UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

THE PORTRAYAL OF DEAFNESS IN ELIZABETH GEORGE'S *FOR THE SAKE OF ELENA*

A Pro Gradu Thesis

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2001

CONTENTS

HUMANISTINEN TIEDEKUNTA
ENGLANNIN KIELEN LAITOS

Samu Kytölä

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Pro gradu –työ
Englantilainen filologia
Syyskuu 2001 134 sivua

Tutkielman tarkoituksena on selvittää, kuinka kuuroutta on kuvattu englanninkielisessä nykykirjallisuudessa, tarkemmin Elizabeth Georgen dekkariromaanissa *For the sake of Elena* (1992). Tutkimuksen lähtökohdat nousevat kuurouden tutkimuksesta, missä 1970 - 1990 -luvulla sosiokulttuurinen, viittomakielisten kuurojen kielellistä ja kulttuurista yhteyttä korostava näkökulma haastoi lääketieteellisen, kuurojen vammaisuutta korostavan perinteen.

Kuurojen kuvaukset kuulevien valtadiskurssissa, tieteessä, viestinnässä ja taiteissa ovat kautta aikojen korostaneet kuurojen vammaisuutta. Erityisemmin kaunokirjallisuudessa kuurot hahmot ovat saaneet kuvastaa kuulevien maailman piirteitä. Aikakauden aatteista riippuen kuurot hahmot ovat edustaneet joko maailman pahuudesta puhdasta oikeamielisyyttä, ihmisen yksinäisyyttä tai elämän raadollista irvokkuutta. Kuurot romaanihenkilöt ovat jääneet ontoiksi: kuulevat ovat voineet peilata itseään heidän kauttaan, tai heidän kuuroutensa on valjastettu romaanin juonen vaatimuksiin. Kuurojen arkielämää, yhteisöllisyyttä, viittomakieliä ja kykyä kommunikoida puheen välityksellä on proosataiteessa kuvattu puutteellisesti ja virheellisesti.

Tämä tutkimus soveltaa narratiiviteorian käsitteitä ja dekkarikirjallisuuden teorioita moniääniseen romaaniin, jossa eri henkilöhahmojen toisistaan poikkeavat näkemykset pääsevät esiin kaikkitietävän ulkopuolisen kertojan välityksellä. Kuva kahdesta kuurosta henkilöstä ja kuurouteen liittyvistä ilmiöistä piirtyy kerronnassa ristiriitaiseksi ja moniääniseksi.

Molemmat romaanin tärkeistä kuuroista hahmoista rikkovat aiempia kertomakirjallisuudessa esiintyneitä kuuron muotteja. Toinen on moniulotteinen, ulkonäöltään viehättävä, äärimmäisen määrätietoinen, seksuaalisuudellaan pelaava uhmakas tytär, joka etsii paikkaansa kuulevien ja kuurojen maailmojen väliltä. Toinen jää yksiulotteisemmaksi, mutta on luultavasti länsimaisen kertomakirjallisuuden ensimmäinen kuurojen oikeuksia ajava ja kuulevia ravisteleva aktivistihahmo. Kummatkin kuurot hahmot piirtyvät kuitenkin kerronnassa toisten, kuulevien hahmojen suodattimien läpi. Dekkarikirjallisuuden konventiot nivoutuvat läheisesti romaanin kerrontaan, ja kuuroudella onkin merkitystä romaanissa myös juonen kannalta.

Kaiken kaikkiaan *For the sake of Elena* on ainutlaatuisen rikas romaani kuurouden kannalta ja tuo esille ilmiön problematiikkaa useilta näkökannoilta. Näyttäisi siltä, että tieteiden piirissä kehittynyt uusi sosiokulttuurinen kuurouskäsitys olisi hiljalleen siirtymässä myös kuulevan valtaväestön taiteeseen ja viihteeseen.

Asiasanat: character analysis. crime fiction. deafness. deafness in fiction. Deaf Studies. detective fiction. socio-cultural Deafness

1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to examine how deafness is portrayed in the detective novel *For the sake of Elena* by Elizabeth George. I shall identify and analyse various voices through which the deaf characters Elena Weaver and Gareth Randolph are described. Moreover, I shall survey two borderline cases of deafness, the portrayal of an organisation of the deaf, and the references to British Sign Language found in the novel.

Due to the complexity and the high interdependence of my research problem, I shall use a cross-disciplinary approach. I will begin by linking my study to various necessary points of reference: study of disability, Deaf studies in particular, deafness in literature, narrative theory, and crime fiction. The primary theoretical framework for this study comes from recent disability and Deaf studies. That will be set in Chapter 2. Deafness in prose fiction as a subject, and previous studies on it, are reviewed in Chapter 3. As my primary data is a novel, additional methodology and terminology are culled from narrative theory, a branch of which study of popular fiction nowadays is. This framework is introduced in Chapter 4.1.

I shall also pay close attention to the norms of the genre we are dealing with - the detective story. The whole process of examining the murder of Elena Weaver unfolds little by little in the novel, most of the time through the eyes of Detective Inspector Thomas Lynley. Similarly, Elena Weaver's deafness and personality unfolds little by little as Lynley and his assistant Barbara Havers carry out the investigations. The requirements of the genre include conventions such as a murder, a number of suspects, evaluation of characters, sufficient clues, sufficient suspense, and identification with the detective, to mention a few. These necessities are closely intertwined to the language used and the portrayal of the characters. A brief review of the study of detective fiction is found in 4.2.

This study is particularly valid as there is not much previous research on the portrayal of the Deaf in fiction. Guella proposes that literature represents a culture's ideas about its concerns, and how people treat these concerns (1983:25). I believe as well that fiction reflects the huge, multi-faceted scale of human life

and that fictional characters, or fictional voices, always reflect our reality, or can even contribute to it. Sometimes this happens more directly or 'realistically', sometimes less so. As Guella points out (1983:26), fiction is one way of identifying people's attitudes. I believe that books *about* the Deaf are widely read *by* the Deaf and potentially important to them, for instance, for the construction of identity, as is the case with any cultural group, however distinct or marginal. The themes dealt with in this study really concern a great number of people. Popular fiction - to which detective prose and thence *For the Sake of Elena* belong - is read by a large audience, and perhaps a rather representative one (all social classes, all ages, both sexes, etc). Popular fiction, including detective stories, is a source of excitement and pleasure, but also of information about different cultures and varying human nature to many readers, educated and uneducated alike. For a number of readers, *For the sake of Elena*, for instance, will certainly be the only source of Deaf issues they have read in their life. This gives additional support for the belief that studying popular fiction - and the views of human experience found in it - is necessary.

Deaf Studies seems to be a flourishing, 'fresh' field of research, to which I might have an opportunity to contribute in an original way. Deafness has apparently aroused little interest among literary critics and it may not have been understood properly - neither by authors nor by critics. At least this did not happen until the late twentieth century when social sciences and linguistics gained better insight into socio-cultural Deafness, and when that insight started to spread. I hope to fuse relevant ideas from narrative theory (more precisely: character analysis, voices, focalisation, etc) to the framework offered by Deaf studies in order to create a meaningful, fruitful and solid theoretical background for my work.

Why is exactly *For the sake of Elena* such a good choice for a study like this? Owing to numerous catalogues and databases as well as the power of the spread word, the novel has become well-known within Deaf communities in the course of the 1990s. There are few novels around that contain any treatment of deafness or deaf issues; therefore, the few that do are welcomed by the Deaf. In *For the sake of Elena*, two deaf characters are portrayed, which gives a promise

of an interesting study. Furthermore, nineteenth-century and earlier twentieth-century fiction has already been tentatively studied, as will be seen in 3.1.

So, my aim is basically to understand, describe, and analyse what goes on in the novel (or in fact, in the carefully selected excerpts) from the point of view of the deaf characters' deviance, to the extent that they are 'deviant'. My study will thus be a study of deviance (some would be eager to say 'disability', but I shall refrain from using that word so far; see 2.2) in a certain, very specific context - a contemporary realistic detective novel. Multiple views and opinions of Elena's deviance are offered in the novel, since Elena had before her untimely death played an important role in the lives of most major characters in the novel. My goal is to understand the novel holistically: how different parts and phenomena are connected, and how language works to create a certain picture of them.

I shall focus on the fictional text itself as a kind of social 'micro-world', and distance the author Elizabeth George from my analysis. However, a novel is always simultaneously a creation (a work of art) and a product of the source culture (Anglo-American). This novel is a realistic account of the examinations of a murder in the Cambridge of the 1990s, and every event and detail could well be from real life. It is also very clear that George had become familiar with deafness issues and the opposite approaches to deafness (see Chapter 2) before she wrote the novel, since those issues and approaches can be found in it through different narrative voices. Therefore, it is not Elizabeth George the author's view or attitude that I will examine, but rather, what and how different characters and voices created by George tell about the deaf characters.

