

Zamfira-Maria Petrescu

“Vasile Alecsandri” University of Bacău, Romania

**LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS OF SOLIDARITY IN THE TELEVISION SERIES
*MURDOCH MYSTERIES***

Keywords: expressions of solidarity, linguistics, *Murdoch Mysteries*.

Introduction

As a moral concept, solidarity encompasses aspects such as shared identity, mutual support and inclusion for the members of a group or minority, common values or beliefs and non-violent forms of resistance that might transform into violent ones. Solidarity is often associated with protests about social inequalities, displeased citizens marching on the streets in organized groups, signing petitions and even planning strikes. According to vocabulary.com, the notion of *solidarity* is connected to people united behind a common goal or purpose express support for a group or “a sense of unity with a political group, a group of striking workers, or people who have been deprived of their rights in some way”. According to the online Cambridge Dictionary, an “expression of solidarity” is a collocation disclosing the manner of action connected with the support and agreement between the members of a group.

According to Peter West-Oram (2021), expressions of solidarity can take many forms—some argue that simply flashing a “thumbs up” would suffice in a social movement, others concur that signing a petition and joining a protest produce greater social differences. Solidarity, or the notion of people standing together as a community and supporting each other as they reach a common objective, is often related to social justice movements and collective actions, since it is based on the premise that a person’s or a group’s welfare is interrelated with

the well-being of a larger community. Solidarity can be manifested in numerous and diverse ways, from supporting marginalized groups through activism and advocacy, to providing assistance and volunteering for the benefit of the unprivileged. In some cases, solidarity was required in labour movements, when workers or members of some unions requested higher wages and safe working conditions. Fundamentally, solidarity concerns the dignity of all individuals, accepting that we can engage ourselves in building each other's happiness (West-Oram 65-68).

In addition to this, solidarity consists of more than some minor displays of civic duties, since it adapts to the mentality of an era or to the preferences of some pertaining to an assembly. An example of solidarity in the Canadian suffrage movement can be noticed during the early 20th century, when women were struggling for their right to vote and to become socially active in a patriarchal society. As Craig Baird points out in his article "Women's Suffrage in Canada" (2021), other issues women were fighting for were the right to property, the right to equal education, equal job opportunities and the right to get a divorce, but they were not supposed to persist any further for the reason that they were unqualified to perform any political duties. In return, suffragists engaged in public speaking, in organizing tours and writing manifestos, acknowledging the importance of the labour movement at the time that requested proper working conditions, as well as women did for themselves (Baird).

The suffrage movement in Canada faced a less radical opposition than in other countries, many women blazing the trail for rights that were regarded as privileges by men. These social issues and many others might be observed in a Canadian Television Series entitled *Murdoch Mysteries*, a period piece which tackles crimes in the late 19th century Canada. For instance, in an episode depicting a lawsuit between the Toronto's Women's Society and the municipality of Toronto, the public learns that after years of striving and suffering for the right to vote, for equal education and for equal job opportunities, a woman has finally managed to legally represent other women as a sign of solidarity. The character

in question is Clara Brett Martin, the first female lawyer in the British Empire and she defends Toronto's Women's Society for discontinuing the regional elections due to the fact that the women's representative was omitted from the ballots, hence other women disrupted the fraudulent event by protesting and blocking the access to the ballots (Blackwell).

In the 1890s and in the 1900s, many cultural conflicts occurred: between the French Canadians and the English Canadians, between Protestants and Catholics, between First Nations and settlers, between the British and the Canadian colonials, between white citizens and black citizens, between conservative men and visionary women. Even though there were fewer Afro-Canadians than African Americans, there were still instances of discrimination that impacted the community (Williams and Walker).

In this article, I would like to outline linguistic expressions of solidarity, as they appear in the Canadian Television series, *Murdoch Mysteries*, in which the plot, the language and characters were adapted to the late Victorian era principles such as respectability and domesticity, implying different viewpoints, different expectations from the citizens and different language. The methodological approach comprises a brief description of the historical context of the episodes analysed, a sample of lines extracted from the script, followed by a short analysis of verbal structures that imply solidarity.

