NOTAS


"Further experiments in phonetic symbolism", *Journal of Psychology*, 45 (1933), pp. 53-75.


*et al., op. cit.*

*et al., op. cit.*

*a nuestra puede verse en Carlos Feal Deibe, La poesía* (Madrid: Gredos, 1965), pp. 39-44.


*a, "Phonemic symbolism and phonological style, ar"*, en B. Kachru and H. F. W. Stahlke, *Current istics* (Edmonton: Linguistic Research, 1972), 11 in *measurement of meaning* (Urbana: University of 57.)


PARADIGMATIC OVERLAPPING IN *TRES TRISTES TIGRES*

John M. Lipski

The modern Latin American novel is a novel of language. Placing matters in a wider perspective, Carlos Fuentes1 remarks that 'hoy, de Witold Gombrowicz a J. M. Le Clézio, de Italo Calvino a Susan Sontag, de William Burroughs a Maurice Roche, la novela es mito, lenguaje y estructura'. Fuentes continues to elaborate on the linguistic nature of the contemporary Latin American narrative (p. 32): 'nuestra literatura es verdaderamente revolucionaria en cuanto le niega al orden establecido el léxico que esté quisiera y le opone al lenguaje de la alarma, la renovación, el desorden y el humor. El lenguaje, en sumo, de la ambigüedad: de la pluralidad de significados, de la constelación de alusiones: de la apertura'. Similarly, Ariel Dorfman2 notes that 'la novela naturalista anterior se fijaba en el contenido más que en la forma. O más bien, encontraba una forma que correspondía a lo factualmente observable en la realidad. Dejaba que las leyes científicas crearan las formas narrativas ... se violentaba al lector al documentarle una realidad que él ignoraba o simulaba ignorar, instándole a la acción —generalmente legislativa— para terminar con ese estado de cosas. Pero ni cambió esencialmente el lector por esta revelación de las musas ni cambió la estructura del mundo americano'. Turning then to the modern Latin American narrative, Dorfman adds (pp. 36-7): 'La novela [actual] misma, el acto estético, es una protesta contra un mundo que trata de negar esa violencia, esperando tal vez que en el bombardeo de bofetadas lingüísticas, alguien se despertará para hacerse preguntas fundamentales, para cuestionar la realidad misma y convertirse en un ser humano cabal'.

Of all the modern novels placing great emphasis on language and form of discourse, perhaps none does so more strikingly than *Tres Tristes Tigres*, by Guillermo Cabrera Infante. From the author's advertisement that the book 'esta escrito en cubano', to the wildly oscillating series of 'Bustrofenomemos' and other linguistic gyrations, Cabrera has created a gigantic word game, a sort of verbal onanism whose parallel in Latin American literature is not often encountered: for sheer order of magnitude, only such titles as *José Trigo, Rayuela*, and more recently perhaps *Abbadón el Exterminador* suggest themselves. The author himself characterizes the writing of his novel as follows:3 '... mi libro procedía por destrucciones que intentaban, algunas veces, llegar a ser construcciones, que la recreación del lenguaje
cotidiano era alcanzada por alteraciones violentas, verdaderas revoluciones de la frase, de la oración y aun del corazón de ese lenguaje que es la palabra’. Cabrera Infante’s linguistic creations, representing the most salient aspect of the novel, have been the subject of much critical commentary, as well as forming the basis for most interviews with the author himself, and by now the various sources of the verbal texture of Tres Tristes Tigres are well known to students of the nueva narrativa.

Perhaps as a result of the constant verbal barrage to which the reader of TTT is subjected by the relentless Cabrera Infante, one general critical appraisal has been that this is a novel without ‘structure’, whatever this latter word is supposed to mean. Dorfman (op. cit., pp. 35-6) notes that Cortázar, Vargas Llosa, del Paso, Fuentes, Cabrera Infante, Marechal, etc., ‘se han dedicado a destruir los esquemas tradicionales del tiempo, del espacio y del lenguaje, fragmentando la personalidad, experimentando con modos narrativos peculiares y ángulos novedosos, buscando un nuevo lenguaje para una nueva realidad. Es la violencia contra las formas establecidas, los modos de ver tradicionales, la gran violación de las reglas del juego social-literario’. Raymond D. Souza remarks that ‘Tres Tristes Tigres’ places its greatest emphasis on language and largely ignores structure, for it is not even worth attacking at this point’. Somewhat less categorical is the statement by Zunilda Gertel that ‘in these novels [i.e. De Donde Son los Cantantes, by Sarduy, El Obsceno Pájaro de la Noche, by Donoso, and TTT] a new language is created in the space of the text itself: fragmentation is used as an expressive unit of the irrational, implying an ever-changing structure’.