The bulk of my work consists of extracts about Elena Weaver's and Gareth Randolph's deafness found in the narrative. I shall make observations about the expressions and words (lexical choices) that different characters use. Then I will go on to identify the multiple voices that are present, and analyse the characters in their context. I shall attempt to place the views or ideas put forth by the different voices in the frame of Deaf Studies. The primary frame is the continuum between the audiologically 'deaf' and the culturally 'Deaf' (see 2.2). Because the story is fictional, I will have to consider the issues of narrative as well: what purpose do these different characters serve, what ideas about life, what

stereotypes, what sides of society or of human life do they represent? I aim at revealing certain patterns and paradigms about the characters in the context where they speak of Elena, Gareth, and deafness. As Chapter 5 is reserved for the necessary (mainly technical) background data about Elizabeth George and the novel *For the sake of Elena* itself, the actual analysis will be done in Chapter 6.

A few words are necessary about my position as analyst. I am myself hearing and I do not have any first-hand knowledge of 'the Deaf experience' (see 2.2), of how it 'feels to be deaf'. So, the best I can do is to link my study in the yet narrow tradition of research of deafness in literature and base my interpretations on the written sources available. Even though no hearing person may not be as qualified as the deaf themselves to appraise whether a portrayal of deafness is accurate, credible, or realistic, I believe that I have here gathered all the necessary tools to analyse such a portrayal in a scholarly way, following and validly combining several fields of research.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

One label that has always been attached to deafness is that of disability, or a handicap. The attitudes towards deafness have been changing rapidly since the late 1970s: it is now increasingly being seen as a social phenomenon and a cultural form, albeit often stemming from a physical state of affairs. The present emphasis has been put forth by social scientists, linguists, and anthropologists, in particular. The trend in the last decades, in the 1990s in particular, has clearly been to depathologise also other defects than deafness by admitting the needs of different groups or individuals to be recognised.

As this study is an analysis of deviance in a specified context, the primary theoretical framework comes from the study of deviance. In 2.1 I shall briefly present the major issues in the study of disability, while 2.2 will be a more detailed survey of Deaf Studies, a cross-disciplinary field that has exploded during the past three centuries.

2.1 Study of disability

Before I shift my focus on deafness, a few words about a larger framework to which deafness belongs are in order. Views of disability and otherness changed drastically during the late twentieth century. While it is questionable whether deafness should be considered a 'disability', the understanding of deafness and study of it do not exist in a vacuum. Instead, they are influenced in many ways by the changing notions of disability, and vice versa.

The most concrete outcome of this change in attitudes occurs on the level of social practice and action, but another important level is that of discourses, texts, speech, descriptions, portrayals, classifications, labelling, narratives, etc. This underlying level is created by language. The focus of this study will be exactly on that level: how impressions are shaped out of language, the building matter of prose fiction.

According to the social model of disability, 'disability' means 'the social consequences of having an impairment' (Light 1999; earlier coined, among others, by Oliver 1983:50), while the term 'impairment' refers to a physical attribute of the body (Corker and French 1999:2). Disability activists (and the disabled) have welcomed such a socially based definition. In *For the sake of Elena*, Elena Weaver and Gareth Randolph have undoubtedly an 'impairment', but it is my aim to find out whether it has caused them a 'disability'.

Originally coined for the purposes of cultural anthropology, Pike's *etic/emic* dichotomy is applicable for the study of disability groups as well. Cultural representations from the point of view of a native of the culture are 'emic', whereas those from the point of view of an outside observer of that culture are 'etic' (Pike 1954). For example, attitudes, views, vantage points, representations, etc, can be emic or etic. In my analysis (Chapter 6) I shall frequently use these terms.

Shakespeare suggests that prejudice still underlies firmly cultural representation (1994:283). He points out that the starting point of stigmatising the disabled is the equation of certain groups with nature and the body: disabled people are stigmatised as 'other' because they represent the victory of body over

mind, of nature over culture, or of death over life (1994:296-297). From such a presupposition arises the establishment of a normal identity through separation from the 'other'. This is done by projection of negative attitudes, fears, or a sense of unease onto the 'other'. Furthermore, disabled people are a threat to order and to the self-conception of Western people: they remind the so called non-disabled people of their own vulnerability, which enhances the need for discrimination and stigmas. (Shakespeare 1994:297-298.)

The most recent view is offered by historians Paul K. Longmore and David Goldberger. While they are surely not the first to notice the following crucial point, their way of putting it says it all: "an ideology of disability as a product of nature has seemed to obviate the need or possibility of studying disability as an artifact or construct." (2000:889). The medical approach has, as a rule, considered the disabled inert or invisible, or "passive recipients of the benevolence of those regarded as the real historical agents", but as active participants and individuals only when part of a broad and conspicuous movement (2000:890-891). Thence, Longmore and Goldberger call for a "shift from medical to sociocultural and political definitions of disability" (2000:921), and demand that the role of disability - similarly as gender, race, or class - be explored as central to modern history (2000:891,922). This suggestion seems today perfectly valid to other fields of social sciences and humanities as well, not the least to study of literature.

2.2 Deafness as a subject

The purpose of this subchapter is to present the major framework for my analysis, Deaf Studies, in a nutshell. Deaf Studies is a cross-disciplinary field of study that includes virtually all scholarship on deafness as a phenomenon, but particularly as studied with a socio-cultural focus. The definition by the Department of Deaf Studies at the University of Bristol (2001; see Bibliography, electronic source) is as follows: "Deaf Studies is the study of *the language, community and culture of deaf people*". The need for such an umbrella field for various kinds of scholarship has both arisen from and, in turn, served to create a new awareness of being deaf.

The last two or three decades of the twentieth century have been a flourishing era for Deaf Studies; it has been successfully linked to linguistics, sociology, anthropology, and educational sciences, among others. Deaf Studies has not only drawn from these disciplines; it has also been hugely influential in reshaping them. A good example is the intensive research on sign languages of the world, which has changed or helped to redefine many central notions held in linguistics.

Before I move on to a review of literature on deafness, I would like to acknowledge an unprinted source of information. Although I have, during my research, read and browsed through numerous (mainly American and British) books on deafness, my overall view on the wide field of Deaf Studies was originally hugely influenced by the lectures and tutorials given during the academic year 1996-1997 by Ulla-Maija Haapanen, lecturer at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. As a hearing child of Deaf adults ('coda'), Haapanen is able to convey aspects of Deaf culture to her hearing students and give valuable emic information to them.

Quite a few of the books that I shall cite in this chapter are general presentations of the field: their main proposition is the conception of deafness as a socio-cultural phenomenon rather than as a medical or pathological one. Moreover, there are linguistically orientated books about sign languages (with emphasis on American Sign Language or British Sign Language) that contain sections on Deaf communities, as well as pragmatically orientated works on education, which contain various relevant parts. It does not matter much which of the general presentations one follows, as the same propositions can largely be found in much of the literature on deafness published during the last quarter of the twentieth century.

There are many different connotations of the word 'deaf'. For most hearing people, 'deaf' means roughly 'the state of not hearing'. Consequently, a deaf person deviates from a normal person primarily in that they have the disadvantage of not hearing. However, deafness is an extremely complex issue, and in this brief review I can only deal with a few of its aspects. For a deaf person, being deaf can be much more than just being unable to hear. For example, the richness of sign language, and the visual in the world and in communication, can be fully revealed to the deaf only.

There exist two distinctive kinds of approaches to the deaf: *the clinical-pathological* and *the cultural* (Woodward 1982:1-3, 75-76). Padden and Humphries (1988:1) point out that "The traditional way of writing about Deaf people is to focus on the fact of their condition - that they do not hear - and to interpret all other aspects of their lives as consequences of this fact.". They add that there is a long history of writings that treat the deaf as "medical cases", or as people with 'disabilities' who 'compensate' for their disability by using sign language. From this point of view, sign language is just an undeveloped system of gestures, which enables the deaf to express their most basic needs. In contrast, Padden and Humphries themselves "want to portray the lives they [the deaf] live" (1988:1). Their book is a clear example of a *socio-cultural* (the more recent term that has largely replaced the term 'cultural' cited above) presentation of the deaf. From the socio-cultural point of view, the notion of the Deaf community is central, as are sign language and different deaf individuals, too. The clinical-pathological and socio-cultural approaches can be understood as two ends of a continuum, and many views of the deaf fall somewhere in between them.

As the major frame of reference from the side of Deaf Studies I shall use the dichotomy suggested first by Woodward (1972, 1982), and later elaborated - among others - by Higgins (1980), Padden and Humphries (1988), and Lane et al. (1996). That is the 'deaf/Deaf dichotomy'. (See also Woodward 1982:1, Padden and Humphries 1988:2, and Vernon and Andrews 1990:3-21). Having the distinction made in American Sign Language (henceforth: 'ASL') as a model, Woodward started to use the lowercase *deaf* when referring to the audiological condition of not hearing, and the uppercase *Deaf* when referring to a group of deaf people who share a language and a culture. Later research has validly pointed out how the two conditions are just extremes at the two ends of a continuum, and that individuals can share both of the two conditions as well as neither of them, or one considerably more than the other. Moreover, there are lots of borderline and in-between cases, to whom injustice is inevitably done unless they are treated individually. The crucial factors are an individual's own identification and preferences. I will not, of course, deny that deafness is also a physical condition. Few hearing people would voluntarily 'go deaf': adopt sign language, join the deaf community and refrain from the benefits of spoken

language. The deaf community, the effective and natural use of sign language, and the quintessence of the deaf people's lives, stem from the physical condition of being unable to hear. No hearing person is likely to achieve the extent of consciousness about being deaf that the deaf themselves have. 'The Deaf experience' is a term often used to refer to the Deaf people's own subjective experience of their existence. The wider use of the term includes the collective experience of the Deaf communities of the world.

