

NOTES ON

HEARER PRESUPPOSITIONS AND THE ART OF LANGUAGE BASED PROFILING

Section 9

Stylistic UFs in Brokaw Anthrax Letter And Their Associated Hearer Presuppositions And Implications

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. In this Section, we illustrate our approach as it relates to Stylistic UFs, noting HPs associated with selected *Stylistic UFs* in Brokaw Anthrax Letter. In subsequent Sections 9 and 10, we remark, respectively on hearer presuppositions associated with selected *thematic UFs and reasoning UFs* in this Brokaw Anthrax Letter. We indicate, as we did for formatting UFs in Section 7, various HPs associated with each UF selected.

1.2. As in Section 7, HPs are associated with selected stylistic UFs of the utterance U relative to the hearer's understanding U* of U and understanding C* of the context C in which U occurs which includes the understanding of C as a letter.

1.3. Recall (from Section 2) that Stylistic UFs are intended to profile the way that S identifies, connects, and contrasts the relative significance of

concepts in terms of their affective intensity, degree of focus, digression, fixedness, perseveration, dispersion, generality, relativization, detail, negativism, and the like.

1.4. For easy reference, we repeat the text of the Brokaw Anthrax Letter:

O9 – 11 - O1

This is next

Take Penacilin Now

Death To America

Death To Israel

Allah is Great

2. STYLISTIC UFS IN BROKAW ANTHRAX LETTER AND THEIR ASSOCIATED HPS

We discuss instances of Stylistic UFs and their associated HPs under two headings: (i) the treatment of key words, and (ii) the placement and sequencing of sentences.

2.1. Stylistic UFs relating to the treatment of key words, indicated with certain of their associated HPs.

(a) Stylistic UF: “Date Incorporated in Body of Letter as single-word content- bearing element rather than as notational indicator of signifying the time of writing”:

Level 1 HP: *S intends the date as the primary content element of the letter rather than as an indication of the date of writing.*

(b) Stylistic UF: “Single-word Leads Into Sentences.” (Comment: Each of the six lines of the letter contains a single word lead - “9-11-01” as a lead into first line, “This” as lead into second line, “Take” as lead into third line, “Death” as lead into the fourth and the fifth lines, and “Allah” as the lead into the sixth and final line.)

Level 1 HP: *S intends his single-word leads to fashion a telegraphic journalistic cadence with the implied suggestion “you can’t miss this!”*

(c) Stylistic UF: “Terse Designation of Key Words.” (Comment: The key words of the fourth and fifth lines are “Death,” “America,” and “Israel,” and designate both the intended targets and S’s intention regarding them.)

Level 1 HP: *S intends to be maximally economical in expression.*

Level 2 HP: *S intends to enigmatically suggest that whatever threat H is being exposed to is a lethal one, as is the threat which S poses to America and Israel.*

(d) Stylistic UF: “Single-word Thumbnail Content.” (Comment: The sequence of initial words, i.e., “This,” “Take,” “Death,” “Death,” and “Allah”, give thumbnail content of message.)

Level 1 HP: *S intends to successively convey, by this choice and ordering of initial words, that the contents of this letter have placed H at immediate hazard, that S also intends to help H avoid the worst effect of this hazard, that S intends to cause deaths in America and Israel, and that S’s motivation is a religious one.*

(e) Stylistic UF: “Single-word disambiguation by context.”

(Comment: By this type of disambiguation I mean allowing the meanings of terms to be determined only by reference to the context in which they are used. We note that the first line – 9-11-01” does not simply refer to the date of the letter (its ordinary meaning), but refers to the destruction of the WTC on that date as is suggested by the context in which that reference is made. In the second line - “This is next” - both the words “this” and “next” do not simply refer to the letter itself but to the threat which that letter implies, again as suggested by the context in which those

references are made, signifying that that threat is “next” both in the sense of following the TWC attack in time and in the sense of posing future destruction.)

Level 1 HP: *S believes that interconnecting references by recourse to context enables one to imply more than what one directly asserts.*

Level 2 HP: *S intends to continue to imply more than he asserts.*

(f) Stylistic UF: “Word Meanings Shift From Specific to General” (Comment: The sequence of initial Words ("This," "Take," "Death," "Death," and "Allah") goes from specific ("This") to general ("Allah").)