While critical opinions concerning the ‘structureless’ aspect of TTT abound, none of the aforementioned critics addresses the question of precisely what constitutes ‘structure’ in a novel, nor what it means for a novel to be without such structure. Presumably, one common equation is that of structure with narrative action or plot; in this sense, TTT does not have a single unified plot, but rather is episodic in nature, as well as containing interspersed extra-narrative material. On the other hand, several critics have noted, on deeper levels of textual signification, a coherent basis for the totality of the novel, thus at least tentatively giving the lie to claims of a total lack of structure.

Perhaps structure is to be equated with the interaction of characters and events in the novel. Narrative plot structure has been defined, for example, by William Hendricks as the set of configurations characterizing the inter-personal relations in the narrative, together with the necessary transitions between ‘events’. In this sense, TTT may be said to possess at least micro-structure, although not necessarily one overall structure, since there are a number of independent events which never interact during the novel. Cabrera Infante never interweave these events in such a way as to unify the protagonists of the novel, even if they do not explicitly appear on the textual surface, making the ‘structure’, in some sense of the word.

What may be at the root of the claim that TTT is a ‘structureless’ novel, a trait shared, as noted by Dorfman, by other novels. Cabrera Infante is not clearly writing abstracionismo in particular, but rather is presenting a set of groupings, using the linguistic medium as a means to express their fundamental natures.

Other observers have indeed discovered in the linguistic component, and at deeper levels of meaning, ‘estruturalismo’ or ‘structure’. Monégal warns, in the reading of the novel: ‘evitar leerla como un caos sin sentido, un conjunto de conexos y que sólo tienen como elemento común Habana poco antes del triunfo de la Revolución’, that ‘contra lo que queda a primera vista parece que tiene su estructura (sería mejor llamarla disociada, es decir, ejecutada de acuerdo con un riguroso plan’.

In observations, it is possible to trace the development of characters, the significance of the interposed narrative elements, and the overall meaning of the juxtapositions. The fact that TTT reflects, for the most part, to certain levels of reading, the novel does indeed have a structure, although not of the sort commonly understood, despite the fact that precedents for TTT are to be found in the Satyricon.

The present note shares with the latter that TTT is indeed a tightly structured novel, organization devoted to the execution of the variety of elements whose contributions must be exerted in order to achieve the coherence of the text. In the present case, however, the structural aspects of the text are not toward the thematic significance but rather toward the thematic devices which characterize the novel. The novel’s overall structure will be sought at a somewhat deeper level, utilizing general semiotic concepts. The results of this analysis will not necessarily be derived from such a re-examination of the text.
structure, since there are a number of independent character-sets which never interact during the novel. Cabrera Infante himself\(^7\) states that 'en este libro, la narración como se entiende tradicionalmente no era esencial, ni siquiera era importante'. On the other hand, the threads which unite the protagonists of the novel, even at those points where they do not explicitly appear on the textual surface, must qualify for the term 'structure', in some sense of the word.

What may be at the root of the claim that \(TTT\) is a novel without structure is a failure to find a unified meaning or purpose to the novel, a trait shared, as noted by Dorfman, by many contemporary novels. Cabrera Infante is not clearly writing about anything or anyone in particular, but rather is presenting a set of characters in constant interaction, using the linguistic medium as a means of expression of their fundamental natures.

Other observers have indeed discovered structure in \(TTT\), both in the linguistic component, and at deeper levels. Emir Rodríguez Monegal warns, in the reading of the novel:\(^8\) 'Ante todo hay que evitar leerlo como un caos sin sentido, un conjunto de narraciones inconexas y que sólo tienen como elemento común el ocurrir en La Habana poco antes del triunfo de la Revolución'. Julio Matas\(^9\) remarks that 'contra lo que queda a primera vista parecer, Tres Trestes Tigres tiene su estructura (sería mejor llamarla disposición u organización) ejecutada de acuerdo con un riguroso plan'. In accordance with such observations, it is possible to trace the development of the various characters, the significance of the interposed elements in the novel, and the overall meaning of the juxtapositions. The recent bibliography dealing with \(TTT\) reflects, for the most part, the view that, at least at certain levels of reading, the novel does indeed contain structured elements, although not of the sort commonly found in narrative discourse, despite the fact that precedents for the format adopted by Cabrera Infante go back at least as far as Tristram Shandy, if not to the Satyricon.

The present note shares with the latter observations the view that \(TTT\) is indeed a tightly structured novel, one in which great attention was devoted to the execution of the various interpolations, and in which equal attention must be exerted in order to fully grasp the significance of the text. In the present case, however, the focus will be directed neither toward the thematic significance nor toward the purely linguistic devices which characterize the novel. Instead, significant discourse structures will be sought at a somewhat more abstract level, utilizing general semiotic concepts. The results which may tentatively be derived from such a re-examination in no way refute earlier claims.
as to the existence of meaningful patterns and structures in **777**, but rather serve to enhance such claims, inasmuch as they are valid, by demonstrating that the novel is structured along additional dimensions.