The distinction becomes even clearer at the opposite end. By 'hearing' I shall refer to those who can hear; it is simply a physical ability that most people have. 'Hearing' refers to a set of attitudes and values, whether unconscious or conscious. According to Woodward (1982:1), the Hearing identify with oral language communities and values. The term is here used to imply following ideas: etic views or clinical-pathological ideas of deafness, considering deafness a handicap, being ignorant of (or deliberately ignoring) socio-cultural aspects of deafness, disparaging sign language(s), feeling superior to the deaf, belittling the ability of the deaf to make decisions, etc.

Furthermore, the division of all people into deaf or hearing is impossible because, again, there are lots of borderline cases. In English the words 'hearing impaired' and 'hard-of-hearing' are used. Moreover, the existence of these borderline cases makes the socio-cultural study of the deaf more complex. Abstract ideas such as a person's *identity* or *attitudes* are central in the socio-cultural approach, and these vary a lot from one individual to another. All these hearing impaired and hard-of-hearing are separate cases and cannot be regarded as a group: some identify strongly with the deaf and like to sign, whereas others identify with and prefer the company of the hearing, avoiding interaction with the deaf or sign language. Research has shown that children with a hearing impairment are exposed to the two opposing identities of 'deaf' and 'hearing' at an early age (Erting 1994; Corker 1997). Hogan discusses the problematic nature of a hearing-impaired person's identification with the help of two case studies (1999:79-91). He points out that "the activity of moving between [Hearing and Deaf] worlds is significant" (1999:90), and emphasises the centrality of "the experience of heterogeneity that deafness creates, [which] is not necessarily negative" (1999:91).

The socio-culturally Deaf have a totally different centre from that of the Hearing: for instance, from a typical Hearing point of view it is better to be hard of hearing than totally deaf, where as from the Deaf point of view total deafness is much more fertile ground for becoming culturally Deaf (see Lane 1992:5, and Padden and Humphries 1988:39-55). Similarly with the formation of ethnic identities based on 'ethnic prides' (of which Black Pride is perhaps the most famous example), the notion of Deaf Pride has been formed.

By far the most important factor in socio-cultural Deafness and Deaf Pride is sign language. Contrary to widespread popular beliefs, sign language is not mimetic symbols that can be understood by anyone. It should be everyone's most basic knowledge that 'sign language' is parallel to the concept of 'spoken language': there are numerous sign languages around the world in pretty much the same way as there are different spoken languages. In sign languages, many similar phenomena are found that have been found in spoken languages. Such phenomena include regional variation, historical change, the existence of different codes and registers, pidginisation when two languages are in contact, etc. In the United States, variants of American Sign Language (from now on, 'ASL') are used, whereas in Britain, the native language of Deaf people is British Sign Language (from now on, 'BSL'), etc. The sign language used in a given Deaf community is of extreme importance to them. For more about sign languages, or ASL and BSL in particular, consult Woll et al. (1981), Kyle and Woll (1985), Vernon and Andrews (1990:69-96), or Lane et al. (1996:42-123).

Hearing children of deaf adults are often referred to with the acronym 'coda'. Most children born to deaf parents are hearing and become thus (at least) bilingual, provided that no conscious attempts are made to suffocate the children's acquisition of one of the languages. Codas are a large group of people, although the majority of them do not consider Deaf culture their own so strongly. Those who do, however, occupy a niche between the two worlds and often work for connecting them.

In educational contexts, since the early nineteenth century there has been a bitter division of experts and the deaf themselves into 'oralists' and 'manualists' There is a mass of literature dealing with this issue: see, for example, Moores (1996:53-80), Mayberry and Wodlinger-Cohen (1987), Wallvik (1997), or

Gregory et al. (eds.) (1998). The oralists believe that all the deaf should learn spoken language as well as possible and that sign language has no place either in the education or in the social lives of the deaf. The manualists believe that sign language is the best choice for the education of the deaf and the hard-of-hearing, because these groups of people can neither pretend to be hearing nor suddenly become hearing. These two terms are related to two sets of values: oralism to Hearing values, manualism to Deaf values. The oralist and manualist views also collocate very strongly with the pathological and socio-cultural approaches to deafness, respectively. This terminology is handy for describing the characters involved with Elena Weaver (or Gareth Randolph) in *For the sake of Elena.* Education is not much of an issue in the novel: neither Elena Weaver's nor Gareth Randolph's mode of education is at stake, and in the character gallery, there are no devoted 'educationists' striving for one end or another, but rather, just 'laymen' (as regards deafness issues) who have different ambitions and personal goals concerning Elena. Rather than giving a simplistic label to any character, the terms introduced above are here most applicable for describing *tendencies* found in the characters of the novel, so that there can be opposite tendencies, strong or weak, even within one fictional person, depending on their world view, personality, position, proximity to Elena, and other factors.

A characteristic feature from my outsider's point of view is that many of the scholars in Deaf Studies, whether deaf or hearing themselves, appear to be to some extent 'participatory': between the lines in their works one can easily read an urge to pass on knowledge, to spread a political message, to change a long-ignored, unfair point in the world. Much of the research on cultural Deafness not only has the aspiration for scholarly and theoretic precision but also shares these clearly definable practical and political aims. For instance, Alker (1994:722) points out that inaccurate, stereotyped, and negative portrayals of the deaf create negative attitudes in individuals, and are thus undesirable, whereas Bat-Chava (2000:420-428) finds support for the argument that deaf people with culturally Deaf or bicultural identities would have higher self-esteem than deaf persons with hearing identities. Padden and Humphries's representation of the American Deaf (1988) is clearly political as well.

3 HEARING REPRESENTATIONS OF DEAFNESS

Having presented where the understanding of deafness has gone by the end of the twentieth century, I shall move on to the conceptions about the deaf by the hearing. In spite of the wide variety and the great number of connected disciplines characteristic of Deaf Studies, it seems that the portrayal of the deaf in mainstream cultural practices and institutions by the hearing majority, whether it is mass media, film, or literature, is a hugely under-represented and ignored topic so far. Lane suggests that the treatment of the deaf in literature and in other media influences their social identity (1992:6). Before I adjust my focus and review deafness in literature as well as earlier studies on it (chapter 3.1), I shall leave space for a brief appraisal on a more generic level: what kind of etic (from outside) views exist and prevail about the deaf in the Western world?

As suggested above, most hearing people still ignorantly hold the medical-pathological view of deafness. According to them, deafness is just the lack of one crucial sense, which brings misfortune, grief, and practical trouble to the affected. This is further accentuated by the great number of hard-of-hearing and deafened people, for most of whom (partial or total) deafness is indeed a curse. It is almost exclusively the culturally Deaf, the signing Deaf, who try to change the persistent stereotypes. This can be done by personal contact or, more impersonally, through mass media or the arts. As close personal contact with Deaf signers is something that just a tiny minority of non-signing hearing people will ever experience, the coverage of the Deaf in mass media and the arts plays a central role.

Alker's (1994) research shows that the English mass media have hardly at all represented the Deaf in a positive light or from a socio-cultural perspective. Reporting about deafness stems frequently from the medical model: the deaf are marginalized, stereotypes about them persist, and demeaning language is used.

Further faults of which Alker criticises the British media are the lack of attention to deaf rights issues, and failure to consult deaf individuals for first-hand information (1994:723).

English theatre can be criticised on the same grounds: few plays portray deaf characters, and no plays give any representation of Deaf culture or the Deaf experience. Instead, each attempt to portray deafness has been based on the medical disability-based model (Alker 1994:722). Ann Silver finds the same failures in Hollywood cinema: the deaf in mainstream films are mainly unrealistic. Hollywood, raised in Silver's treatise to stand as a metaphor for the society at large, has a huge influence on the general public; it shapes their way of perceiving the world. (Silver 1994:731-735.)

It seems, thus, that the only non-Deaf domain where deafness has begun to receive fair treatment is scholarly writing. Particularly revolutionary and illuminative research in this aspect has been done by linguists (see, for example, Kyle and Woll 1985:1-36) and sociologists (see, for example, Higgins 1980), whereas works of medicine and, at least traditionally, many works within education have insisted on the medical model. In contrast to Hearing research, Deaf scholars have for decades emphasised the aspects of socio-cultural Deafness (see, for example, Lawson 1981, or Padden and Humphries 1988).