My aim is to demonstrate that individuals belonging to different cultural, religious and social backgrounds resort to verbal expressions of solidarity in unexpected situations, showing sympathy to those who have been wronged, even to an outsider. A secondary aim is to display an open attitude to controversial issues connected with private life and human rights. In the selected episodes, one can recognise solidarity when an assembly of people, sharing the same ideologies, wave signs in protest and afterwards resort to brutal actions (like the Temperance League), or when a group of women, serving a common goal, hope to change the world peacefully (the Suffragettes).

Characteristics of Linguistic Solidarity within Conflicts

Solidarity emerges from a sense of shared identity and determination within a group, based on aspects such as race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, gender, or political beliefs. The mutual support provided by members of a certain group and their commitment to helping one another contribute to connecting the parties emotionally or even economically. Solidarity often materialises in collective actions, including boycotts, strikes, protests beneficial to achieving objectives; or in non-violent forms of resistance based on shared values and beliefs, as means of advocating for social change and challenging systems of abuse and bias. As Neculau (192) investigates in his book, solidarity involves commitment to equality and social justice based on the empathy and compassion established within the group which willingly listens and understands the members' experience or perspectives. The sense of reciprocity allows the members of a group to recognize the contributions and sacrifices of others, cooperating to serve common aims, as far as rights are concerned.

Șerbănescu (247) considered that conflicts, or the catalyst of solidarity, commence when disagreements between groups (generally) or individuals (particularly) contradict beliefs, regarding social roles, social status, or duties. Conflicts ordinarily derive from the quest for resources and power or from the status that might be threatened by the demands of some minor groups.

Taking into account a pragma-stylistic approach, the use of language that demonstrates a sense of support and connection with others is called a linguistic expression of solidarity and it can unfold many verbal expressions (words or phrases) and paraverbal expressions (intonation or accent) that build or strengthen relationships and even establish trust between members of a community while facing challenging situations. The Romanian author Andra Șerbănescu (63) noted that speakers may resort to a variety of stylistic devices such as play on words, metaphors and so on, in order to deliver a more sophisticated verbalisation of their thoughts.

Among methods of communicating linguistic expression of solidarity, we can mention: the use of inclusive language that incorporate all individuals, regardless of their ethnicity, gender or preferences; active listening (that reveals compassion and interest when somebody confides in the listener); manifesting empathy (by using a language that shows understanding of experiences and emotions of others); offering emotional aid through statements such as “If I can help you in any way, please let me know”; and positive reinforcement that boosts morale and the listener’s self-esteem. Şerbănescu (227) mentioned some additional ways of communicating linguistic expression of solidarity: using humour to break the ice with the help of personal anecdotes or self-deprecating humour that enables others to laugh together with the joker is a socially acceptable manner. All these methods of expressing solidarity through language increase the sense of unity within communities and approach issues that are relatable to all members of a group.

Contextualised Linguistic Expressions of Solidarity in *Murdoch Mysteries* Television Series

The Complete Murdoch Mysteries Collection is a compilation of seven novels and a novella written by the contemporary author Maureen Jennings (2013), based on a real detective known for solving crimes in the late 19th century Canada using modern methods, such as finger-marks and blood types. These novels describe crimes that occur in different social strata, especially in Toronto’s most destitute areas, making use of sarcasm to lift the spirits or even highlight the character’s misery in the novel. The novels in question were adapted into a television series under the same title, but their adaptation was adjusted with the purpose of appealing to the younger public.

As the author stated herself in Myke Jaycock’s interview (2022), the producers have altered the characters and the plot for aesthetic reasons, improving the props and the scenery (characters come from wealthier backgrounds than those in the novel, they wear fashionable clothes, luxurious

accessories, indulge in fancy habits). These confer the characters a distinct personality, while various forms of humour are employed in order to catch the eye of both the younger and the older audience, this television series bringing to light social, political, cultural and, at times, technological matters. Throughout the sixteen seasons, the animosities between police officers belonging to two different Station Houses, on the one hand, and between constables and overbearing industrialists, on the other hand, erupt in conflicts solved verbally through spontaneous arguments (Sheley).