The crucial notions with regard to the present endeavor concern the terms **syntagm** and **paradigm**. These terms, as used in modern linguistics and semiotics, date from the work of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, and relate, at any given point, the total system of possible choices with the choice or realization that is actually made. Put in most general terms, the **paradigm** is the **system**, the set of all possible realizations of a given series of units, which may be phonemes, words, sentences, narrative units, or any of a variety of more abstract entities. The paradigm is by definition highly structured, for it constitutes the source from which the various choices which go into the makeup of a text are obtained. The linguist Roman Jakobson**1** has characterized the paradigm as being defined by relations of **similarity**, where the criteria of sharing similar features serves to ensure common membership.

The **syntagm**, in contrast, is the set of concrete realizations of elements of the paradigmatic structure, i.e. the actually occurring choices. In the case of a verbal paradigm, for example, the syntagmatic level would be represented by the actually occurring verbal forms. Corresponding to the paradigm of phonemic oppositions, the syntagm is the set of phonetic realizations or allomorphs. To the set of paradigmatic narrative units defining possible narratives, corresponds the syntagmatic level of the actually realized narrative structure. Jakobson has defined the syntagm as exhibiting a relation of **contiguity**, whereby elements are included in common membership by virtue of their juxtaposition in the chain of realized verbal events.

The paradigm and the syntagm are normally opposed to each other as underlying system to concrete realizations, an opposition resulting from the definitions themselves. In certain instances, however, the generally rigid separation of the syntagm and paradigmatic axes becomes ruptured, fluid as it were, allowing one of the axes to penetrate or ‘spill over’ onto the other. Jakobson has utilized the notion of interpenetration of the semiotic axes to characterize various manifestations of aphasia, or speech disorders resulting from brain damage. More significantly for the case at hand, the French critic Roland Barthes**1** in a description of the paradigm/paradigm dichotomy, states: ‘the mode of articulation of the two axes is sometimes “perverted”, when for instance a paradigm is extended into a syntagm. There is then a defiance of the usual distribution syntagm/system and it is probably around this transgression that a great number of creative phenomena are situated, as if perhaps there were here a junction between the paradigm and the deflections from the semantic system. The obvious extension of a paradigm on to another paradigm, or (or others) remaining potential’. Instances of the kind the paradigm occur in sound change, in case of interference, and in various forms of analogy. Interpenetration, the overlapping of the paradigms occasionally occurs in literature, generally with resulting effects. For example, the French novelist Raymond Queneau’s *Dans le Métro*, has his characters conjugate verbs and orthographic correspondences, all as part of the same. Various examples of the Latin American novelist Jorge Luis Borges’ *Nouveau roman* exhibit instances of the syntagm onto the paradigm in terms of general narrative full extent of the literary manifestations of the paradigms is charted.

Let us turn now to specific details of **777**, and enumerate the various instances in which the paradigms have been allowed to encroach upon the structure of the narrative, and the results obtained thereat. The very beginning of the novel, containing the immortal nightclub announcer, we note the constant switch between Spanish and English, generally in the form of translation.

**Showtime!** Señoras y señores. **Ladies and gentlemen**. **Muy** buenas noches, damas y caballeros. **Good evening, ladies and gentlemen**. **Tropicana**, el cabaret MAS fabuloso donde todos ustedes. **Tropicana**, the most fabulous night-club in the **WORLD** ... presenta ... presents ... su nuevo espectáculo ... its new show ... en el que artistas continentales ... where performers of continental ... se encargarán de transportarlos a ustedes ... do maravilloso ... They will take you all to the **wonderful world** ... y extraordinario ... of the **Tropics**.

The MC’s monologue is not really, as termed by the jerga en la que el español se mezcla con el inglés, a structured passage in which English segments
of meaningful patterns and structures in TTT, but once such claims, inasmuch as they are valid, by the novel is structured along additional dimensions. motions with regard to the present endeavor concern paradigm. These terms, as used in modern linics, date from the work of the Swiss linguist,10 and relate, at any given point, the total systems with the choice or realization that is actually general terms, the paradigm is the system, the set of a given series of units, which may be sentences, narrative units, or any of a variety of more paradigm is by definition highly structured, for it from which the various choices which go into the e obtained. The linguist Roman Jakobson11 has paradigm as being defined by relations of similarity, sharing similar features serves to ensure common

in contrast, is the set of concrete realizations of paradigmatic structure, i.e. the actually occurring formal paradigm, for example, the syntagmatic ent produced by the actually occurring verbal forms. Correspondence of phonemic oppositions, the syntagm is realizations or allophones. To the set of paradigms-defining possible narratives, corresponds the syntagm-actually realized narrative structure. Jakobson has as exhibiting a relation of contiguity, whereby in common membership by virtue of their juxtaposition of realized verbal events.

