore: bralci poročajo, da so si zamišljali zapor in rešetke, medtem ko je bila scena na odru minimalistična, prizorišča pa so se hitro menjavala, tako da jih je običajno zaznamoval samo kakšen značilen predmet. Iz odgovorov anketirancev je razbrati, da besedilo večjo pozornost odmerja Dorothy, medtem ko se uprizoritev bolj osredotoča na naslovnega junaka. Največ razlik med predstavami bralcev in ustvarjalcev gledališke uprizoritve se je pokazalo prav na ravni predstav o vseh nastopajočih osebah. Natančno smo primerjali značajske lastnosti Freda Millerja in kostum Daniela Parkerja.

Izkazalo se je, da sta podoba naslovnega junaka na podlagi branja besedila in podoba junaka na podlagi branja režije presenetljivo podobni, saj sta med ponujenimi pomenskimi dvojicami na petstopenjski lestvici obe skupini obkrožali naslednje značilnosti: Fred je inteligenčen, zavrt, osamljen, čustveno zapleten, resen, ranljiv, poklicno uspešen fant, urejene zunanosti, nenasilen in srednje privlačen. Razlike pa se pojavijo pri tistih lastnostih, ki zadevajo zunanost osebe. Gledalci so zunanost osebe označili glede na igralčev fizični videz, zato je zanje Fred nizek in svetlolas, medtem ko je za bralce Fred visok in temnolas. Enoten odgovor bralcev je presenetljiv, kajti v besedilu ni nobenega podatka o zunanosti oseb. Drugi primer pa je povezan s kostumom dramske osebe: to vprašanje smo osredotočili na osebo psihiatra Daniela Parkerja, ki ima edini skozi celotno uprizoritev nespremenjena oblačila. Bralci si na podlagi branja Daniela zamišljajo v elegantnih, dragih, uglajenih oblačilih (nekaj primerov odgovorov: brežhibna obleka po zadnji modi, hlače na rob in bela srajca, elegantna obleka temne barve s kričečo kravato, strog, uraden videz, obleka drage blagovne znamke, čevlji denimo znamke Hugo Boss, črni lakirani čevlji, moderna očala ipd.). Spet je presenetljiva enotnost odgovora, saj je takšen odgovor zapisalo kar 87 odstotkov vprašanih, medtem ko le 13 odstotkov

vidi Daniela v vsakdanjih oblačilih, tj. v kavbojkah ali drugih navadnih hlačah in srajci oziroma puloverju, dodaja pa še neusklajene barve, športne copate in očala. Drugače so si Danielov kostum zamislili ustvarjalci predstave: gledalci so najpogosteje našli natikače, oranžno srajco in rdeče hlače, med pridevniki pa pisana oblačila, hipijevska, žive barve, neusklajena, ohlapna, sproščena, neformalna, preprosta, razvlečena oblačila.

Ker v besedilu ni konkretnih podatkov o zunanosti oseb, predvidevamo, da so v opisanih dveh primerih izjemno enotni odgovori posledica splošne družbeno-kulturne vednosti, iz katere izhajajo nekakšne vnaprejšnje predstave o ekshibicionistu oziroma borznem posredniku in psihiatru (podoba uglajenega newyorškega psihiatra je lahko recimo posledica številnih podobnih nastopajočih likov v ameriških televizijskih nanizankah). Hkrati pa smo s temi vprašanji nakazali, da je duševnost oseb v besedilu natančno zarisana, medtem ko ostaja njihova zunanost primer praznega mesta (Iser) oziroma vrzeli (Ubersfeld), ki jo v našem primeru bralci zapolnjujejo drugače kot odrski ustvarjalci in za njimi gledalci, pri čemer pa sta obe možnosti legitimni in nista v nasprotju z besedilom. Lastnosti, ki zadevajo čustveni odnos sprejemnikov do družbeno zaznamovane osebe (anketiranci so na petstopenjski lestvici obkrožali vrednosti med *odvraten* – *simpatičen* ter *moja čustva ob osebi so negativna* – *moja čustva ob osebi so pozitivna*), so pokazale visoke vrednosti in pozitivno naravnost sprejemnikov: ta je pri gledalcih še višja kot pri bralcih. Tako lahko tvegamo in za Jaussonom, Iserjem, Brechtom in drugimi ponovimo, da srečanje z literaturo in potemtakem tujo izkušnjo prispeva k širitvi bralčevega/gledalčevega spoznavnega horizonta in tako spreminja tudi bralca/gledalca ter njegove poglede na svet.