3.1 Earlier studies on Deaf characters and deafness in fiction

There has been slight disagreement on the amount of research on this topic. While Lang and Panara point out that many reviews of the treatment of deafness in literary works have been published (1989:22), Guella writes about "a handful of articles", and "two anthologies" (1983:25). At least, the number of studies on deafness in fiction did not increase drastically between 1983 and 1989. Anyhow, the studies conducted so far have often been just articles in journals of the Deaf (such as *The Deaf American* or *The Silent Worker*). Only a few of them have been to hand at the writing of this study. Fortunately, these few surveys are rather new and deal with the subject quite broadly. Here my aim is to present an overview of articles and small-scale studies conducted so far on the subject: an anthology

edited by Batson and Bergman (1985, orig. 1973), Guella (1983), Bergman (1987), Lang and Panara (1989), and Gregory (1990). All of the five are rather superficial reviews of several fictional texts, but together they give a good overview of the developments that have taken place during the past two centuries. However, at the time of the writing of this thesis, no thorough studies on the portrayal of deafness in single texts could be found. Furthermore, the methodology of literary analysis has not before been taken to full use to study deafness in fiction.

[Note: *Angels and outcasts* was originally published as *The Deaf Experience* in 1973, and the actual content of the book remained unchanged at the first printing with the new title (1985). I have used the unchanged 1997 edition of *Angels and outcasts*; the page numbers in references are all from it. It should be noted, however, that the year when the original ideas came out first was 1973. See the bibliography for the details.]

Throughout the history of prose fiction (poetry and drama are out of the scope of this study) there have been deaf characters in novels and short stories. They are even found in works that predate by far the birth of the novel: in Icelandic sagas and chronicles, in Greek mythology, and in Welsh and Irish tales. The hearing-impaired appear throughout the world's folklore, often in ways that show misunderstandings of them, and their status as outsiders or a target of fun (Guella 1983:26). As regards the prose fiction of our times, deaf characters are featured in plenty: among others, in the works of Guy de Maupassant, Alfred de Musset, Boris Pasternak, and Carson McCullers. Guella points out that by 1983, almost one hundred short stories and about 150 novels with deaf characters had been found. However, autobiographies excluded, deaf protagonists or hero(in)es have been extremely few: fictional deaf characters have often been just minor, flat characters portrayed largely in stereotypes. (Guella 1983:25.)

The range of deaf characters is rather broad: they have served different functions in different historical periods, but they also differ within particular eras. However, they are usually portrayed within a limited range of symbolic options, and the range of images is narrow compared to the actual range existing in deaf communities (Guella 1983:27). The majority of the portrayals show little or no understanding of deafness (Guella 1983:26). The presence of deaf characters

often tells more about the attitudes of the hearing society, or about the hearing person with which they are juxtaposed, than of deafness or the Deaf experience. (Batson and Bergman 1985:ix, 3-7, 140, 205.) Some of the fictional deaf characters have been just minor side characters, but even where they are protagonists of the story, they still remain somewhat hollow and unrealistic. Deaf characters stand as metaphors for something more general such as suppression or isolation (Lane 1992:7; Batson and Bergman 1985:205).

Batson and Bergman validly observe a diachronic change in the portrayal of deaf characters. Nineteenth-century deaf characters are heavily, often unrealistically idealised in contrast to the hearing, who are more susceptible to the evil within society, while those of the twentieth century carry more often a message of isolation, "the new illness of society" (Batson and Bergman 1985:124). Moreover, the one-dimensional role that deaf characters generally play in nineteenth-century fiction changes into more imaginative portrayals. Twentieth-century deaf characters can be absurd or grotesque, ignorant, odd and confusing, and even victors or heroes (Batson and Bergman 1985:137-140; Bergman 1987:172-173). However, fluid and enlightened portrayals of deafness per se still remain few: the fictional deaf represent in many ways the modern condition, "its absurdity, its alienating pressures, its destruction of the individual, its smothering of the voice of one against many" (Batson and Bergman 1985:137).

Deaf characters in nineteenth-century fiction mostly represent suppression and class struggle (Batson and Bergman 1985:4, 124). Excessive idealisation renders those characters somewhat unrepresentative of real deaf people. The main credit of those works lies not in the portrayal of the deaf; they rather manage to show today's readers how intolerant society then was (including the narrators who were unable to portray the deaf realistically or in depth). The idealised deaf characters of the nineteenth century are 'good': they hold moral qualities that most (upper class) people could not aspire to (Batson and Bergman 1985:3). Being outside the society, they represent 'purity' untouched by its evils, and evoke sympathy in readers because of the injustice fallen on them.

The nobler portrayals of deaf characters are just evidence on the belief in the superiority of the "natural" man compared to the socialized man (Batson and

Bergman 1985:84-85; Lane 1992:8). Batson and Bergman suggest that the extremely noble and poor deaf peasants symbolize "the most suppressed people" (1985:124) of all, due to their inability to get their voice heard and thus stand up for themselves. These characters are representative, not round characters portrayed in depth. As such, they can only reveal facets of nineteenth-century circumstances to us, instead of telling about the deaf experience.

The twentieth century saw an increase in the number of deaf characters in fiction as well as in the general acceptance and tolerance of differences (see also Guella 1983:27-29). However, this did not lead to a fairer or more equal treatment of deafness, but rather, gave way to another kind of representativeness (Batson and Bergman 1985:140; see also Guella 1983:27). Deaf characters, alone in their absurdity and grotesqueness, came to represent the condition of all individuals.

The history of prose fiction also includes rare successful deaf characters, who have in some way 'made it' in their lives. In Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* (1957) there is a deaf hunter who is an excellent lip-reader, speaks fairly well, and has been successful in his life. Deaf successes are more frequent in biographies of deaf people. In a fairly recent autobiography, *No sound* (1970), Julius Wiggins portrays himself successful and happy all the time. In *No Sound* there are numerous insights into the Deaf experience without any trace of inferiority. This is a far cry from a hundred years back, when Dickens's and de Musset's characters did not reach full happiness until a hearing child was born to them. (Batson and Bergman 1985:315, 317.) Yet Panara (1972) validly claims that the fictional deafness of the mid-twentieth century is no more based on reality than earlier depictions.

Batson and Bergman emphasise the contribution brought by deaf authors to literature about the deaf. They point out that Howard L. Terry, who himself avoided the entire topic of deafness in his works written in the early twentieth century, was "the only published deaf novelist" (1985:261). This may not be very far from the truth, although is it flagrantly ethnocentric to suppose that the only published American deaf writer should be the only one in the whole world. Anyhow, the fair majority of literary works by the deaf are autobiographies, and thence, not exactly under the scope of this study, which focuses on the deaf in

fiction. It is not out of place to mention, however, that in autobiographical works deaf authors have been able to vividly and accurately describe 'the Deaf experience', and what it is like in practice to be deaf in a society dominated by the hearing. Drabble finds in those works occasional depictions of "happiness and hope", or "courage and perseverance" (1987:2-3), whereas the most common aspects found in the works of the deaf writers surveyed by Batson and Bergman are pride and defiance of the victim role (1985:205-207). It is noteworthy that these works are usually written in the first-person mode (Bergman 1987:172).

Batson and Bergman further point out that it is almost exclusively in works by deaf authors that deaf characters do not personify the loneliest or the most isolated characters that can be imagined. They add: "if an author wishes to create the most pathetically isolated person he or she can, often what comes to mind is a deaf character" (p.317), and critique this tendency of portraying the deaf to the reading public as misleading. Furthermore, the miracle cure motif, recurring in several fictional texts about the deaf written by hearing authors (see Grant 1987:141-142), is severely criticised by Bergman (1987:174).

Batson and Bergman's arguments are not thoroughly consistent. While their main argument is that deaf characters have always been metaphorically representative of something else, they inconsistently point out that the deaf characters they examined are "fully developed" (1985:ix), and that the deaf experience can be grasped from their sample of excerpts (1985:4). Whether they mean 'Deaf' or 'deaf' in the sense as the two terms are nowadays used is left unclear, as the tradition of this distinction was fully established later than 1973, when Batson and Bergman edited the anthology and wrote their commentaries. Perhaps they, after all, meant: what can be somehow grasped from the excerpts is the experience of being 'deaf', and not the Deaf experience.

Defiance and pride are not only found in autobiographies but they are also central themes connected with deafness in fiction (Batson and Bergman 1985:307-308). Another inconsistency in Batson and Bergman's line of argumentation is that while they credit deaf autobiographists with the proudest and the most valid portrayals of deafness, they elsewhere claim that deaf characters are "always", throughout the time span examined, defiant and proud (pp.307-308). The basic difference, they seem to suggest, is that the nineteenth-

century characters accept their due in proud silence (but hardly 'defiantly'), while the twentieth-century counterparts stand for the wish of modern authors to portray general spirit of proud defiance by individuals or communities. Largely because of this tendency, deaf characters have appeared more numerous since the 1950s than ever before (Batson and Bergman 1985:308). Today, a fictional Deaf person "is proud of who he is, proud of his language and culture, angry at the injustices heaped on him by a hearing world" (Lane 1992:41).