Level 1 HP: *S intends to bring the reader along from the intimacy of "here and now" to the broader implied agenda of anti-U.S. Islamic extremists.*

Level 2 HP: *S intends to project a relationship of from intimacy between himself and H (whom S undertakes to "save" within the context of a world-wide targeting agenda.*

Level 3 HP: *S intends to project an image of himself as a highly controlled and competent person who has control over the life o death of other.*

(g) Stylistic UF: “Ambiguous Single-word Reference.” (Comment: The word “This” in the Second Line is ambiguous inasmuch as it is not clear whether it is intended to refer specifically to the yet-identified contaminant in the envelope, or intended to refer to a generalized assault on selected targets by mailing them such contaminants as this envelope holds.)

Level 1 HP: *S keeps this referent unclear in order to raise maximal concern in H by implying a more general contamination threat than this single instance would constitute.*

(h) Stylistic UF: “Omission of Key Word” (The missing key word in this letter is, of course, “Anthrax.”)

HP Chain 1 (for this UF):

Level 1 HP: *S’s omission of Anthrax mention is intentional*

Level 2 HP: *S intends H to perceive that S’s omission of Anthrax mention is intentional.*

Level 3 HP: *S intends that H make the Anthrax identification.*

Level 4 HP: *S intends that H perceive S as a potentially destructive adversary.*

2.2. Stylistic UFs concerning placement and sequencing of sentences, indicated with certain of their associated HPs.

(a) **Stylistic UF: “Terminal Exhortations.”** (Comment: The last three lines, unlike the lines which precede them, are the exhortations: "Death to America," "Death to Israel," and "Allah is great.")

Level 1 HP: *The three lines of the letter containing these phrases are intended to have a ceremonial rather than a literal content.*

Level 2 HP: *By their use, S intends to give an impression of link with WTC perpetrators.*

Level 3 HP: *S intends a “populist” appeal in his use of these fairly hackneyed instances of current radical Islamic rhetoric.*

Level 4 HP: *While hackneyed, S intends, by their use, to suggest that he is of middle eastern origin, and hence to heighten H’s potential concern regarding this letter. Ironically, their use carries the opposite implication, namely that S is not of middle eastern origin.*

(b) **Stylistic UF: “Paired Exhortations.”** (Comment: S indicates a break in communication import by leaving an extra space between Line 3 and Lines 4 and 5, namely "Death to America" and "Death to Israel." These two lines are paired exhortations which are, moreover, linguistically patterned in precisely the same way.)

Level 1 HP: *S believes America and Israel equally culpable and deserving to be his enemies*

(c) **Stylistic UF: “Parallel Sentence Phrasing.”** (Comment: The words, "America" and "Israel" have precisely the same placement in the fourth and fifth sentences, both occurring in the context, "Death to....")

Level 1 HP: *S intends to suggest that the United States and Israel are equally viable targets against which S has lethal intent such as is symbolized by the enclosed Anthrax spores.*

(d) Stylistic UF: “Sentences Sequenced in Contrastive Affective Tone.” (Comment: The First Three Lines are Neutral in Expressed Affect, whereas The Last Three Lines Are Not.)

Level 1 HP: *S intends to contrast the first three lines which are specific and substantive with the last three lines which are general and rhetorical.*

(e) Stylistic UF: “Minimally Phrased Sentences.” (Comment: The letter consists of a date and five “bullet –like” lines following, each consisting of three simple words.)

Level 1 HP: *S intends the minimal phrasing of the letter to suggest a dangerous and dedicated adversary.*

Level 2 HP: *S believes that doing so reinforces the ominous tone of the letter.*

(f) Stylistic UF: “Cryptic and Enigmatic Sentences.” (Comment: First three Lines - “9-11-01/This is next/Take penicillin (sic) now” are Cryptic and Enigmatic)

Level 1 HP: *S intended the meaning of the first three lines of the letter to pose a mystery for H.*

Level 2 HP: *S intends that their incremental decipherment would lead H to the intended inference that the material in the envelope might be highly toxic.*

Level 3 HP: *S believes that a belated discovery of Anthrax by H would be impactful.*

(g) Stylistic UF: “Varying Sequence of Sentence Moods.” (Comment: Line 2 – “This is next” - is declarative, Line 3 – “Take penacillin (sic) now” – is imperatival, and Lines 4 5, and 6 – “Death to America/Death to Israel/Allah is great” - are exhortative.)

Level 1 HP: *S intended to vary moods in this manner to get as much in his letter as possible.*

Level 2 HP: *S intended to place the most substantive sentence, that is, the declarative sentence, “This is next,” to immediately follow the date and precede all the others.*

(h) Stylistic UF: “Sentences Ordered by Decreasing Content.” (Comment: The sentences are in order of decreasing content: first a declarative sentence, followed by an imperative sentence, followed then by three rhetorical exhortations.)

