

Title: Logic questioned: a distortion of the poetic space and question-answer adjacency pairs in Brodsky's *Homage to Yalta*.

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Brodsky's *Homage to Yalta* is a poetic report of a police interrogation concerning the murder of a Yalta resident. The testimonies of four witnesses/suspects are framed by the introduction and conclusion in which the narrator and the poet's lyrical *I* creates a poetic universe with a distorted perspective. By means of masked logical mismatches, semantic crossing, syntactic shifts, and mixing oppositions Brodsky achieves the effect of Escheresque space filled with impossible objects, repetitive images flowing one into another, upward stairs that lead downward, parallel lines that converge, distorted reflections, etc. In the paper I examine how the distorted perspective is sustained throughout the poem by constructing a communicative act of interrogation that frustrates reader's expectations. The study will focus on the analysis of sequencing of question-answer adjacency pairs (Schegloff 1972) in presenting the testimonies of different witnesses from the conversational-analytic perspective and against the background of question-answer strategies in real-world institutional communication. The textual data will be evaluated along two axes: that of answering strategies, specifically turn and role allocation in answers, and that of questioning strategies.

It will be shown that choosing one strategy over another in signaling the interrogator's question--who never shows up in the interrogations except in reverberations of his questions in the witnesses' answers--is an important tool in establishing power configuration patterns.

Analysis of the questioning techniques used portrays the interrogator as ineffective in information elicitation yet skillful in power manipulation, knowing all the answers yet asking off-target questions.

References.

Schegloff, E. A., 1972. Sequencing in conversational openings. In: J.J. Gumperz and D. Hymes, eds., *Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication*, 346-380. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.