Lang and Panara point out that science fiction has portrayed deafness very similarly with other genres. Furthermore, for authors of science fiction, deafness can be "an excellent inherent literary device for conveying social and political messages to a wide range of readers". (1989:22.) In science fiction, deafness and silence have been given various interpretations and metaphorical meanings, while sign languages have appeared more frequently than in other forms of fiction. Lang and Panara suggest, however, that sign languages are portrayed as inferior to speech: they just bridge "linguistic voids until oral languages are learned" (1989:26). Despite these failures, Lang and Panara point out that science fiction has great potential to deal with the alternate reality of "deafness" (1989:28).

In addition to being symbols or metaphors for societal phenomena, deaf characters have had another important function in fiction: the advancement of the plot. Drabble points out how writers such as Guy de Maupassant or Viola Meynell have seized upon possibilities of deaf characters for the sake of melodrama (1987:2). Deafness may be an important factor in the development of the plot while deaf characters may not get their own personal voice or experience heard. Yet it should be kept in mind that writing fictional works is an extremely complex process: the metaphorisation of deaf characters and their utilisation for the purposes of the plot are deeply intertwined and can rarely be simplistically separated.

Grant's anthology *The Quiet Ear* (1987) is just a compilation of excerpts from literature with only a few pages of editorial material. It brings together a miscellaneous collection of excerpts from literature, both verse and prose, both fiction and non-fiction. Every excerpt deals with deafness in some way or another. The aim of the editor Grant, partially deaf himself, is to find "comfort to the deaf and make the hearing world appreciate and understand this complex

disability better" (1987:5). The anthology comprises different sections; the most valid one here is the section titled 'fiction', which focuses on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries once again. Grant does not actually examine the excerpts in any scholarly way. The most apparent judgement that can be made of the sample is that deafness has almost exclusively been depicted as an affliction, a misfortune, or a curse. Although Drabble points out in the preface (1987:1) that the book "gives speech to a silent world", virtually none of the deaf characters featured in the fiction section of the book are fully developed. Instead, all of them are portrayed through the lens of the hearing society, the hegemony, with which it is easier for most readers to identify. Then again, too definite appraisals should not be made as the excerpts are rather short, and many of the deaf characters featured have life outside the excerpts, too. It is left out of the scope of this thesis to examine these fictional works deeper.

Drabble suggests that "a growing sensitivity is illustrated by various stories for young people, which try to teach a sympathetic, positive response to deafness: we do seem to have progressed, at least in theory, from thoughtless laughter" (1987:2). True, certain changes with respect to the portrayal of deafness can be traced which are best described as 'a growing sensitivity'. Yet, sensitive and piteous portrayals of deaf characters are unlikely to succeed in giving a voice to the deaf in their own right.

The picture of deafness drawn in fiction so far is largely dissimilar to the life of those in the Deaf community. Sign languages are often ignored, or reduced to 'finger talk' or a set of gestures necessary for communication but inferior to spoken language. Clearly, there is a need for symbols that more closer approximate reality (Guella 1983:25).

All in all, the dominant way of portraying deafness has been as a handicap, a deficiency, something that constantly causes deaf people, as well as others around them, to suffer. Analogously, deaf people are portrayed primarily as unhappy, lonely, inferior, victims of fate or circumstances, peculiar or even grotesque misfits isolated from society by their disability. The status of deaf people is seldom represented as equal to that of the hearing characters (Gregory 1990:296; Guella 1983:27). Furthermore, the attribution of myths and mystical

powers to deafness and deaf characters in fiction has been usual (Bergman 1987:174; Gregory 1990:297-298).

On the basis of this review, it is evident that the portrayal of deafness constitutes a problem and, at the same time, proposes a challenge for authors. Lane seems to approach these problems with the suggestion that a true portrayal of deafness by a Hearing person is a contradiction in terms. He suggests that even when a Hearing person makes an "extrapolative leap" by trying to imagine what it would be like to be deaf, this attempt is doomed to egocentric thinking and, thus, to failure (1992:6, 10-12). To understand deafness deeper, Lane proposes, a great degree of cultural relativity and a fundamental change in the frame of reference are needed (1992:12).

3.2 Authors' aims in portrayals of deafness

In *The Quiet Ear*, there are excerpts in which authors featured in the anthology comment their portrayals of deafness (these excerpts are mainly letters to the editor Brian Grant sent by the authors). They give first-hand testimony of the aims and purposes of given authors when taking on the task of portraying deafness in their works, and the opportunity to approach the issue of portraying from their point of view.

For instance, Wilkie Collins relied heavily upon John Kitto's autobiographical *The Lost Senses* when he needed materials to work from to be able to represent a "Deaf Mute", his heroine Madonna. Collins found in Kitto's book traits "connected with the deprivation from which she is represented as suffering" (Grant 1987:33). Similarly, Elizabeth Ayrton points out that she needed a disability for her Cretan protagonist, and that she finally chose a suddenly imposed deafness, which "would drive the victim so far into himself that he would feel an even greater despair than the deaf almost always feel" (Grant 1987:151).

There are authors who have written their fictional accounts of deafness on the basis of real-life relationships with deaf people (for instance, for own children in order to give them a deaf hero to identify with) (Grant 1987:195). Mark

Medoff, playwright and author of *Children of a Lesser God*, decided to write a play about deafness after two encounters with an "irresistible" deaf ex-actress, who enlightened him about the lack of parts for deaf actors in the canon of 'hearing' theatre (Grant 1987:203-204; inverted commas original).

4 AIMS, METHODS OF ANALYSIS, AND TYPE OF DATA

As shown in Chapter 3.1, deafness in fiction has been studied before by Batson and Bergman, Lang and Panara, and Guella. However, the point of departure of these scholars has not been purely descriptive: they have an explicit bias and criteria that arise from inside the Deaf community and the wish to do justice to it. They value the surveyed works according to the degree of Deaf experience portrayed in them. They prefer portrayals of socio-cultural Deafness to unrealistic or merely metaphorical (or allegorical) deaf characters. Yet they cannot find any socio-cultural portrayals among works by hearing writers.

Although I fully share their urge to do justice to the long-ignored Deaf culture, I shall aim at maximum objectiveness and descriptiveness in my own analysis. This aim is supported by my adoption of relevant tools from narrative theory. While the observations by Batson and Bergman, and others cited in 3.1, are absolutely valid and well motivated by their vantage point, concepts from the study of literature are needed to get to a more thorough and accurate analysis of a single work. For example, Batson and Bergman frequently mistake author for narrator, particularly in their commentary of the nineteenth century: "And these four authors are no exception to this general intolerance: in their very idealization of their deaf characters [... they] reveal their own inability to tolerate differences" (p.3). The only exception to this confusion is Guy de Maupassant's aristocrat narrator in *Deaf-Mute*, whom Batson and Bergman successfully examine as separate of the author de Maupassant (1985:122-124). Only at this point do Batson and Bergman seem to realise that even if authors can hardly portray things of which they have no clue at all, they may well choose not to load their narrators and characters with all of their knowledge and values. Thence, I shall distance the

author (Elizabeth George) from the analysis more than Batson and Bergman have done, and examine the novel as an arena of polyphony (multiple voices), where the arrangement of voices is not necessarily in perfect accordance with the author's personal sympathies.

In order to examine the representation of deafness in *For the Sake of Elena*, attention has to be paid to the narration form of the novel: who is the narrator? Who does the narrator tell about? From whose point of view are the chosen extracts narrated? Into whose mind does the narrator have access? What kinds of 'filters' are at work as information is passed from the narrator to the reader? Is the narrator reliable, and if it is, to what extent? What purpose do these narrative choices serve in the story? What implications does the narration form have on the portrayal of deafness?

Despite the predominant trend in literary studies to downplay the role of character in fiction (see 4.1.1 below), and in spite of the obvious interdependence between character and action, my focus will be explicitly on character. More precisely, I shall examine how Elena's and Gareth Randolph's characters are formed, and what those characters are like who talk or think about Elena or Gareth in a certain way.

In 4.1 I shall present the methodology that I have picked from narrative theory, whereas subchapter 4.2 is a review of popular fiction and detective fiction as research data.

4.1 Narrative theory

The major framework of this study is derived from the field of Deaf studies, a cross-disciplinary field in its own right. Moreover, I must follow certain conventions found within narrative theory as my primary data is prose fiction. For the purposes of this thesis, I shall avoid excessive use of theoretical terminology. In the actual analysis (Chapter 6), however, methodology of narrative theory will be used. I have adopted most of that terminology from Rimmon-Kenan (1983), who offers a good overview on narrative theory, balancing between different schools found within that field. The same basic terminology (character, narrator,

point of view, focaliser, etc) can be found in numerous other works within the field. Also Rimmon-Kenan has adopted concepts, definitions and ideas from previous scholars, such as Ewen (1971, 1980), Genette (1972), and Bal (1997, orig. 1980). All references and solitary page numbers in this chapter (4.1) are from Rimmon-Kenan (1983), unless otherwise indicated. In the following, I shall present Rimmon-Kenan's framework for aspects of narrative fiction, characters and characterisation, focalisation, and narrative voices.