Sklep

Primerjava lastnih predstav, nastalih na podlagi branja besedila, z branjem režije in nastalo konkretno realizacijo odrskih ustvarjalcev je eden od temeljnih virov užitka. Če beremo dramo po ogledu uprizoritve, ta dimenzija odpade, saj odgovori anketirancev kažejo, da v tem primeru beremo dramo v skladu z videnim na odru. Zato se nagibamo k odločitvi za branje dramskih besedil pred ogledom uprizoritve. Seveda pa je pri tem treba upoštevati tudi sam namen oziroma cilje branja, zato je v določenih primerih smiselno tudi obratno zaporedje.

Študentje so v našem primeru poročali, da se jim je zdel vprašalnik koristen, saj jim je pomagal oblikovati vtise, zato so v predavalnici lažje in pogumneje sodelovali v diskusiji: pokazal jim je določene elemente, na ka-

tere niso bili pozorni oziroma so jih prezrli, in njihovo funkcijo, ob njem so opazovali avtonomnost in hkrati medsebojno prepletenost dramskega besedila in gledališke uprizoritve ter spoznavali tudi različne mehanizme, ki sodelujejo pri opomenjanju in recepciji dela. Največja prednost vprašalnika je, da se nanaša na analizo konkretnega dramskega besedila/uprizoritve in tako dopolnjuje znanje s predavanj o teoriji drame oziroma šolske obravnave teoretičnih pojmov, ki so ponavadi abstraktne, splošno povzemajoče različne teorije in metodološke prijeme, vezane na izolirane dramske prvine in konkretizirane z očitnimi primeri iz različnih besedil. Takšen vprašalnik in diskusija ob njem vključuje nadgradnjo bralnih in drugih strategij, ki so specifične za branje dramskih besedil, ter spoznavanje teoretičnega aparata za analizo drame. Vprašalniki spodbujajo verbalizacijo estetske izkušnje vsakega posameznika, saj ta pri sebi ponovno podoživi in premisli o predstavi oziroma besedilu ter na podlagi zapisanega lažje primerja svoje ugotovitve in zaznave z drugimi. Analiza drame s pomočjo vprašalnika ni nova metoda: Anne Ubersfeld, André Helbo pa tudi Patrice Pavis so izdelali različne vprašalnike, ki pa so splošni in niso osredotočeni na točno določeno dramo, hkrati pa se v večji meri nanašajo na analizo gledališke uprizoritve.⁷

Pričujoča raziskava ne ponuja dokončnih odgovorov, omogoča pa pogled v procese branja in razumevanja večje skupine bralcev in pokaže, kaj bralci opazijo ob prvem, spontanem branju nekega besedila in ogledu gledališke uprizoritve, kakšna so njihova doživetja ob branju, iz katere perspektive pristopajo k besedilu, na kakšen način vključujejo informacije besedila v svoje že obstoječe miselne sheme ipd. Rezultati kažejo na pestrost besedilnih svetov, ki nastanejo na podlagi branja istega besedila, in dokazujejo, da branje in razumevanje literarnih besedil ni odvisno samo od stopnje šolanja in književnega znanja, temveč tudi od subjektivnih lastnosti posameznega bralca. V odgovorih anketirancev se tako kažejo tudi individualna, subjektivna vrednostna merila vsakega posameznika, zato so odgovori pri vprašanjih odprtega tipa razpršeni. Tudi kadar več anketirancev navede podoben odgovor, zazna isti element ali opiše isti prizor, je njihova interpretacija lahko različna in je posledica subjektivnega doživljanja oziroma sestavljanja gledaliških znakov v samo njim lastno celoto.

Prav zato takšne raziskave vsakič znova preverjajo tudi uporabnost same metodologije. Raziskave različnih vrst občinstva s pomočjo vprašalnika sodijo med najbolj razširjene oblike, njihov temeljni problem pa je zagotoviti pravo razmerje med kvalitativnimi in kvantitativnimi tipi vprašanj. Pri kvalitativnih vprašanjih, pri katerih anketiranci pišejo odgovore samostojno, so namreč odgovori razpršeni, zato jih je težko razvrstiti in ovrednotiti, so pa jasen pokazatelj spontanega odziva. Pri zaprtih vpraša-

njih, pri katerih so odgovori dani vnaprej, je te lažje prešteti in statistično obdelati, a po drugi strani izgubimo določene informacije. Posamezni raziskovalci iščejo ravnotežje med obema možnostma gleda na predmet raziskovanja in cilje. Po drugi strani pa vidimo eno poglavitnih težav tudi v sami metodologiji raziskovanja, saj je težavno raziskovati branje, ne da bi pri tem s svojim načinom raziskovanja in izbranim instrumentarijem posegali v bralčev spontani bralni proces, mu z zastavljenimi vprašanji sugerirali razumevanje, pritegnili njegovo pozornost na določen element ali ga kako drugače usmerjali. Vse naštetu pa je tudi razlog, da je tovrstnih raziskav v slovenskem prostoru še vedno zelo malo.