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teach disorders resulting from brain damage. More use at hand, the French critic Roland Barthes12 syntagm/paradigm dichotomy, states: 'the mode wo axes is sometimes "inverted", when for intended into a syntagm. There is then a defiance in syntagm/system and it is probably around this set number of creative phenomena are situated,

as if perhaps there were here a junction between the field of aesthetics and the defections from the semantic system. The chief transgression is obviously the extension of a paradigm on to the syntagmatic plane, since normally only one term of the operation is actualized, the other (or others) remaining potential. Instances of the syntagm influencing the paradigm occur in sound change.13 in cases of bilingual structural interference,14 and in various forms of analogical leveling. The opposite interpenetration, the overlapping of the paradigm onto the syntagm, occasionally occurs in literature, generally with strange and striking results. For example, the French novelist Raymond Queneau, in Zazie dans le Métro, has his characters conjugate verbs and discuss phonetic/orthographic correspondences, all as part of the narrative dialogue.15 Various examples of the Latin American nueva narrativa and the French nouveau roman exhibit instances of the overlapping of the syntagm onto the paradigm in terms of general narrative events,16 and the full extent of the literary manifestations of this device has yet to be charted.

Let us turn now to specific details of TTT,17 in an attempt to enumerate the various instances in which the paradigm or set of possible variants has been allowed to encroach upon the syntagmatic structure of the narrative, and the results obtained thereby. Starting with the very beginning of the novel, containing the humorous jargon of the nightclub announcer, we note the constant switching between Spanish and English, generally in the form of translations. The novel begins:

Showtime! Señoras y señores. Ladies and gentlemen. Muy buenas noches, damas y caballeros, tengan todos ustedes. Good evening, ladies & gentlemen. Tropicana, el cabaret MAS fabuloso del mundo ... "Tropicana", the most fabulous night-club in the WORLD ... presenta ... presents ... su nuevo espectáculo ... its new show ... en el que artistas de fama continental ... where performers of continental fame ... se encargarán de transportarlos a ustedes al mundo maravilloso ... They will take you all to the wonderful world ... y extraordinario ... of supernatural beauty ... y hermoso ... of the Tropics.

The MC's monologue is not really, as termed by Luis Gregorich,18 'una jerga en la que el español se mezcla con el inglés', but rather a tightly structured passage in which English segments are paradigmatically
alternated with Spanish phrases. What makes the passage stylistically unusual, from the standpoint of the structures under discussion, is the constant alternation between Spanish and English, instead of the more usual paradigmatic choice to present the material in one language or the other. Thus, right from the outset, the tenor of the novel is established, and the stage is set for more comprehensive and far-reaching incursions of the paradigmatic structures onto the syntagmatic flow.

Following the prólogo, comes the section Los Debutantes, in which the various personages who are to recur throughout the novel make their first appearance. Here the author, instead of providing a unified introduction to his cast of characters, has opted for the discontinuous and heterogeneous presentations to be found in the individual 'chapters' of this section.

The following divisions, Seseribó and La Casa de los Espejos, contain numerous minor instances where the syntagmatic stream explicitly incorporates aspects of the paradigmatic range of possibilities. For example, on p. 120 we have the sequence 'Juan Blanco-Johannes Witte, Giovanni Blanco-Juan Branco'. Later (p. 146), Arsenio plays with the variants un bromista consumado < un bromado consumista. More significantly, in the section Ella Cantaba Boleros beginning on p. 160, Códec relates the details of the dream he had during the night he spent with La Estrella, involving a series of metamorphoses; included are passages such as the following: 'venía un pez fosforecente que era largo y se parecía a Cuba y después se achicaba y era Irene y se volvía prieto, negruzco, negro y era Magalena y cuando lo cogí, que picó, comenzó a crecer y a crecer y se hizo tan grande como el bote y se quedó boyado, bocariba, jadeando ...'. The metamorphoses of this nature frequently found in dreams and hallucinatory states provide a naturally occurring example of paradigmatic overlapping, as though the mind could not decide on the representation it prefers, but chose instead to run through a repertoire of possibilities. Cabrera Infante's use of the dream sequence adds to the aura of unreality and parody which surrounds the night spent with the massive Estrella, and enhances the overall impact of the novel by providing yet another instance of the shaky dividing line between hypothetical structures and the real world.