4.1.1 Existence of characters

Although the notion of character as an independent, human-like entity in fiction has been denied and reduced both by authors and literary critics of the twentieth century, Rimmon-Kenan defends that widely denied view. Her well-argued position and integrative approach allows us to view fictional characters in a way valid for studies such as mine. As Todorov has put it in his theory on 'narrative-men' ('hommes-récits'), a character is a potential story of his own life (1971:37).

Rimmon-Kenan further legitimates the study of character (pp.34-36). First, character and action are interdependent, none being *a priori* a more fundamental aspect of narratives than the other. Second, some narratives clearly focus more on psychology (of characters) at the expense of action, and vice versa. Todorov suggested the classification of narratives into 'psychological' and 'a-psychological'; psychological narrative regards each action as a means of access to the personality in question, while in an a-psychological narrative action is important in itself (1971:33-37.) Third, the reader's attention on a given reading can be focused on either element, and so the hierarchy of character and action can be changed, even within the same reading.

Citing Ewen (1971:7; 1980:33-44), Rimmon-Kenan presents a three-dimensional classification of characters (p.41). The three continua or axes used for the task are: complexity, development, and penetration into the 'inner life'. On the axis of complexity, a character can have many different traits (which can even be in conflict) or just one or a few traits that are emphasised or portrayed in excess. On the axis of development, minor characters are often static and not

developed (while they are likely to serve a certain function in the narrative), while at the opposite pole, there are fully developed characters, whether fully traced in the text or just implied (Rimmon-Kenan 1983:41-42). The third axis, penetration, involves getting inside the consciousness of the characters: while the reader is let by the narrator to some characters' minds, others remain opaque. Also the terms 'flat' and 'round' have traditionally been used for the same purpose as Ewen's three axes; 'flat' and 'round' can as well be considered the two extremes of a continuum. If a character is (in Ewen and Rimmon-Kenan's terms) relatively complex, relatively well developed, and if the reader has at least some access to its mind, it can be called 'round'; if one or more of these aspects is violated, the character remains more or less a 'flat' one. (For more about Ewen's writings in Hebrew, see Rimmon-Kenan 1983:151.)

4.1.2 Characterisation

I shall now have a preview of the methods for 'finding' the character between the lines of the text. Having suggested that character is, on the level of story, essentially a construct, Rimmon-Kenan introduces a methodology (pp.36-40, 59-70) in order to reconstruct character from the cues found in the text. This is essentially done by generalisation. One collects a set of personality traits, and if a particular trait does not match with the ones already worked out by the reader, the implication would seem that either the generalisations have gone more or less wrong, or that the character has changed. So, a certain degree of cohesion is definitely needed in character portrayal in order to enable any generalisation or reconstruction. The main principles of cohesion, Rimmon-Kenan suggests, are repetition, similarity, contrast, and logical implication (p.39). By these means narration prompts generalisation and reconstruction of characters.

While Rimmon-Kenan admits that "any element in the text may serve as an indicator of character and, conversely, character-indicators may serve other purposes as well" (p.59), there are elements that are most frequently associated with characterisation. The two basic types of textual indicators of character are direct definition and indirect presentation (Ewen 1971; 1980:47-48 as cited by

Rimmon-Kenan 1983:59-60). Direct definition is explicit naming of a character's qualities; the more authoritative the narrator, the more the reader is tempted to accept the definitions (p.60). In the prose fiction of the twentieth century, diredt definition has given way to indirect presentation, which predominates in modern and postmodern prose (Ewen 1980:51-52 as cited by Rimmon-Kenan 1983:61).

Unlike direct definition, indirect presentation exemplifies, implies and displays traits that characters have, and it is left to the active reader to reconstruct the characters. According to Rimmon-Kenan, characters' traits may be implied by action, speech, appearance, or environment (pp.61-67). Actions can be habitual or one-time; commissions, omissions, or mere intentions; symbolic on non-symbolic (pp.61-63). In characters' speech, both its content and its form (or style, or manner) can indicate their traits, both social and individual aspects (pp.63-65). Moreover, 'speech' can be realised either in conversation or in silent inner 'mind-talk'.

Where action and speech convey character-traits through causal connections (to be made up by the reader), implication of character-traits by appearance or by environment relies more on spatial contiguity (p.65). The relation between external appearance and character-traits is essentially a metonymical means of character portrayal, as hardly anyone believes anymore in theories that attribute certain physical features with a certain set of psychological traits. Physical features can be put on a continuum where features beyond the character's control (height, length of nose) lie at one end and those that depend largely on the character (clothes, hair-style) at the other (p.65). I would suggest that the latter are more helpful in the reconstruction of character, as they certainly tell more about 'the inner life'. Along with appearance, a character's physical (room, house, street, town) or social (family, class) environment may function as trait-connoting metonymies (p.66).

In addition to definition and implication of character-traits, they may be emphasised or reinforced by analogy (pp.67-70). As one type of analogy, Rimmon-Kenan mentions reciprocal characterisation, in which "two characters are presented in similar circumstances [and] the similarity or contrast between their behaviour emphasizes traits characteristic of both" (p.70).

There is variation in the use of these indicators: while different writers use them in different ways, such variation may also be found within the works of one writer, or even within a single narrative (p.59). Finally, Rimmon-Kenan acknowledges the complexity and multi-dimensionality of characterisation: it is greatly dependent on the reader and the focus chosen. The means of characterisation may interact or overlap significantly. Moreover, character-traits themselves are far from plain and simple; in well-developed characters there is always the co-presence of many (even conflicting) traits, and the reader may well have to "hesitate among various labels" (p.70). This is what makes characters psychologically more 'real' and interesting for readers.

4.1.3 Focaliser

The notion of 'focaliser' is essential to the understanding of the portrayal of deafness in *For the sake of Elena*. Focalisers are utilised by the narrator to indicate centre of consciousness: *who* experiences *what*, through *whose* eyes is the reader introduced to the events. Adopted from Genette (1972:206-224), the term 'focaliser' is preferable to the more common 'point of view'. Rimmon-Kenan gives reasons for this choice. With the concept of focalisation, the strongly visual connotations of 'point of view' can be avoided, and cognitive, emotive, and ideological elements can be added. More importantly, it brings clarity to the discrimination between perspective and narration: 'who sees?' and 'who speaks?' are two different questions (p.72) that can be posed in connection with any extract in a given novel. A character can apparently both see and speak, even at the same time, but also a narrator (or 'an agent') can tell what a character sees (or hears, smells, tastes, feels), or one character can tell what another character perceives. Thus, the distinction between narrator and focaliser has to be made. With third-person centre of consciousness (the predominant narration mode in *For the sake of Elena*), the centre of consciousness is the focaliser, while the user of the third person is the narrator (p.73).

Narratives are always focalised *on* someone or something. While the focaliser is the agent whose perception orients the presentation, the 'focalised' is

the object of perception or experience. (See Bal 1997:149-154.) The focalised is generally 'what is seen' or 'what happens'. It should be noted, however, that the focalised can also be a character's thoughts or emotions: it can be broadly grasped as the *content* of the text.

Rimmon-Kenan suggests (pp.74-76) that depending on the focaliser's position to the story, it can be internal or external. The locus of internal focalisation is inside the events, generally in the form of a character-focaliser, but also possibly non-personified (the line may sometimes be difficult to draw when the reader is not sure whose perception colours the narration). External focalisation (outside or 'above' the events) is often very close to the narrator, and thus its vehicle is called narrator-focaliser. Within one narrative, focalisation can remain fixed, alternate, or even vary among several focalisers (pp.76-77).

Rimmon-Kenan divides focalisation into three facets: perception, psychology and ideology, which may or may not overlap in narration (pp.77-82). Perception is determined by space and time. As regards the spatial component, the external position of the focaliser corresponds to a bird's-eye view and the internal position to the view of a limited observer. As regards time, an external focaliser has access to all the temporal dimensions of the story (past, present and future), whereas an internal focaliser is limited to the ever changing 'present' of the characters (p.78).

The psychological facet involves two components as well: the cognitive and the emotive. An external focaliser knows everything about the represented world (while it may often withhold information to create suspense), while an internal one, being part of the world, cannot by definition be omniscient (p.79). At the emotive level, we face the question of objectivity: an external focaliser is often perceived as objective and neutral, whereas an internal one, always involved in the story, is biased and gives subjective, coloured accounts of the focalised (p.80).