OPOMBE

¹ Seznam takšnih hipotetičnih bralcev je obsežen, saj je vsak raziskovalec osnoval svoj model; o tem gl. uvodno študijo Andrewa Bennetta k zborniku *Readers & Reading* (Bennett 3).

² Seveda pa dramska besedila niso popolnoma izvzeta; tako je npr. N. Holland preučeval, na kakšen način Brecht preoblikuje različne fantazije v družbeno sprejemljive pomene, W. Iser je poskušal razložiti vrste in funkcijo smeha pri Beckettu, H. R. Jauss je razlagal mit Ifigenije pri Racinu in Goetheju, iz bralčeve/gledalčeve perspektive pa je napisan tudi njegov spis *Über den Grund des Vergnügens am komischen Helden*, v katerem poskuša tragično in komično razložiti kot nekaj relativnega, odvisnega od občinstva in njegovih subjektivnih zaznav.

³ Da so navedeni pojmi uporabni pri konkretnih analizah, dokazujejo različne študije. Marvin Carlson se na primer v poglavju »Theatre Audiences and the Reading of Performance«, ki je izšlo v knjigi *Theatre Semiotics: Signs of Life* (1990), opre na teoretična izhodišča W. Iserja, H. R. Jaussa, U. Eca, M. de Marinisa in S. Fisha in jih aplicira na štiri konkretne primere. Tako najprej ugotavlja vpliv žanrskih zakonitosti na razumevanje pri različnih tipih drame skozi zgodovino. Potem razpravlja o vlogi in razvoju gledališkega lista, predvsem o tem, kako ta s svojimi informacijami usmerja recepcijo. Sledi konkreten primer drame in vpliv oglaševanja: Carlson vzame za zgled dramo *Čakajoč na Godota* in prikaže, kako oglas predvidi modelnega gledalca oziroma ga zgreši. Zadnji primer pa kaže vpliv časopisne kritike, in sicer gre za oceno uprizoritve *Češnjevi vrti*. Na podlagi navedenih primerov Carlson ugotavlja, da se gledališke študije v glavnem ukvarjajo z odzivi in občutki gledalcev po koncu predstave, premalo poudarka pa je na tem, kar oblikuje gledalčev horizont pričakovanja, torej tisto, kar gledalci že prinesejo v gledališče: pričakovanja, domneve, strategije in drugo, kar bo kreativno sodelovalo s stimuli predstave.

⁴ Do podobnih sklepov pride tudi Una Chaudhuri v članku »The Spectator in Drama/ Drama in the Spectator« (1984), kjer navedeno trojico naslovnikov še dodatno časovno ločuje, tako da jo najprej postavlja v čas nastanka drame, nato pa ločuje še vsa kasnejša branja.

⁵ *Eksibicionist* je zgodba o Fredu Millerju, uspešnem borznem mešetarju, ki kaže čustva na družbeno nesprejemljiv način. Razkazovanje ga že tretjič pripelje v zapor, kjer se seznani s socialno delavko Dorothy Jackson, ki v njem ne vidi le spolnega iztirjenca, temveč ranljivega in nezaupljivega fanta, in med njima se postopoma splete čustvena vez. Njeno nasprotje je psihiatrinja Eva Stempowsky, zanjo je Miller pacient in izmeček, za katerega

je edina prava ozdravitev šok terapija. Igra, ki je postavljena v New York, v treh dejanjih in skupno štirindvajsetih prizorih prikaže pet oseb (poleg naštetih sta tu še paznik Jimmy in psihiater Daniel) in njihovih intimnih usod, pri čemer vsakdo doživi novo epizodo, a se vendar gledano v celoti nič ne zgodi. Tako je *Ekshibicionist* zgodba, ki poteka predvsem na ravni jezika, zgodba, ki temelji na poznavanju sodobnega diskurza in novodobnih ritualov komunikacije, ob katerih Jovanović izpostavlja nekaj problemskih težišč sodobnega človeka: osamljenost, krhkost, ranljivost, razmerje med poklicno uspešnostjo in zasebno izpraznjenostjo, iskanje družbeno sprejemljive samopodobe ipd.