Puns, or humorous employments of words or phrases that sound alike or possess multiple meanings (as defined by the online version of the Cambridge Dictionary), can positively reinforce the listener's self-esteem, the example provided in the episode entitled *Marked Twain* being eloquent from this perspective.

Another definition proposed by the Cambridge Dictionary approaches the notion of *sarcasm* as "the use of remarks that clearly mean the opposite of what they say, made in order to hurt someone's feelings or to criticize something in a humorous way".

A sample of figurative language identified in the fragments extracted from the television series is the metaphor, employed with the scope of rehabilitating a decadent civilization. According to the online version of the Collins Dictionary, a metaphor is a figure of speech which describes "something by referring to something else which is the same in a particular way"; the issues at hand will be approached in the paragraphs that follow.

The following examples are excerpts from the scripts of some of the most emblematic episodes in the television series. In an episode dedicated to prohibition, a neighbourhood famous for its drunken inhabitants is supposed to "get dry" as politicians are about to vote for the *Local Option*. Inspector Brackenreid's wife is lodging the leader of the temperance movement, Mrs. Carry A. Nation, for the duration of some speeches that intend to persuade the citizens

to give up drinking forever. Detective Murdoch and Inspector Brackenreid investigate the murder of a pro-liquor councilman who got poisoned in a bar:

Brackenreid: All this local option business is ridiculous, if you ask me.

Murdoch: Sir, if it's what the people of the Junction want, I see no reason to prevent it.

Brackenreid: Liquor is a good thing for a good man. A few drunks having too much is hardly cause to get rid of it.

Murdoch: I've never understood the appeal of alcohol, sir. It impedes the brain's ability to function, making it impossible to think clearly.

Brackenreid: Well that's just it, Murdoch. Don't you ever want to relax and stop thinking for a couple of hours?

Murdoch: No.

(MM: *The Local Option*, S09E06 08:54-09:17)

This excerpt illustrates the exchange of lines between a person solidarizing with those who enjoy a drink (Inspector Brackenreid, who exasperates the Constabulary with his addiction to scotch) and an abstinent person (Detective Murdoch, who is a devout Catholic and avoids the seven deadly sins). Brackenreid is not convinced that a few drunks are a reason for prohibiting alcohol, so he uses a weak frequency adverb: *hardly* and repeats the adjective *good*: *good (thing for a) good (man)* in order to reinforce his ideas. Detective Murdoch holds his ground as he uses words with a negative meaning (*never*—adv., *impedes*—verb, *impossible*—adj.). Inspector Brackenreid uses the same tactics as the Detective to prove that Murdoch should disrupt his monotonous habits and enjoy himself once in a while (the negative auxiliary *Don't*, the verb *stop* that shows disapproval).

In the same episode, a reverend invites Carry A. Nation to speak about the dangers of alcohol to the Temperance Movement in Toronto. Inspector Brackenreid's wife, Margaret, is also a member of the Temperance League:

Reverend: The scourge of liquor is a terrible thing. It turns homes into hovels. We must stand up to this scourge, for temperance is the will of the Lord himself.

All: Amen! Amen! Hallelujah!

Reverend: It pleases me very much to introduce to you a special guest. A woman of great standing who has dedicated her life to our cause. Mrs. Carrie A. Nation.

Brackenreid (noticing his wife in the crowd): Bloody Margaret.

Carry Nation: Liquor is not merely a scourge. Liquor is a pestilential highway leading to ruin and wretchedness. (applause) Liquor is ruining the lives of our children, both born and unborn. It is the embodiment of pure evil! (cheering and clapping)

Brackenreid: Bollocks. I think that's the woman who's staying at my house.

Carry Nation: Those who stand in our way must be destroyed!