The following section, Los Visitantes, provides a paramount example of paradigmatic overlapping in the "Historia de un Bastón", reputedly a translation of a narrated adventure by an American tourist, Mr. Campbell, followed by his wife's 'corrected' version of the same events (much later we learn that Campbell is not even married!). Both versions are written in halting Spanish, with a strong underpinning of English syntax and phraseology. It turns out that these are translations by Rine Leal, friend of the protagonists. Following come two corrected Spanish versions, which are of Silvestre, attempting to rectify his friend's translation (op. cit., p. 140) notes, regarding this series of translations: 'El resultado es inesperadamente un abandono sobre la multiplicidad de sentidos que puede llegar a una obra, en la que, como en la física cuantica, hay una exactitud referencial, y donde la fidelidad a la traducción es inversamente proporcional de otros niveles, y viceversa'.

The inclusion of this series of variants, a version of the story, shows once again Cabrera Infante's view of the universe in general, and of linguistic structure in particular. By allowing the reader to view a panorama of possible finales of the finished product of the authorial choice of text, the work as a continual process of creation, of creative gameplay, is never terminated. Cabrera Infante himself has described the correction no termina para mí ni siquiera con este libro. No comprendo a esos escritores que hablan del libro está terminado, queriendo decir escrito, preso, según los casos, entonces deciden olvidar que el libro siempre es factible de corrección y de mejora, una corrección no es un estado, sino una meta'.

The same page contains a number of references to Bustrófedor and Rine, thus establishing a pattern which characterizes the entire section: 'Los únicos nombres que llamaba muchas veces Bustrófoton o Bustrófodo, Bustrófóne, Bustrófodo, Bustrófones, Bustrófador, y Florentino Cazali...'.

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by Rine Leal, friend of the protagonists. Following these two passages come two corrected Spanish versions, which are found to be the work of Silvestre, attempting to rectify his friend’s transgressions. Gregorich (op. cit., p. 140) notes, regarding this series of translations and counter-translations: ‘El resultado es inesperadamente una suerte de testimonio sobre la multiplicidad de sentidos que puede llegar a adquirir la traducción de una obra, en la que, como en la física cuántica, nunca es posible una exactitud referencial, y donde la fidelidad a determinados niveles lingüísticos o significativos es inversamente proporcional a la precisión de otros niveles, y viceversa’.

The inclusion of this series of variants, instead of simply one version of the story, shows once again Cabrera Infante’s multiple view of the universe in general, and of linguistic structures in particular, by reflecting his refusal to commit himself to a single definitive statement. By allowing the reader to view a panorama of possibilities, instead of the finished end product of the authorial choice, the writer exposes his work as a continual process of creation, an open-ended structure which is never terminated. Cabrera Infante himself has noted:39 ‘la tarea de la corrección no termina para mí ni siquiera cuando el libro está impreso. No comprendo a esos escritores que hablan de que cuando un libro está terminado, queriendo decir escrito, pasado en limpio o impreso, según los casos, entonces deciden olvidarse de él ... para mí un libro siempre es factible de corrección y de mejora, porque la perfección no es un estado, sino una meta’.

The next section, appropriately entitled Rompecabeza, contains the greatest density of puns and other verbal games, and consequently, it is here that the largest number of examples of paradigmatic overlapping are to be found. The section begins with the following lines: ‘¿Quién era Bustrófédon? ¿Quién fue quién será quien es Bustrófédon?’. By successively presenting a number of verb tenses, the author alternately describes Bustrófédon from a number of different perspectives, in a fashion suggestive of his multiple nature, which emerges from the text.20

The same pages contain a number of variants of the names Bustrófédon and Rine, thus establishing a pattern of verbal synthesis which characterizes the entire section: ‘Lo único que sé es que yo me llamaba muchas veces Bustrófoton o Bustrófotomátón o Búsneforonpie, depende, dependiendo y Silvestre era Bustrófénix o Bustrófeliz o Bustrófitzgerald, y Florentino Cazalis fue Bustróflore mucho antes de que cambiara el nombre y se pusiera a escribir en los periódicos con su nuevo nombre de Floren Cazalis, y una novia de él se llamó siempre Bustrófedora y su madre era Bustrofelisa y su padre Bustrófader ...’, and so forth.
Examples of this sort of paradigmatic presentation are too numerous to cite individually; a few additional references should suffice. Page 208 offers the sequence *pedos bucales/vocales/bocales*, while the following presents a series of variants of *Alicia en el País de las Maravillas*: ‘... y me corderé de Alicia en el País de las Maravillas y se lo dije al Bastroformidable y el se puso a reír, a regalar: Alicia en el mar de villas, Alicia en el País que Más Brilla, Alicia en el Cine Maravillas, Avaricia en el País de las Malavillas, Malavidades, Mavaria, Marvia, Malicia, Milicía, Milhizia Milinda Milindia Milinda Malanda Malasia Malesia Maleza Maldicia Malisa Alisia Aluvia Aluvia Alevilla y marísa y marbrilla y maldevilla y empezó a cantar tomando como pie forzado (forzudo) mi Fi Flaro la evocación de Alicia y el mar y Martf...’. On page 211, we are given explicit reference to such verbal behavior: ‘... y nos pusimos a cantar todos las variantes de todos los nombres de la gente que conocemos, que es juego secreto...’. On pp. 212-13 we find the Variaciones Quijotisini, consisting of a one-stanza poem repeated five times, each time using a different vowel. Page 213 also contains a series of variants on the word *dádiva*, and the names *Ajab, Analina*, and others. Pages 215ff. contain many of Bustrófón’s word games, in which paradigmatic alternations abound. The overall impact of such verbal gymnastics has seemed tiring and repetitious to some, stimulating and fascinating to others; whatever the impression, the paradigmatic presentations stretch the Spanish language past its usual boundaries and strengthen the underpinnings of this *novela de lenguaje*.