⁶ Rezultati raziskave so z vsem pripadajočim znanstvenim aparatom (statistična obdelava podatkov, tabele, preglednice, priloge z odgovori anketirancev) objavljeni v avtoričini knjigi *Najdeni pomeni: empirične raziskave recepcije literarnega dela*, v nadaljevanju pa povzemamo ključne ugotovitve.

⁷ Med njimi je zagotovo najbolj znan Pavisov vprašalnik, ki ga je avtor izvajal s svojimi študenti in je usmerjen v semiolško analizo uprizoritve. Pavisov vprašalnik je najpogostejše citiran in ga najdemo v številnih knjigah, v slovenskem prevodu v Pavisovem *Gledališkem slovarju* (1997) ali v reviji *Maske* (1988–1989).

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Reading a Drama Text: An Empirical Case Study

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Reception aesthetics and reader-response theory are the two strands of literary criticism to have underlined the reader's active role in the reading process, forming various reader constructs. Moreover, the new field of research has prompted theatre theorists to take a keener interest in the processes of reading and understanding drama texts, as well as to pay attention – especially in the postmodern multimedia civilisation – to the audience's perceptions. The paper presents the results of an empirical case study examining the readers' contact with a selected drama text at several levels of response. Their responses are compared to the perceptions of spectators on attending the performance, and to the spectators' understanding of the production's reading.

Keywords: drama / reception theory / readers / theatre audience / empirical research

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Introduction

Reading ranks among the most complex human activities, as has been demonstrated by a number of studies brought to prominence in the 1970s, a decade which restored to the reader an active role in the generation of meaning. According to these studies, the reader can be described in three ways at least. The first, theoretical, approach presents the relation between reader and text through various models of hypothetical readers, including Wolfgang Iser's implicit reader, Umberto Eco's model reader, Stanley Fish's informed reader, Jonathan Culler's ideal reader, and others.¹ This research places the reader in a larger socio-cultural context, delving into the mechanisms of production and reception governing the reader's generation of meaning. In addition, the findings of psychoanalysis are employed to tackle the reader as an individual, from the perspective of both his/her work and his/her enjoyment of reading. A second possibility is to describe the reader from a historical perspective, involving an analysis of readers and their reading habits and tastes through history or a certain historical period. What is taken into account is social structure, cultural and psychological habits,

political and economic influences etc., as attested by archive sources. The third, experimental, approach is based on theoretical findings applied to the analysis of a particular audience. The material is usually gathered by means of questionnaires, interviews or measurements of the readers' biological functions, and analysed by the empirical method. It is this third approach, then, which foregrounds the concrete, everyday, lay reader, who may be described with a quantitative precision. Since the scholarly conclusions thus arrived at are not abstract, referring as they do to a specific audience (rather than to a reader who is the model of a sophisticated scholar or an ahistorical construct), Peter Dixon has introduced the term 'statistical reader' (Dixon et al. 10). An example of such empirical research, which examines the readers' contact with the text at several reader-response levels, will be presented in this paper, focusing on reading a drama text.

Reception aesthetics and reader-response theory are the two strands of literary criticism to have underlined the reader's active role in the reading process, forming various reader constructs. Their analyses have tended to focus on prose and lyric poetry, while the reader/spectator of a play has rarely been the object of their research.² For all their shortcomings and proneness to criticism, the two disciplines have exercised great influence, both through their new field of research (the third methodological paradigm) and through introducing new concepts, which have proved viable in drama theory as well and have been included in the reflections of emphatically theatre-oriented theorists. Concepts like concretisation, blank filling, horizon of expectations, interpretive communities, model reader, everyday fantasies, enjoyment occur in the works by theatre semioticians as well (including Patrice Pavis, Anne Ubersfeld, Marco de Marinis, Marvin Carlson and others).³

The major difference stems from the very object of research, since the literary communication of drama differs from that of prose or lyric texts: due to its double existential status, drama envisages several types of addressee. The reader thus reads the playwright's text, while the spectator watches a performance; the latter does include the text, but the text as read through the eyes of the director and actors, actualised according to the audience's expectations and habits. It follows that the drama recipient is a triple one, composed of readers, the director and actors (that is, the whole troupe), and spectators.⁴ Both the reader's and spectator's receptive capabilities are taken into account by the playwright in the very process of writing. According to Patrice Pavis ('Teze' 119), drama texts are simply traces of a certain performance practice; while reading, we should envision how their creation was shaped by the limitations of acting and staging. In the post-modern multimedia civilisation, on the other hand, the element of theatre

communication scrutinised by sundry disciplines has been the spectator.