All: Hear, hear! [...]

Carry Nation: In the name of the Lord, we shall destroy these dens of immorality! (shouting) We shall deliver them to the same defilement and devastation to which they have delivered so many souls! ... LOCAL OPTION! LOCAL OPTION! LOCAL OPTION! LOCAL OPTION! LOCAL OPTION! LOCAL OPTION! LOCAL OPTION!, Clear the way! Vice! Sin! Despicable iniquity! [...]

Margaret: Long live temperance!

Brackenreid: Margaret! Dammit, woman!

(*MM: The Local Option, S09E06 10:42-12:01; 20:56- 22:16*)

In this fragment, the religious interjections demonstrate the holiness of the quest to redeem the public: *Amen, Hallelujah*, just as the next sinister, religious nouns: *scourge, wretchedness, evil, devastation, sin, iniquity* stir fear and awe in the public. As the protesters prepare to burst into a bar, the leader utters verbs that are associated with annihilation: *ruining, destroyed*, whereas the rest of the crowd agrees with her statements by shouting the expression *hear, hear* and chanting the slogan *Local* (the allegedly chosen-by-the-locals-option, and not by the Government) *Option*. The Inspector's wife shows loyalty to her cause (forcing the Inspector to quit drinking) by adapting the expression *Long live* to her interest *Long live temperance*. The Inspector shows his disapproval towards his wife's actions by shouting an impolite expression using an irritated tone (*Dammit!*) and brings her into her senses by calling her *woman* and grabbing her by the arm.

In this episode, depicting the Prohibition movement in Canada, one of the religious metaphors for alcohol that the prohibitionists adopt is "Despicable iniquity." This is a compilation of an adjective and a noun, emphasizing the battle for social justice and prohibitionists' engagement in a crusade against vice and sin.

The protestors, including the Inspector's wife, are arrested by the Inspector after devastating a bar, but all the protestors are set free, except for Carry A. Nation. Once again, Brackenreid's wife disagrees with him:

Brackenreid: I'm the police inspector. I get to choose what crimes we arrest people for.

Margaret: You can't just leave her here.

Brackenreid: Are you defending her?

Margaret: Things may have gotten out of hand, but we meant well.

Brackenreid: She took an axe to a man's bar.

Margaret: She is our houseguest, Thomas.

Brackenreid: Oh, Lord, give me strength.

(MM: *The Local Option*, S09E06 23:09-23:55)

As far as power imbalance is concerned, the Inspector asserted his power associated with his social status (expressed by the nouns: *Inspector*, as in *chief* or *superior* and *police*, an institution that served the monarch and holds the power to arrest every threat to society), disadvantaging his opponents through the use of personal deixis: *I'm the police inspector*, *I get to choose* and verbs that show conflict: *arrest* or the idiom *to take an axe to somebody*. He disagreed with his wife as he used the verb *defend* with a negative meaning.

The Inspector's wife protects Carry Nation against her husband's charges and mentions mitigating circumstances as an excuse (the expression *to mean well*) for the rampage she has caused unwillingly (the idiomatic expression *get out of hand*); afterwards she reminded him about his duties as a respectable host (she used the possessive adjective *our* and the compound noun *houseguest*). In reply, the Inspector, who is a protestant, implores Jesus (since he uses the noun *Lord* instead of *God*) for patience to go through all the unpleasant experiences through the expression: *Oh Lord, give me strength*.

In another episode, Dr Ogden, Detective Murdoch's wife, hired Mark Twain to give some speeches in order to boost the suffragette movement. Mark Twain presented a change in his discourse caused by his wife's influence, who he claims to be even smarter than him:

Woman 1: I'm just not sure it is necessary to have a man advocating for our cause. [...] I just believe we women are more than capable of stating our own case.

Woman 2: We can state it all we want, but it makes no matter if no one is listening.

Woman 1: I suppose so...

Woman 2: Did you just agree with me? We are making progress.