The ideological facet of focalisation is inseparably connected with my research question. The events and characters of the story can be evaluated from a single, dominant point of view, or from competing points of view that form a hierarchy (Uspensky 1973:8-9). In the simplest case, these norms would be presented through the perspective of one dominant narrator-focaliser. However,

as is the case with *For the sake of Elena*, multiple ideologies are portrayed through the use of different focalisers. Uspensky proposes (1973:8-9) that the narrator-focaliser has the most authoritative ideology, while those of character-focalisers become subordinate to it (see also Rimmon-Kenan 1983:81). The validity of their ideological positions is doubtful, and their interplay enables a 'polyphonic' reading (p.81; the notion of polyphony comes originally from Bakhtin 1973, orig. 1929). Ideologies are usually portrayed implicitly through behaviour, speech or thought, but they can also be discussed explicitly by characters. The same holds true of the narrator-focaliser's ideology: it can be implied in orientation or emphasis, but it can as well be posed directly (p.82).

The perceptual, psychological and ideological facets, as well as the components that they comprise, are in constant interplay. Detective Inspector Thomas Lynley in *For the sake of Elena* serves as an example: being the focaliser (as he is in most scenes of the novel), he can see and hear something (the focalised) at the same time, filter his perception through his previous knowledge, and colour it with his emotions from his ideological standpoint. This all can happen in just one sentence of the narration. As Rimmon-Kenan points out (p.82), however, the three facets need not concur: they may belong to different, even clashing focalisers.

Focalisation itself is conceptual, non-verbal, but it is always expressed by language (p.82). Focalisation, as well as shifts and changes in it, are signalled by language: among such linguistic means found in examples by Rimmon-Kenan are naming, word choices, sentence complexity, use of metaphors, and degree of irony. Rimmon-Kenan also discusses problematic or impossible cases such as James Joyce. However, I would claim that in works of crime fiction, no matter how polyphonic they may be, focalisation is indicated very explicitly for most of the time.

Finally, Rimmon-Kenan suggests that focalisation as a textual factor might be totally integrated with story and narration: a character-focaliser's perceptions could be seen just as part of the story, whereas focalisation by a narrator-focaliser could be reduced to just one rhetorical strategy among others (p.85). In respect with my research question, however, focalisation remains a central tool: if a certain portrayal of deafness is given in the text, *whose* portrayal

is it? *Who* is talking about deafness or the deaf characters of the novel? The creator of all voices of the novel, and thence the uppermost level of production, is Elizabeth George the author. Yet all the time she uses a narrator of one kind or another to convey meanings and to unfold the narrative. Different characters of the novel take different stands to Elena's deafness, and these views are conveyed to readers through different lenses. This renders the possibilities offered by the notion of focalisation valuable to my study.

4.1.4 Narrative voices

While narration is the act of telling the story in some language, narrator is the source of the words used in the telling of the story. In her typology of narrators (pp.94-103), Rimmon-Kenan proposes four criteria, according to which narrators can be evaluated and which influence readings of narratives: narrative level, extent of participation, degree of perceptibility, and reliability. The most applicable of these four for my present purposes are the latter two, as they have the most to do with the ideological level and thus, the portrayal of deafness. In order to make the difference to characters clear, I shall use the pronoun 'it' to refer to narrators.

One of the narrator's roles is to communicate to others what they do not know. The narrator shows its prior knowledge of characters (and thus, implicitly, its own presence as well) by *identifying* them in some way when they are introduced to the story (p.97). *Definition* of character is more authoritative characterisation: it involves an abstraction, generalisation, or summary (p.98). Moreover, a narrator can tell things which the characters are unconscious of or which they conceal from others. *Commentary*, yet another way how the narrator shows, can be in the form of interpretation of the story, of judgement, or of generalisation (of a particular case to apply on a larger scale). The more the narrator uses these signs, the more overt and visible it becomes, and consequently, the reader becomes more conscious of its existence.

In fiction, an omniscient outside narrator (in Genette 1972:255-256, 'an extradiegetic and heterodiegetic narrator') is generally considered reliable, although the reliability of a narrator is rather hard to define. Rimmon-Kenan

applies negation to this dilemma by proposing three sources of the narrator's unreliability: limited knowledge, personal involvement, and problematic value-scheme (p.100). Due to these factors, character-narrators (in Genette 1972: 255-256, 'homodiegetic narrators') are more likely to be unreliable than outside narrators. However, despite this rule of thumb that generally holds well, with many texts it is difficult to decide whether, and to what extent, the narrator is reliable or unreliable (p.103).

4.2 Detective fiction as data

In the tradition of the study of literature, popular fiction was nearly ignored for a long time. One of its sub-genres, crime fiction, was labelled as 'entertainment', 'low' literature, or one-dimensional leisure reading that could be disposed of once the murderer was found out, and it was not considered worth of academic or critical studies.

According to Todorov, the same measurements do not apply to "high" art and "popular" art (1971:10). To detective fiction, theory of popular fiction can be applied: to "develop" its norms is failure to obey them, while to "improve upon" detective fiction is to write "literature", not detective fiction. The best popular novel is the one about which there is nothing to say. Todorov quotes S.S. Van Dine, a dogmatic author of detective fiction, who invented a set of rules for writing it in 1928: for example, love, descriptions, or psychological analyses have no place in detective novels (Todorov 1971:15-16).

Scholarly notions of detective fiction have changed somewhat from those comments. L'Henry Evans (1988:100) sees the traditional position of crime fiction as "ephemeral, the reading being valid only in so far as excitement and suspense are created by the difficulty of finding out who is the perpetrator of the murder [and] once he has been unmasked, it seems that the book can legitimately be discarded". L'Henry Evans challenges this anachronistic view, however, with alternative postmodern views that allow even detective stories a multiplicity of individual readings. This is in great concord with *For the Sake of Elena* and my standpoint to it. There are indeed multiple voices building the reality in the novel,

and this multiplicity and variety also applies to the portrayal of deafness from different perspectives, with different focus, with varying proximity to the matter and with varying credibility.

John Cawelti (1976:1) has suggested a dichotomy into 'formulaic' and 'mimetic' fiction. While Cawelti denies that popular fiction is in any way 'degraded' fiction, he proposes that its function is essentially different from élite fiction. 'Formulaic', or popular, fiction aims at reproducing cultural consensus and ideal world without disorder, ambiguity or uncertainty, while 'mimetic', or élite, literature confronts us with exactly these contradictory elements that are found in the real world. Pawling seems to suggest, quite rightly, that this model is too black-and-white and does not leave space for the possibility of creative, radical popular fiction (1984:10-11). Popular fiction, thus, need not necessarily be fully predictable, escapist, conservative, or formulaic, but it can (at its best) question dominant values or shake ossified beliefs, too. This is the case with *For the sake of Elena.*

As Pawling points out, the "identity of English Literature as an intellectual discipline is, in part, dependent on a 'significant other' - popular literature". In contrast, he suggests that literary criticism should be "able to account for the whole of literary culture, and not just that segment which has been canonised" (1984:1-2). Popular literature (including detectives, the current subject of analysis) enjoys a wide readership, and therefore, the world-views and representations of phenomena found in it are definitely not insignificant, but indeed, worth critical investigation. (About the relationship of popular fiction and literary criticism up until the 1980s and the changing situation, see Pawling 1984:1-19.) Thus, this study is not carried out just to specify how deafness is portrayed in the micro-world of the novel, but also to find out to what kinds of portrayals is Elizabeth George's huge readership exposed.

However, my main emphasis will lie on the analysis of the text as a source of meaning creation (Pawling 1984:17,4). For the purpose of this study, I shall borrow from Pawling a framework for understanding popular fiction: it should be examined "as a form of cultural production and as a *process of meaning creation* which offers a particular way of thinking and feeling about one's relationship to oneself, to others, and to society as a whole." Thence, a popular fictional text is

not only a bearer of ideology or an image of social identity, but also "*intervenes* in the life of society by organising and interpreting experiences which have previously been subjected only to partial reflection" (Pawling 1984:4).

Furthermore, Pawling suggests a framework of genre analysis for popular fiction: the genres exist in "specific social, cultural and historical contexts" (1984:5), which cannot be ignored, and are based on contracts between writers and readers. The fundamental contract of thrillers could, for instance, be "thrill of uncertainty which is generated by the opposition between security and adventure". (Pawling 1984:4-5.) I shall determine the ways in which *For the sake of Elena* follows or deviates from the contracts and conventions of the thriller, but only where my research problem, the portrayal of deafness is inseparably linked to them.

As regards crime fiction, terminology varies somewhat. All combinations of the attributes 'crime', 'detective', 'spy', and 'murder', attached to the nouns 'fiction', 'prose' or 'stories' are roughly synonymous compound terms: 'crime fiction', 'detective prose', 'murder stories', 'spy fiction', etc. Also 'mystery' is widely used in everyday language to refer to the genre. Some recent scholars on detective fiction distinguish between its different sub-genres. Such distinctions are not, however, needed for my present purposes, as I examine deafness as one aspect in the novel rather than the novel itself as a detective novel. For the sake of general readability and simplicity, I shall here systematically stick to the most generic terms 'crime fiction' and 'detective fiction' and regard them as synonymous.