La Muerte de Trotsky referida por varios escritores cubanos, the following section, contains transcriptions of Bustrófón’s parodies of the styles of various prominent contemporary Cuban authors. This is in many ways a keynote of the entire novel, for Cabrera Infante is demonstrating at once the multiplicity and the unity of *lo cubano*, through parodies of the works of other authors, in addition to his own well-defined style. This paragon of paradigmatic exhibition typifies the constant interaction of the system and the narrative stream in *TTT*, and justifies the comment offered by Andrew Sarris²¹ that ‘Cabrera Infante’s sensibility spills all over his characters until they dissolve into a series of stylistic options’.

Following the section *Algunas revelaciones* we come to *Bachata*, the longest section, and the last except for the one-page epilogue. During the lengthy verbal interchange between Arsenio Cué and Silvestre we are presented with more examples of word-play, in which paradigmatic structures are presented in explicit arrays. To cite an example, on page 295 we find a series of variants of the name *Bach*, following a by now well-established format: Bach, Bachata, Bachanal, Baches, Bachillerato, Bacharat, Bacaciones, etc. The following series here, *hier, ici, aquí*, while p. 322 offers a series ‘sobre el opio’, including ‘el opio es la religión de los pobres, es el opio de los pueblos’, ‘el cine es el opio de los ciegos’, and so on. At times, anthemics reach the point of obsession, as when powerful things but one series of verbal variants after another abound in this section, as the two *tigres* become personified and more exhausted in their nocturnal excursions; they successively search and discover facts about the world in nature, the two friends verbally turn themselves into peacock-like exhibitions of verbal prowess designed to display the duplicity and paucity of their inner thoughts. The complete series of linguistic variants reflects the duplicity of the protagonists, searching for answers to the unknown questions as they dash madly about in the night.

Having discussed various textual instances of linguistic variants has been allowed to overlap the concrete discourse, we may move to a higher level of attempt to discover additional structural patterns. At this stage, it should be noted that any attempt of paradigmatic and paradigmatic axes must be realized in a given language, since, for domains larger than the word or construction, the linguistic and semiotic forces have not yet arrived at a unified theoretical model. In particular, the fields of design and narratology are still in a state of flux, and the formulation of definitive conclusions.

One salient characteristic of *TTT* is the multiplicity varying with each section, which contributes to the unity of the *novela de voces*. Rodríguez Monegal (op. cit., p. 21) notes that, ‘pese a la diversidad de voces, a pesar de que se presentan escritos, de que una pertenecen a escritores proporcionados (un vestre) y otras a mujeres que se pierden en los listados’, haya una unidad básica en el discurso, que se convierte en una unidad está asegurada por esa categoría ‘*galería de voces*’, as an integrated layer, as a unified narration and a series of individual narrations by different narrators. While the use of more than one narrative voice is common in literature, the constant shifting of voice, and a wide paradigmatic range is not often found, an aspect of the narrative plane, to the multiple structure of *TTT*. Cabrera Infante’s multiple narration may be compared, for example, to the work of Jorge Luis Borges, with however, one important difference: in
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Malavillas, Malavidas, Mavarcia, Marvia, Malicia,
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isini, consisting of a one-stanza poem repeated
using a different vowel. Page 213 also contains
the word dâdina, and the names Ajab, Analina,
T. contain many of Bustrófedon's word games, in
ternations abound. The overall impact of such
seemed tiring and repetitious to some, stimulating
ers; whatever the impression, the paradigmatic
he Spanish language past its usual boundaries and
ings of this novela de lengua.
Trotsky referida por varios escritores cubanos,
contains transcriptions of Bustrófedon's parodies
s prominent contemporary Cuban authors. This is
t of the entire novel, for Cabrera Infante is de-
the multiplicity and the unity of lo cubano,
e works of other authors, in addition to his own
paragon of paradigmatic exhibition typifies the
the system and the narrative stream in TTT; and
offered by Andrew Sarris two that 'Cabrera In-
all over his characters until they dissolve into a
ction Algunas revelaciones we come to Bachata,
d the last except for the one-page epilogue. Dur-
interchange between Arsenio Cué and Silvestre
more examples of word-play, in which paradigm-
resented in explicit arrays. To cite an example,
a series of variants of the name Bach, following
hed format: Bach, Bachata, Banchanal, Baches,
Bachillerato, Bacharat, Bacaciones, etc. The following page presents the
series here, hier, ici, aquí, while p. 322 offers a series of interpretations
'sobre el opio', including 'el opio es la religión de los chinos', 'el trabajo
es el opio de los pueblos', 'el cine es el opio de los espectadores', 'el
opio es el cine de los ciegos', and so on. At times such verbal calis-
thetics reach the point of obsession, as when pp. 363-65 contain noth-
thing but one series of verbal variants after another. Other examples
abound in this section, as the two tigres become progressively drunker
and more exhausted in their nocturnal excursion through Havana. As
they successively search and discover facts about each other's intimate
ature, the two friends verbally turn themselves inside out as it were, in
peacock-like exhibitions of verbal prowess designed to cover the sterility
and paucity of their inner thoughts. The constant presentation of
complete series of linguistic variants reflects the insecurity and multi-
plicity of the protagonists, searching for answers to imperfectly under-
stood questions as they dash madly about in the night.