Dr Ogden: Please welcome Mr. Mark Twain. (Applause)

Mark Twain: Thank you, ladies. And gentlemen [...]. You know, when you have lived as long as I have, you have the right to change your mind. And that's what I'm going to do here tonight. I'm gonna change the minds of those of you who believe that women should not have the right to vote. Let me read you something. "I never want to see the women voting, and gabbling about politics, and electioneering. There is something revolting in the thought. Let your natural bosses do the voting." (murmurs) Those were my words. That's what I believed, until I met my wife, Olivia Langdon. After that meeting, I came to believe that a woman is always right. (laughter and applause) And I became a woman's rights man! You know, if women held the right to vote, the world would not be in the state it's in.

(MM: Marked Twain, S09E02 29:35-32:23)

In this excerpt, two women debate the necessity of having men in the suffragette movement, one of them stating that women should represent themselves by comparing themselves to men (the idiom *more than*) by using the adjective *capable*. The other woman claimed that it did not matter who they talked to as long as the public was indifferent (the indefinite pronoun *no one*). This contradictory conversation comes to a resolution when the first woman concurs with the second woman, as the verbs *agree* and *are making progress* suggest. In accordance with the definition of sarcasm, an example can be noted in the conversation carried by the two women who were attending Mark Twain's speech. What follows is an aftereffect of active listening that proves how one of the women disapproved of the other's usual dissensions: "Did you just agree with me? We are making progress."

Mark Twain started his speech by thanking ladies for the attendance, and afterwards thanking the gentleman for having modern viewpoints. As he delivered his anecdote, he justified why he solidarized with women by using the second type conditional sentence: *if women held the right to vote, the world would not be in the state it's in*. His mentality changed from one that despised the female

ability of thinking (the pejorative verb *gabbling*, the adjective *revolting* and the premodifier *natural* of the plural noun *bosses*) into one that embraced modernity and equality starting from the moment he met a special woman. In his deliverance of the speech, Mark Twain appeals to humour, to a play on words in particular, in order to boost the morale of the ladies in public. "I came to believe that a woman is always right. And I became a woman's rights man!". One can notice the double meaning of the word *right*—an adjective meaning *always correct* and a noun correlated with the social movement of *emancipation*.

In an episode that presents the hardships the African Canadian community has gone through ever since they migrated to Canada and became part of the Canadian society, a respectable citizen (who was responsible for transporting former slaves from the United States to Canada) is found dead in a church belonging to the Black community, after having preached at the morning service:

Reverend: Who among us has not been hurt? Who has not been mistreated? But in our darkest hours, we discover strength in Jesus. Amen! Amen! Our guest today reminds us of a past in which we were mistreated. And though we may wish to forget that past, we're reminded to boast. Boast that in our hardships, we found strength in our Lord! Boast that in times of need, we found friends! Like our friend, Mr. Frank Parker. (applause)

The victim: A wonderful sermon. Indeed, few things could make a man feel weak and small like the fight for abolition. And when speaking was no longer enough, I took action. That's right. Amen. I smuggled fugitive slaves. Amen! Yes, I broke the law! A law that went against my feelings and my sympathies. A law without humanity. Now, some of you may wish to call me a hero. No. I am simply a man. I'm simply a man that did what he knew was the right thing. Amen. It is no more than should be expected by anyone. Amen.

(MM: *Colour Blinded*, S09E13 01:22-3:13)

Before being killed, the victim of the murder enunciated the reasons why he had helped slaves escape the United States and faced the law, by exploiting the postmodifiers of the noun *law* (*against my feelings, without humanity*). His modesty is highlighted by the use of the adverb *simply* and the noun *man*.

Miss James, Dr Ogden's assistant, who is also a member of the Afro-Canadian community, after listening to the victim's speech, tries to find reconciliation in

Detective Murdoch's office. Detective Murdoch is a Catholic, so this is as far as he can go professionally in a Protestant city. Protestants would never promote a Catholic to a high-ranking position.

Miss James: Dr Ogden has told me that you are a Catholic. Catholics face some measure of prejudice and ill will. Quite unfairly, I imagine.