Level 1 HP: *S intended to craft a letter having this type "tight" design, that is, with each sentence fulfilling a particular function.*

Level 1 HP: *S believed that the last three lines, which are the least substantive lines in the letter, fulfilled the function of reinforcing the idea - expressed earlier in the first and second lines that there is a link between the threat posed in this letter with the WTC attack.*

(i) Stylistic UF: “Holding Targeted Entity Unaware.” (Comment: At this point in the reading of the letter the recipient is wholly unaware that the envelope actually contains a dangerous substance, to say nothing of its being anthrax. S's sentences up to this point collectively imply that S the letter recipient has, in the process of opening and reading this letter to this point has been placed in danger by having been exposed to some contaminant, the details of which the reader is held wholly ignorant.)

Level 1 HP: *S intends to flaunt power over H, first by keeping his own identity secret, and then by withholding direct information regarding Anthrax spores in envelope.*

(j) Stylistic UF: “Focal Placement.” (Comment: Placing an expression first (the date in this letter) usually is usually associated with its having the greater importance than what follows it, and placing it last (the reference to “Allah”) is usually associated with its having a lesser importance than what has preceded it.)

Level 1 HP: *S believes his implication of having an Islamic religious base relatively unimportant.*

Level 2 HP: *S does not expect hearer to believe that he (S) has an Islamic religious base.*

Level 3 HP: *S intends to shroud his communication with an implication of having a mysterious origin.*

3. ALTERNATIVE HP CHAINS FOR THE STYLISTIC UF “OMISSION OF KEY WORD (ANTHRAX) IN LETTER”:

3.1. There are alternative HP Chains for each of the above UFs beyond those given here. In particular, there are alternative HP Chains of the

UF “Omission of Key Word (Anthrax),” beyond the HP Chain given above in (2.1 (h)). This would, of course, be true for any HP chains associated with a given UF instance.

3.2. The choice of HPs and their ordering in a chain is at the discretion of the individual profiler. We indicate below some further possible HP Chains for this Stylistic UF “Omission of Key Word (Anthrax).” These HP Chains would be in addition to that given above in (2.1 (h)), as well as in addition to those HP Chains for this same UF instance given earlier in paragraph 6 of Section 5 in which we had organized there within an alternating branching structure of type A.

3.3. Our intention here, as always, to propose alternative ways for the individual profiler to identify HPs in a document and to structure them into levels and chains according to his or her own intuitions. The exercise of such intuitions would depend, not only on the individual profiler, but also on details regarding the context in which the document issued. Accordingly, the suggested HPs and their structuring into levels and chains is based on a broad (rather than detailed) characterization of the context in which this Anthrax letter had issued.

4. SOME ALTERNATIVE HP CHAINS OF THE UF “OMISSION OF KEY WORD (ANTHRAX),” BEYOND THE HP CHAIN GIVEN ABOVE IN (2.1 (H)), AND BEYOND THOSE GIVEN IN PARAGRAPH 6, SECTION 5 FOR THIS UF.

4.1. HP Chain 1:

Level 1 HP: *S believes that omission of Anthrax mention is appropriate.*

Level 2 HP: *S does not intend to communicate with H cooperatively.*

Level 3 HP: *S intends that H perceive S as a potentially destructive adversary.*

4.2. HP Chain 2:

Level 1 HP: *S’s omission of Anthrax mention is intentional*

Level 2 HP: *S intends H to make the Anthrax identification.*

Level 3 HP: *S intends that H perceive S’s omission of Anthrax mention as intentional.*

Level 4 HP: *S intends that H perceive S as exercising control over H.*

4.3. HP Chain 3:

Level 1 HP: *S believes that omission of Anthrax mention is appropriate.*

Level 2 HP: *S believes that H believes that S believes that S's omission of Anthrax mention is appropriate.*

Level 3 HP: *S intends that H be concerned about S's next action.*

4.4. HP Chain 4:

Level 1 HP: *S's omission of Anthrax mention is intentional*

Level 2 HP: *S intends H to make the Anthrax identification.*

Level 3 HP: *S intends that H perceive S's omission of Anthrax mention as intentional.*

Level 4 HP: *S intends that H perceive S's intention as being other than to cause injury to H.*

Level 7 HP: *S intends that H communicate the receipt of the letter and the nature of its contents to others.*

4.5. HP Chain 5:

Level 1 HP: *S's omission of Anthrax mention is intentional*

Level 2 HP: *S intends H to make the Anthrax identification.*

Level 3 HP: *S believes that omission of Anthrax mention is appropriate.*

Level 4 HP: *S intends to imply that S has further nefarious purposes which he is not mentioning.*

Level 5 HP: *S intends that H be intimidated.*