**EDITORIAL**

**Words**
**(or,** *managing the whole lot of them***)**

> 'There is glory for you!'
> 'I don't know what you mean by 'glory', Alice said.
>  Humpty Dumpty smiled contemptuously.
> 'Of course, you don't, 'till I tell you. I meant "There's a nice knock-down argument for you"'.
> 'But "glory" doesn't mean "a nice knock-down argument"', Alice objected.
> 'When *I* use a word,' Humpty said, in a rather scornful tone, 'it means just what I choose it to mean -  neither more nor less.'
> 'The question is,' said Alice, 'whether you can make words mean so many different things.'
> 'The question is,' said Humpty Dumpty, 'which is to be  master – that's all.'
> Alice was too much puzzled to say anything; so after a minute, Humpty Dumpty began again.
> 'They've a temper, some of them – particularly verbs: they're the proudest – adjectives you can do anything with, but not verbs – however, *I* can manage the whole lot of them!'
>
> (Lewis Carroll: *Through the Looking-glass*)

As Johansen and Larsen (2002:116) put it, Humpty Dumpty "is suffering from megalomania" when he says that he *can* manage words. His desire to show his power over words through the mere act of paying/*buying* them in order to make them work for him (for the space of a limited number of hours) reveals, on the one hand, the user's need to *subdue*  their force and make it satisfy one's purpose; and, on the other hand, it  discloses the same user's limited control over *words in use*, as the latter do not exist just by and for themselves as mere isolated items; they are related to each other and made *to weave* a fabric/text  when  intended to communicate something.

Thus, there can be traced the journey from denotation to connotations  controlled  through  codes,  meant  to  transmit  an intended message and to create a communicative bridge between

locutors. This journey from word through text to discourse reveals the word-user's limited power to change denotations at will because words, as linguistic signs, refer to something, have their own history and work only in relation to each other when *forced* to convey an idea, feeling etc.

The verb *to use* in Humpty Dumpty's dialogue with Alice circumscribes the avatars of the word's metamorphosis from a mere dictionary entry through a bordered and coded-built up relational entity/text to an intentionally communicated message. It shows that a word, like any other object:

- can be bought and sold;
- through such a transaction it is given a price, which means that it is appreciated quantitatively and qualitatively and it acquires a value;
- it may lose or increase value through the very act of being used.

The very act of using words means to make them fulfill a communicative purpose, to squeeze their energy out of them and to establish a dialogue between two types of *users*: the maker of a message and the receiver of that particular message. The latter's power to gain knowledge by interpreting the words woven in spatio-temporally rooted written texts is the thread running though all the articles of this volume.

"The word in language," as Mikhail Bakhtin[1] considers, "is half someone else's. It becomes 'one's own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention."

As "semiosic creatures which grow and develop through the manipulation of sign-vehicles and the involvement in sign-processes" (John Deely[2]), words never *lie flat on a page; they rise and grow* into transparent globes containing an infinity of thoughts and emotions (Virginia Woolf).

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[1] Bakhtin, M.M.(1981): *The Dialogic Imagination.Four Essays*, ed. by Michael Holquist, trans.by Caryl Emerson and John Holquist, University of Texas Press, Austin.
[2] Deely, J.(2005): *Defining the Semiotic Animal.A postmodern definition of "human being" to supersede the modern definition as "res cogitans"*, New Bulgarian University, Sofia.

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