Consequently, my aim was to illumine through research the contact between reader and drama text, as well as between spectator and performance, and to present the similarities and differences between text and performance as reflected at various levels of reader-/spectator-response. The essence of the research is thus not directed at analysing the text and performance, that is, at comparing and evaluating the two, since they are independent media with features of their own. The focus of interest is the recipients' response and the differences between their mental representations based on reading the drama text (that is, the differences between the readers' textual worlds), or on attending the performance and reading the performance text – the production of entire stage systems, which include the drama text: reading the performance text entails grasp of the production's reading of the text. This reading precedes the production itself, making the latter a stage realisation of the reading (Pavis, 'Od besedila' 152). The present study, then, addresses the question of how a text or performance acquires meaning for the recipient – which linguistic signs of the text are decoded by readers and which signs of the performance, linguistic and non-linguistic, are perceived by spectators. Moreover, the empirical study has tested the applicability of certain theoretical concepts.

Problem and Method

In keeping with the research aims, a questionnaire was prepared including quantitative and qualitative questions (YES/NO answers, a five-degree marking scale, arrangement of elements, multiple choice items, independent wording of answers to such questions as Explain, Describe, Enumerate, Evaluate, Substantiate). The questions referred to sundry levels of reader-/spectator-response, that is:

- perception of various drama elements as revealed through the text and/or performance: the protagonists (character, appearance, facial expression and gestures, costume, interpersonal relationships), discourse (perception of the linguistic peculiarities of drama discourse, idiolect and sociolect, manner of speaking, repetition ...), time and place (time and place of action, settings, *mise-en-scène*, materials and colours, objects and props, sounds, noises, music);
- understanding and interpretation (level of difficulty, less intelligible scenes, the basic idea, message of the play ...);
- evaluation and appreciation (general assessment of text/performance enjoyability, favourite scene, dramaturgically weak scene ...);

– comparison between text and performance (the extent to which the performance follows the text, differences between the mental representations formed through individual reading and through the given stage realisation ...).

The research consisted of two parts: the first group of interviewees read the text first and saw it performed later, while the second group saw the performance first, reading the text afterwards. This enabled a comparative study of the degree to which a preliminary reading had affected the perception of performance elements, and vice versa. The research involved 60 first-year students of the Slovene language with completed secondary education, aged 19–20 years, mostly female, and hailing from various parts of Slovenia, which ensured a homogenous sample in terms of age, education and interests. The material was *Ekshibicionist* (The Exhibitionist), a play by Dušan Jovanović featuring themes and ideas which were expected to interest the selected sample of interviewees;⁵ moreover, the play was available for both reading and watching at the time of the research. Directed by Jovanović, it was premiered in the 2001–2002 season at the theatre SNG Mala Drama Ljubljana and published the same year in the accompanying theatre booklet, with the book edition following in 2004.

Research Results⁶

Perception of the constituent parts of the play

To judge by the answers involving the protagonist, the linguistic features and the spatio-temporal dimensions of the play, the interviewees had mostly focused on the protagonist (characterisation, personality traits, facial expression and gestures, costume, complexity ...), as these answers were in the majority. The answers of those who had read the text in advance gave the impression of being more exhaustive, precise and reflective in the above categories, but the questions were not posed decisively enough to warrant an authoritative conclusion. They do, however, suggest that these interviewees were less preoccupied with the plot itself, which enabled them to focus more attentively on the performance elements listed above, with the exception of linguistic peculiarities, objects, props, other scenic elements, such as materials and colours, or music; the perception of these elements was generally weaker, and not even the familiarity with the plot ensured by a preliminary reading channelled attention to these performance segments. The most striking features were the vulgar expressions used by Jimmy, a prison guard, and the frequent use of technical terms by Eva, a psychiatrist.

Most other linguistic traits were noticed by fewer than half of the readers and a third of the spectators; the results for the other characters were lower still, while one fourth of the interviewees either left a blank or replied that they did not know the answer, could not remember it, or had not paid attention to the linguistic features. Therefore the readers/spectators had trouble identifying the functions of these elements and their correlation within the performance: such questions were repeatedly answered with *I don't know*, or not at all. As for channelling the spectator's attention, our case confirms both basic premises cited in Marco de Marinis' study 'Dramaturgija gledalca' (Dramaturgy of the Spectator) (189–204), one of the rare papers addressing an issue so fundamental as the question of how the varied and scattered elements are pieced together by the spectator into a harmonious and meaningful performance – that is, the issue of perception. Since theatre art has the greatest claim on the recipient's sensory abilities, the spectator is forced to discard, or even actively annul, some of the numerous stimuli to which he is exposed simultaneously and successively. As noted by de Marinis, the spectator thus employs, automatically and unconsciously, two models – attentive focusing and selective attention – which prompts de Marinis' fundamental question: What draws the spectator's attention to one thing and away from another? We may begin with an example of attentive focusing and selective attention: the item of Daniel Parker's costume cited by more than half of the spectators was his flip-flops, which had attracted attention by Daniel putting them on and taking them off, carrying them around, etc. At the same time, the flip-flops diverted attention from other elements of his costume, such as his cap, mentioned by a single spectator although worn by Daniel throughout the performance. De Marinis' second idea is that the performance should begin by surprising the spectator, arousing his interest and wonder, if it is to secure his attention. This was borne out at several levels. To give two instances: the list of objects remembered by the spectators was headed by the unusual, surprising and therefore fascinating ones (e.g., the object with pins, the urinal, the lamppost, the animal); the same applies to the scenes which proved memorable, i.e., the scenes commanding attention by being shocking, funny, emotionally charged or enacted with exceptional persuasion.