Having discussed various textual instances where the paradigm
of linguistic variants has been allowed to overlap onto the syntagm
of concrete discourse, we may move to a higher level of realization, in
an attempt to discover additional structural patterns characterizing TTT.
At this stage, it should be noted that any attempts to define the syntag-
matic and paradigmatic axes must be realized in a purely tentative fash-
ion, since, for domains larger than the word or connected phrase, lin-
guistics and semiotics have not yet arrived at a universally acceptable
theoretical model. In particular, the fields of discourse or text gram-
mar and narratology are still in a state of flux, which precludes the
formulation of definitive conclusions.

One salient characteristic of TTT is the multiplicity of narrators,
varies with each section, which contributes to the aural aspect of this
'novela de voces'. Rodríguez Monegal (op. cit., p. 86) notes that 'a
pesar de la diversidad de voces, a pesar de que unas hablan y otras
escriben, de que unas pertenecen a escritores profesionales (como Sil-
vestre) y otras a mujeres que se pierden en los labeirintos de la orto-
grafía o de la fonética, hay una unidad básica en el procedimiento: esa
unidad está asegurada por esa “galería de voces” '. The novel is at once
a unified narration and a series of individual narrations, each proffered
by a different narrator. While the use of more than one narrator is not
uncommon in literature, the constant shifting of viewpoints over such
a wide paradigmatic range is not often found, and adds, on a higher
plane, to the multiple structure of TTT. Cabrera Infante's use of mul-
tiple narration may be compared, for example, to the works of Vargas
Llosa, with, however, one important difference: in TTT the boundaries
between the various narrations are neatly defined, providing a clear
instance of paradigmatic substitution. In the novels of Vargas Llosa,
on the other hand, the reader is left with the task of unravelling the
complex labyrinth of constantly shifting viewpoints, aided by verbal
cues often deeply embedded in the texture of the narration, thus ac-
counting for the shimmering and at times intangible nature of the texts.

Together with the shifting of narrative point of view comes the
alternation of various narrative segments, including the series of psy-
chiatric interviews, the series ‘Ella cantaba boleros’, and the various non-
repeated segments. Rather than following a single, unified narrative
blueprint, Cabrera Infante has created a jigsaw puzzle or quasi-linear
narrative collage of individual cameos, whose overall unity is not ap-
parent until completion of the novel, if at all. This lack of unified structure
has been responsible for many of the claims of formlessness in the nov-
el, and yet, in keeping with the overall trend of paradigmatic over-
lapping, this technique is seen to be consistent with the structure found in

That Cabrera Infante’s highly intricate novel possesses at least
a certain measure of internal linguistic and narrative structure appears
beyond doubt. The extent and nature of this structure are still, how-
ever, open to interpretation and question. The present note has sought,
in a highly elementary fashion to be sure, to outline one aspect of a
structural analysis of the novel as a whole. It has been suggested that,
more so than any other contemporary Latin American novel, TTT is
characterized by the overlapping of the paradigm of narrative potential
onto the syntagm of narrative realization. This overlapping occurs at
all levels of discourse, from word-level puns and verbal games to the
alternation of entire passages and narrators. There is thus seen to be a
nesting of structural alternations, forming an ever more complex array
of realized potentials as one proceeds outward from the individual
word, through the phrase, passage, and finally to the entire narrative
segment in what Rodríguez Monegal has termed this ‘libro paradigmático’.