Murdoch: One difference, I suppose, is that people can't tell that I'm a Catholic just by looking at me.

Miss James: What do you do when you encounter such treatment, Detective?

Murdoch: I know the truth about myself, Miss James. And I know that no matter what someone might say or think about me, I must be the strongest and the best version of myself that I can possibly be.

Miss James: So go along to get along?

Murdoch: No. No. Simply be better than anyone who might hate you.

(MM: *Colour Blinded*, S09E13 41:22-42:22)

Miss James thought that Detective Murdoch recommended her (the expression *go along to get along*) to accept the majority's opinion and simply accept being assimilated at the expense of her requests, but in fact, Detective Murdoch believes that she should overcome the discrepancies between herself and the society (using the superlative adjectives *best* and *strongest*) and prove that she is a better person than those who judge her (the pronoun *anyone*, the verb *hate*, the personal pronoun *you*).

Conclusions

The most common forms of linguistic expressions of solidarity in the series occur in desperate situations when a distressed person needs a peer willing to listen or sometimes reinforce and share a common viewpoint. The situations in which linguistic expressions of solidarity occurred in three different phases: firstly, when the wife of a police inspector, who is fond of drinking, sides with the leader of the Temperance Movement, secondly, when a famous writer unexpectedly supports women's rights; and thirdly, when a biased Catholic Detective shares his views on life with an Afro-Canadian woman.

In two out of three episodes, the linguistic expressions of solidarity exclude gendered issues, as they focus on tensions caused by ethnicity or vices. In the

first episode, Detective Murdoch's partially neutral positions, with reference to instating prohibition, opposes Inspector Brackenreid's opinion on the matter (the blunt negative adverb *no*). In the third episode, Detective Murdoch enhances his speech with comparative structures (the adjectives *better* and *strongest*), which inspires young Miss James, as well as the audience, to face bias remarkably. This switch of verbal tactics emphasizes that there is no recipe for diplomacy or solidarity, but rather a permanent adjustment of opinions and conduct.

Solidarity entails feelings such as compassion, empathy, and an inner disposition to initiate some activities that create a more impartial or fair society, just like Miss James expresses in her assertion (the nouns *Catholics*, *prejudice* and the adverb *unfairly*). Banners used in picketing display diversified forms of linguistic expressions of solidarity, while chants articulated during marches provide other examples of messages bearing significance for both the protesters and the opposers (the adjective *Local* and the noun *Option*).

Solidarity provided by displays of affection or mercy requires more than uttering some comforting expressions or some magic words that suit every occasion. One resorts to constructive distractions, such as humour or other sorts of entertainment, another just spends precious time with a friend in need, some bear tokens of appreciations and others voluntarily sacrifice some forms of enjoyment (they fast or shave their heads) as signs of solidarizing with them (Mason 1998). When humans understand the suffering of others and experience their sorrow, they become united and improve the flaws of this prejudiced world.

References

- Baird, C. 2021. "Women's Suffrage in Canada." *Canadian History Ehx*. <https://canadaehx.com/2021/12/04/womens-suffrage-in-canada/>, DOA 11.03.2023.
- Blackwell, J. D. 2008. "Clara Brett Martin." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/clara-brett-martin>, DOA 11.03.2023.
- Jaycock, M. 2022. *Conversation. Interviews with interesting people. Maureen Jennings 02 2022* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9U5Ic10_mMo&t=84s.

- Jennings, M. 2013. *The Complete Murdoch Mysteries Collection*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Limited.
- Mason, A. 1998. "Solidarity." *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://www.rep.routledge.com/articles/thematic/solidarity/v-1>, DOA 11.03.2023.
- Neculau, A. 1987. *Comportament si civilizatie. [Behaviour and Civilisation]*. Bucharest: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică.
- Sheley, E. 2020. "Criminal Investigation and Canadian National Identity in *Murdoch Mysteries*." *Entertainment and Sports Law Journal* 18:1, 7.
- Șerbănescu, A. 2007. *Cum gândesc și cum vorbesc ceilalți [How the Others Think and Speak]*. Iași, Editura Polirom.
- West-Oram P. 2021. "Solidarity is for Other People: Identifying Derelictions of Solidarity in Responses to COVID-19." *Journal of Medical Ethics* 47, 65-68.
- Williams, D. W., & J. St. G. Walker. 2021. "Black History in Canada until 1900." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/black-history-until-1900>, DOA 11.03.2023.