Understanding and interpretation

By their own assessment, the interviewees had no difficulties understanding either the overall text or performance. Among the scenes experienced as less intelligible, more than half of the readers listed the end of

Scene 23, where two parallel conversations have to be followed simultaneously, while a few were perplexed by Dorothy's long monologues. As for the performance, the major snag turned out to be the fast pace of the action, which caused the spectators to overlook certain information, for example about Fred's childhood and Eva's past – that is, the parts with an epic dimension. After the readers had seen the performance and the spectators had read the text, both claimed to understand the overall play better and to find the unclear particulars clearer, which certainly suggests that the holistic understanding of a play requires both reading the text and seeing its performance – if possible, that is.

Neither readers nor spectators had trouble identifying the message of the play. True, some of the answers were very simple or even simplistic, but it was not the 'correctness' of the interpretation that was at issue here. Most readers approached the text from the perspective of one of the characters and his or her problems, thus perceiving the message in terms of the recognition that everyone has problems, regardless of their social status or education: the only difference is that some shut their eyes to trouble rather than admit it to themselves, presenting a perfect front while inwardly ravaged by conflicts. The spectators supplemented this perspective with the wider meaning of the play, its fundamental message, which points to the loneliness and alienation of the modern world. Although the text is semantically open, admitting various emphases of meaning, the answers of the selected sample mostly remained within the two semantic fields described above.

Evaluation and appreciation

Both text and performance rated very highly on the enjoyability scale (on a five-degree scale, the performance was awarded a grade of 4.67 and the play 3.97). The spectators praised particularly the cast, the comic portrayal of serious problems and the topical theme, that is, the reality of contemporary society. To these, the readers added the brilliant dialogues, composition and – in some cases – the use of varied language registers. The passages most often labelled as tedious were Dorothy's monologues at the beginning of the play, as well as some of the conversations between Dorothy and Eva. Furthermore, a theatre performance admits more types of comedy than one, and the comic quality accordingly ranked more highly with the spectators than with the readers (the performance was awarded 3.83, the text 2.87). While surprised by the frequent oaths and vulgarisms, the interviewees found them meaningful and effective in the context of the text/performance.

Comparison between the readers' textual worlds and the theatre realisation

The comparison between the drama text and its performance is based here on the similarities and differences between the text and its staging as perceived and interpreted by the recipients. What is assessed, then, is primarily the correspondence between the text and the verbal component of the performance, as well as between the textual worlds formed by the readers and by the authors of the performance. Except for a handful of line omissions or sentence additions, the performance strictly followed the text without interfering. However, the representations formed by the interviewees on the basis of reading often differed from the theatre realisation. The readers experienced the play as problem-oriented and serious, while the performance took a lighter and more comical perspective. Moreover, the settings were envisaged differently: the readers had imagined a prison with bars, while the scene on the stage was in fact minimalistic, with the rapidly shifting settings usually marked only with a representative object. The interviewees' answers suggested that the text paid more attention to Dorothy, whereas the performance focused on the eponymous protagonist. In fact, it was at the cast-of-characters level that the discrepancies between the readers' and artists' mental representations occurred most frequently. We compared in detail the envisioned character traits of Fred Miller and the costume of Daniel Parker.