Cabrera Infante’s constant refusal to commit himself to one
structural alternative instead of all the variant possibilities results in the
highly unique verbal creation that is Tres Tristes Tigres, and represents
an extreme version of a technique which occurs from Stern to Joyce,
from Poe to Pynchon, from Cervantes to Cortázar. It has been noted by
the semiologist Julia Kristeva 22 that ‘l’ensemble infini (du langage
poétique) est considéré comme ensemble de possibilités réalisable, mais
elles ne sont pas réalisables toutes ensembles’. William Hendricks, speak-
ing of narrative structure in folklore, and by extension, of other forms

of verbal creativity, states: 23 ‘the analogue to po-

mater of individual choice in such matters as the
persona and their attributes chosen to enact a given
event is related, and so on ... although syntax and
there remain options ...’. Cabrera Infante’s break-
tenet of narrative production accounts for the high
discourse which he has created, and affords him a
among his contemporaries.

The mere juxtaposing of more than one plot
the textual surface is by itself not necessarily sig-
of literary discourse, but a recurrence of such plots
to claims of structural coherence. In the case of TTT
has carefully fabricated a concentric series of plots
by producing one of the most widely discus-

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arrations are neatly defined, providing a clear substitution. In the novels of Vargas Llosa, the reader is left with the task of unravelling the constantly shifting viewpoints, aided by verbal eddies in the texture of the narration, thus acting and at times intangible nature of the texts. The shifting of narrative point of view comes the narrative segments, including the series of psychologies 'Ella cantaba boleros', and the various non-linear narratives following a single, unified narrative scheme. It has created a jigsaw puzzle or quasi-linear individual cameos, whose overall unity is not apparent, if at all. This lack of unified structure seen to be consistent with the structure found in

infante's highly intricate novel possesses at least external linguistic and narrative structure appears tent and nature of this structure are still, howtion and question. The present note has sought, fashion to be sure, to outline one aspect of the novel as a whole. It has been suggested that, in contemporary Latin American novel, TTT is the overlapping of the paradigm of narrative potential narrative realization. This overlapping occurs at word-level puns and verbal games to the

The mere juxtaposing of more than one paradigmatic variant on the textual surface is by itself not necessarily significant to the theory of literary discourse, but a recurrence of such patterns lends credence to claims of structural coherence. In the case of TTT Cabrera Infante has carefully fabricated a concentric series of paradigmatic displays, thereby producing one of the most widely discussed works of contemporary Hispanic literature.

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of verbal creativity, states:23 'the analogue to parole in folklore is a matter of individual choice in such matters as the individual dramatis personae and their attributes chosen to enact a given story, the presence or absence of certain plot episodes, the detail in which a given narrative event is related, and so on ... although syntax is regulated by rules, there remain options ...'. Cabrera Infante's break with this fundamental tenet of narrative production accounts for the highly unusual form of discourse which he has created, and affords him a rather unique position among his contemporaries.
NOTES


5. ‘Metamorphosis as a metaphor of the world’, *Review* 9 (Fall, 1973), 20-23 [p. 20].


7. In the interview with Rita Guibert, p. 22.

8. ‘Estructura y significaciones de Tres Tristes Tigres’; in *Guillermo Cabrera Infante*, pp. 81-128 [p. 82].


14. For some considerations, see J. Lipski, ‘Structural linguistics and bilingual interference’, to appear in the *Bilingual Review*.

15. For a greater discussion of this particular case of general instances, see J. Lipski, ‘On the meta-discourse’, to appear in the *Journal of Literary Discourse*.

16. For one such case, see J. Lipski, ‘Crimes and Gommes and Los Albañiles’, to appear in *Romanica*.

17. Page references will be to the 1970 edition in *Breve de Bolsillo* of Seix Barral, Barcelona.


20. Rodríguez Monegal, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-8 discuss tenses of the novel: a present tense of the character, a multiple past tense, and a unique future tense correspond to this characterization of Bustofoedon.


22. ‘Pour une sémiologie des paragrammes’, *Terror* 5, 53-75 [p. 57].

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15. For a greater discussion of this particular case as well as more general instances, see J. Lipski, ’On the meta-structures of literary discourse’, to appear in the Journal of Literary Semantics.

16. For one such case, see J. Lipski, ’Crimes and criminals in Les Gommes and Los Albañiles’, to appear in Romance Notes.

17. Page references will be to the 1970 edition in the series ‘Biblioteca Breve de Bolsillo’ of Seix Barral, Barcelona.


20. Rodríguez Monegal, op. cit., pp. 107-8 discusses the three basic tenses of the novel: a present tense of the characters’ monologue, a multiple past tense, and a unique future tense, which also correspond to this characterization of Bustofoledon.


22. ’Pour une sémioogie des paragrammes’, Tel Quel 29 (1967), 53-75 [p. 57].