Internet sources

- <https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/solidarity>, DOA 10.03.2023.
- <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/example/english/expression-of-solidarity>, DOA 10.03.2023.
- <https://glossary.sil.org/term/solidarity>, DOA 11.03.2023.
- <https://tvshowtranscripts.ourboard.org/viewtopic.php?f=13&t=35873>, DOA 13.03.2023.
- <https://tvshowtranscripts.ourboard.org/viewtopic.php?f=13&t=36203>, DOA 13.03.2023.
- <https://tvshowtranscripts.ourboard.org/viewtopic.php?f=13&t=23825>, DOA 13.03.2023.
- <https://tvshowtranscripts.ourboard.org/viewtopic.php?f=13&t=25099>, DOA 13.03.2023.
- <https://tvshowtranscripts.ourboard.org/viewtopic.php?f=13&t=23003>, DOA 13.03.2023.
- <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/pun>, DOA 05.10.2023.
- <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/sarcasm>, DOA 05.10.2023.
- <https://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/wlf/what-metaphor>, DOA 05.10.2023.

TV series

- Murdoch Mysteries*. 2008. Created by Harvey Crossland.
-06.09: The Local Option; 02.09: Marked Twain; 13.09: Colour Blinded.

Abstract

The article explores linguistic expressions of solidarity in a Canadian television series entitled *Murdoch Mysteries*. The episodes chosen—"The Local Option," "Marked Twain"

and “Colour Blinded”—are contextualised historically and analysed linguistically with the purpose of identifying the preferences for religious lexemes or blunt words. The analysis focuses on the elements that prove the dominance of one gender or ethnicity over another by means of linguistic expressions of power and discrimination. The applicative part attempts to investigate two directions: to demonstrate that individuals belonging to different cultural, religious and social backgrounds resort to verbal expressions of solidarity in unexpected situations and show sympathy to those who have been wronged; and to display an open attitude to controversial issues connected with private life and human rights.

Artykuł podejmuje temat językowych wyrazów solidarności w kanadyjskim serialu telewizyjnym pt. *Murdoch Mysteries*. Wybrane odcinki—„The Local Option,” „Marked Twain” and „Colour Blinded”—zostają umieszczone w kontekście historycznym, a następnie przeanalizowane językowo w celu zidentyfikowania preferencji dla stosowania leksemów religijnych bądź wyrażania wprost swojego zdania przez postaci. Analiza skupia się na elementach wykazujących przewagę jednej płci bądź tożsamości etnicznej nad inną za pomocą środków językowych wyrażających władzę i dyskryminację. W dalszej części artykułu podjęta zostaje próba zbadania dwóch możliwości interpretacyjnych: wykazanie, że postaci pochodzące z różnych grup kulturowych, religijnych i społecznych w nieoczekiwanych sytuacjach uciekają się do wyrażania solidarności słowami i do okazywania współczucia tym, którym stała się krzywda; a także pokazanie otwartego podejścia do kontrowersyjnych kwestii związanych z życiem prywatnym i prawami człowieka.

Zamfira-Maria Petrescu studied philology in Bacău (Romania), where she received a master’s degree, and social sciences in Bordeaux (France). As a doctoral student at “Vasile Alecsandri” University of Bacău, she has participated in national and international conferences that approached the phenomenon of humour in literary and non-literary texts. Her research interests encompass fields such as linguistics, humour studies and the mystery genre. The corpus of her thesis explores multiple themes connected to social and historical issues represented in the Canadian television series *Murdoch Mysteries*.