It transpired that the image of the eponymous protagonist evoked by the text was surprisingly close to the one evoked by the production: among the semantic pairs provided on a five-degree scale, the following characteristics were marked by both groups: Fred is an intelligent, inhibited, lonely, emotionally complex, serious, vulnerable, professionally successful young man of neat appearance, non-violent and moderately attractive. Differences crop up, however, when it comes to his appearance. The spectators, associating the character's physical appearance with the actor's, saw Fred as short and fair-haired, while the readers saw him as tall and dark. This uniformity of reader-response is surprising, for the text gives no clue as to the characters' appearance. The second example involves a character's costume, concentrating on the character of psychiatrist Daniel Parker, the only one who wears an unchanging set of clothes throughout the performance. On the basis of reading, Daniel was envisaged as wearing elegant, expensive, refined clothing (examples of answers include: an impeccable suit of the latest fashion, formal trousers and a white shirt, an elegant dark-coloured suit with a loud tie, a stern, formal appearance, an expensive brand name suit, brand name shoes such as Hugo Boss, black

lacquered shoes, fashionable glasses, etc.). Again, the uniformity of the reply is striking: it was given by as many as 87 per cent of the interviewees, while only 13 per cent imagined Daniel wearing everyday clothes, that is, jeans or other casual trousers and a shirt or sweater, compounded by mismatched colours, tennis shoes and glasses. A different costume, however, was envisioned by the authors of the performance: the items most frequently listed by the spectators were flip-flops, an orange shirt and red trousers, while the most frequent adjectives to describe his clothing were motley, hippie, bright, mismatched, loose, casual, informal, simple, baggy.

Since the text gives no specific clue as to the characters' appearance, the strikingly uniform answers in these two cases presumably stem from a general socio-cultural knowledge, which generates in advance our mental representations of an exhibitionist-cum-stockbroker and a psychiatrist (the image of an urbane New York psychiatrist, for example, may result from the many similar characters featured in American TV series). At the same time, these answers suggest that the psyche of the characters in the text is clearly delineated, while their appearance remains a blank (Iser) or gap (Ubersfeld). In our case, the latter is filled in differently by the readers and by the theatre artists (with the spectators in their wake), but both options are legitimate and in no contradiction with the text. The recipients' emotional attitudes to a socially stigmatised character (the interviewees marked on a five-degree scale the values ranging from *odious* to *likeable*, from *my feelings about this character are negative* to *my feelings about this character are positive*) yielded high values, revealing a positive attitude on the recipient's part, the spectator's even more so than the reader's. Thus we may venture to repeat after Jauss, Iser, Brecht and others that an encounter with literature, that is, with an alien experience, helps to broaden the reader's/spectator's cognitive horizon, thus affecting both the reader/spectator and his views of the world.

Conclusion

Comparing our own mental representations, formed through reading a text, with the production's reading and the resulting realisation by the theatre artists is a major source of enjoyment. Reading the play after viewing the performance precludes this dimension because, to judge by the interviewees' answers, the reading conforms to what has been seen on the stage. Therefore it seems advisable to read a play before seeing it performed. Still, depending on the aim of the reading, the reverse sequence may make sense in some cases as well.

In our case the students reported finding the questionnaire useful: as a means of forming their impressions into shape, it enabled them to participate more easily and confidently in the classroom discussion; it alerted them to some of the previously neglected elements and to their functions; it helped them observe the autonomous yet interwoven relationship between text and performance, and introduced them to the mechanisms guiding the audience's reception as well as attribution of meaning. The greatest advantage of the questionnaire is its focus on one particular text/performance, which complements the drama theory lectures, that is, the classroom introduction to theoretical concepts: these tend to be sweeping, abstract summaries of various theories and methodological approaches, limited to isolated dramatic elements and illustrated with straightforward examples from diverse texts. This type of questionnaire and the accompanying discussion refines the strategies specific to reading drama texts, as well as introduces the theoretical apparatus of drama analysis. Such questionnaires encourage the verbalisation of individual aesthetic experience: the individual mentally re-enacts and considers the performance or text, making notes which will assist him in comparing his own conclusions and observations with others'. To be sure, drama analysis with the aid of a questionnaire is no novelty: various questionnaires have been developed by Anne Ubersfeld, André Helbo and Patrice Pavis, but those are general rather than focused on a single play, and more attentive to analysing the performance itself.⁷

Our case study provides no final answers, but it does allow an insight into the reading and understanding processes of a larger group of readers, revealing what the readers notice on spontaneously reading a text or attending a theatre performance for the first time; what they experience during the reading; from what perspective they approach the text; how they integrate the text information into their existing mental schemes, etc. The results show the diversity of the textual worlds based on reading the same text, proving that the reading and understanding of literary texts depends not only on the reader's level of education and literary knowledge, but also on his or her subjective qualities. The interviewees' answers thus reveal their individual, subjective value standards, which result in heterogeneous answers to open-ended questions. Even when several interviewees give a similar answer, notice the same element, or describe the same scene, their interpretations may differ because they spring from a subjective experience, from piecing the theatre signs together into an idiosyncratic whole.

That is why such case studies at the same time test the viability of the methodology itself. Studying various kinds of audience with the aid of questionnaires ranks among the most widespread forms, but its key prob-

lem is ensuring the right proportion between qualitative and quantitative question types. The qualitative types, to be answered in the interviewees' own words, elicit heterogeneous answers, which are difficult to categorise and evaluate yet clearly indicate a spontaneous response. The answers to closed-type questions, on the other hand, are suggested in advance and thus easier to count and process statistically, but they entail the loss of certain aspects of information. Individual researchers seek a balance between the two possibilities, depending on the subject and goals of their research. Moreover, a crucial problem is the research methodology itself: it is difficult to explore reading without interfering, through our research methods and instruments, with the readers' spontaneous reading processes – without suggesting by our questions how the text should be understood, or drawing attention to a certain element, or guiding them in some other way. All these drawbacks result in the scarcity of such studies in Slovenia.

NOTES

¹ The list of such hypothetical readers is comprehensive, with each researcher having designed his or her own model; see Andrew Bennett's introduction to the essay collection *Readers & Reading* (Bennett 3).

² o be sure, drama texts have not been completely excluded: N. Holland, for example, examines how Brecht transforms fantasies into socially accepted meanings, W. Iser attempts to explain the types of laughter and its function in Beckett, and H. R. Jauss explains the Iphigenia myth as used by Racine and Goethe; the reader's/spectator's viewpoint is also the perspective of Jauss' *Über den Grund des Vergnügens am komischen Helden*, which seeks to explain the tragic and the comic as relative, depending on the audience and their subjective perceptions.

³ The applicability of the above terms to concrete analyses has been proved by a number of studies. Marvin Carlson's chapter on 'Theatre Audiences and the Reading of Performance', published in his book *Theatre Semiotics: Signs of Life* (1990), starts from the theoretical premises of W. Iser, H. R. Jauss, U. Eco, M. de Marinis and S. Fish, applying them to four examples. Having assessed the influence of genre on understanding various drama types throughout history, Carlson moves on to the role and development of the theatre booklet, particularly to the way in which the information provided guides the audience's reception. On the example of a specific play, *Waiting for Godot*, Carlson addresses the impact of advertising, demonstrating how an ad may either anticipate or miss the model spectator. The last example illustrates the influence exerted by newspaper reviews, in this case by the review of a *Cherry Orchard* performance. Based on these examples, Carlson observes that theatre studies mainly deal with the audience's reactions and feelings after the performance, while paying too little attention to the factors shaping their horizons of expectations, that is, to what the audience itself brings to the theatre: expectations, assumptions, strategies and anything else that will creatively cooperate with the stimuli of the performance.

⁴ Similar conclusions are drawn in Una Chaudhuri's article 'The Spectator in Drama/Drama in the Spectator' (1984), which makes an additional temporal distinction between the three recipients, first setting them in the time of the play's creation, and then distinguishing further between all subsequent readings.

⁵ *Ekshibicionist* is the story of Fred Miller, a successful stockbroker who shows his emotions in a socially unacceptable way. This is the third time that exhibitionism has landed him in jail, where he meets Dorothy Jackson, a social worker who sees him not as a mere sexual pervert but as a vulnerable and mistrustful young man, and they gradually develop an emotional tie. Her opposite is the psychiatrist Eva Stempowsky: she considers Miller a patient and a scum, who can only be healed through shock therapy. In a total of three acts and twenty-four scenes, the play, set in New York, presents five characters (the above three plus Jimmy, a prison guard, and another psychiatrist, Daniel) and their intimate destinies, with each of them going through a new episode although, generally speaking, nothing happens. It is thus a story unfolding mainly at the level of language, a story based on familiarity with contemporary discourse and the modern rituals of communication, which serve Jovanović as a foil for the modern man's central problems: loneliness, fragility, vulnerability, relation between professional success and private hollowness, search of a socially acceptable self-image, etc.

⁶ The research results, accompanied by the full scholarly apparatus (statistical data processing, tables, charts, appendixes including the interviewees' responses), have been published in my monograph *Najdeni pomeni: empirične raziskave recepcije literarnega dela* (Found Meanings: Empirical Research into the Reception of a Work of Literature), while the present article only summarises the key findings.

⁷ The best known must be the Pavis questionnaire, practised by its author with his students and directed at a semiological analysis of the performance. Most often cited, the Pavis questionnaire has been included in a number of books; its Slovene translation is found in Pavis' *Gledališki slovar* (Dictionary of the Theatre) (1997) or the *Maska* (Mask) magazine (1988–1989).

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