Crime fiction as a genre has been markedly Anglo-Saxon (Lundin 1981:67): it can then be assumed that it reflects and reproduces markedly Anglo-Saxon cultural traits. Some have gone as far as to claim that Shakespeare's *Hamlet* - or even the story of Cain and Abel in the Bible – can be considered crime fiction, as they deal with crimes (Lundin 1981:70). However, by far the most often quoted birth date of the genre of crime fiction is 1841, when Poe's *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* was published (Lundin 1981:67; Tani 1984:xi, 1-16). It is true that numerous acknowledged authors have written about crimes. The definition of crime fiction has to be narrowed here: not every novel that deals with crime is crime fiction. I shall base the discussion in this chapter on my

intuitive definition, which is essentially narrower than the abovementioned. 'Crime fiction' consists of works that, first, deal with a serious crime (most often murder), second, are generally read for entertainment and excitement rather than for literary or artistic value (whatever is meant by it), and third, have traditionally (but not so flagrantly anymore) been left out of the literary canon and the centre of scholarly focus. This definition finds support from Tani (1984:1-34).

In detective novels there are often two different stories: the story of the crime, and the story of the investigation (Todorov 1971:11) The crime cannot be immediately present in the narrative (1971:12). In Todorov's typology, 'the thriller' ('le roman noir', 'série noire') integrates the two stories, 'prospection' replaces pure retrospection (1971:13-17). In Todorov's 'suspense novel' ('le roman à suspense'), the interest lies both in the past and in the future. The mystery is the starting point, the main interest is derived from the present story (1971:17-18). *For the sake of Elena* has features from both the thriller and the suspense novel (see 6.3).

Bradbury (1988:88-89) points out that the text "moves towards an understanding of events", and "at the moment immediately before the narrative closure, the action is explained and the criminal is revealed." A very central requirement of the genre is to keep the reader in suspense, in anticipation, frequently even to mislead the reader. This shows in the information structure, narrative choices and word choices that are met during the novel. Focalisation in crime fiction is often internal rather than external: the reader follows the detective(s) 'in real time'. The "evil disruptions of the status quo" are the compulsory impetus for the action - and the story itself - to start at all (Palmer 1984:86). As Palmer points out (1984:77), it is essential to the genre that the villain's identity be hidden from the readers, and they are thus not, by definition, allowed to see events from the villain's perspective.

One feature typical of detective novels is that they come out in series: the hero(ine)(s), the detectives, the spies are the same in every book, and they become more and more familiar to the readership. This is in stark contrast to 'élite' literature, where trilogy is probably the maximum degree of 'seriality' that is accepted without criticism towards the author for treading the same path for too long.

Palmer suggests a framework for distinguishing between different character prototypes in a crime story: amateurs, professionals, and bureaucrats (p.81). The hero is always professional, while the gallery of amateurs may consist of onlookers, victims or average minor characters. The bureaucrats are incompetent, inflexible, non-creative actors of the novel; the villain is often a prototype of bureaucrat, but also the hero's helpers are often left to that status (Palmer 1984:81-85). The villain can be professional as well; in such cases two narrative strategies distinguish the villain(s) from the hero(es): the hero never starts the action but only reacts to prior aggression, and moreover, the hero always wins (Palmer 1984:86). To this model we can add the possibility of different prototypes being combined in a character, for instance, Elena Weaver in *For the sake of Elena* is both an amateur victim, and, as it later turns out, a professional and active actor in personal relationships.

As discussed above, crime fiction has a certain set of norms that works both as a foundation and as a limitation to it. However, as early as in the 1970s, a genre of 'post-thrillers' is considered to have begun. According to Palmer, it is "a new genre, arising out of certain features of the old, but operating certain displacements at the same time" (1984:90-91). In the post-thriller genre, there can be two or more heroes different from each other, and the heroes might not necessarily be devoted to defending the social order, but may, rather, operate on the wrong side of the law (Palmer 1984:95-96).

I shall add to this the possibility of the hero(es) being partly unsuccessful in their task: the villain (usually the murderer) may be caught, but some other aspect or part of the crime may be left unsolved. Moreover, the post-thriller protagonists may face insoluble problems in their personal lives, while still being successful in their profession. They may even be controversial characters with equally many vices as virtues. Unlike the traditional thrillers, where the hero's actions are justified by their results, and where, at the closure, the state of affairs is regained, such justification or conclusion may be missing in the post-thriller. This is partly due to the injustice, lack of consistency and irony that is found in the postmodern world: there simply is no ideal state of affairs to be regained. (Palmer 1984:95-97.)

5 BACKGROUND DATA

Before moving on to the actual analysis of deafness in *For the sake of Elena*, some basic information about the author Elizabeth George and the novel itself is appropriate. In 5.1 below I shall briefly introduce Elizabeth George, whereas in 5.2 I shall give some very basic and technical data about the novel, which is the primary data for this analysis.

5.1 About the author

Elizabeth George (born 1949) is a Californian mystery writer, who made her debut in 1987 and has by 2001 written eleven detective novels. Her work has achieved a wide readership and it has been praised by critics and readers alike. George has been called by critics one of the most 'literary' of mystery novelists. This is probably due to her great emphasis on characters, setting and style rather than just on crime, or the twists and turns of the plot. George has good social and psychological insight, and she is known for making relationships between her characters extraordinarily complex, not devoid of romantic and sexual quality. Certain patterns can be recognized in George's works: the mysteries published so far have featured the same protagonists (Detective Inspector Thomas Lynley and his assistant, Detective Sergeant Barbara Havers), and the structure is roughly the same in all of them: a murder and its investigations around a number of suspects, with complex and problematic human relationships carefully interwoven into the plot.

5.2 About the novel

For the Sake of Elena (1992) is a modern detective story. The events are set in the Cambridge of around 1990. A deaf student, Elena Weaver, is murdered in the beginning, and Lynley, of Scotland Yard, is called to examine the case with Havers. There are a plenty of sub-themes in the story: personal problems,

unrealised love, divorces, unhappy marriages, deception, intrigue at Cambridge University, secret love and sex between male dons and female students, and lesbian love, to mention a few.

Excluding translations into several languages, the original exists in at least three different versions: the first edition in hardback (1992), the second edition in paperback (1993), and at least one audio book version. Only the latter is abridged. All references are to the US and Canada paperback edition (1993), that contains the complete text of the original hardback edition (442 pages).

For the Sake of Elena (1992) was George's fifth detective novel. Thus, the detectives had already been psychologically developed to some extent in the earlier novels. The novel can be seen as a link in a series of novels, begun at a certain point and likely to continue in the coming decades. However, as is usual with crime novels, it can be read as an independent work, without the background knowledge provided by the four previous novels. To my best knowledge, deafness is not a theme in Elizabeth George's other detective novels.

In addition to George's regular (and growing) literary audience, *For the Sake of Elena* has aroused interest among Deaf readers because deafness plays a central role in the novel. The novel has been listed under "Deaf fiction" by several Deaf issues related institutions. It has been praised for its well-informed and accurate depiction of Deaf issues. This group of potential readers may not necessarily be interested in George's other works, or in the whole mystery genre for that matter, but they may potentially get their hands on the book because of the deafness theme.

In Author's Note (pp.xix-xx) George explicitly deals with the context of the production of the book: she expresses her debt to a few senior and junior fellows of Cambridge University, an Inspector, a Ceephone specialist, an art connoisseur, a painter, and a jazz expert, among others, for their consultation. The point is that while the story is completely fictitious, it could (thanks to George's consultations with all those experts) as well be true as for the accuracy of the setting, general facts, and tiny details. Even though deafness is a central theme in the novel, George does not express her debt to anyone on deafness matters. Yet the novel is acclaimed within Deaf communities for its accurate and enlightened views of deaf issues. My closer survey will try to clarify in detail how deafness is

portrayed in the novel, and whether all this praise by the deaf communities is really deserved.

6 ANALYSIS

This chapter comprises the actual analysis of the novel. I shall first have a brief review of questions of voice and narration in *For the sake of Elena* (6.1 and 6.2), then describe briefly how the novel concords with the conventions of the detective genre (6.3). For the analysis of the portrayal of deafness (6.4 - 6.8), I have included a great number of extracts where one of the deaf characters is portrayed, or where their deafness is dealt with. The extracts are left unabridged for the most part; this should make it possible to read this study independently of the knowledge of the novel itself. Furthermore, I have explained the context in which the extracts are set in the story.

Almost every single reference in this chapter is to my primary source, *For the sake of Elena*. Thus, for general readability, I have decided neither to repeat the name of the work (or to use any clumsy abbreviation or acronym) nor to constantly quote the year of publication (1992/1993). Simply, all solitary page numbers refer to the 1993 paperback edition. Only at a couple of points a reference will be made to a secondary source; this will be indicated as usual. All italics in the quotes from the novel are original.

As regards the names of the characters, I shall follow the dominant references used by the narrator. Once the whole name has been mentioned once or twice, some characters are referred to by their first name (Elena, Gareth, Adam, Glyn, Justine) while others are by their last (Lynley, Havers, Cuff, Thorsson, Troughton). Furthermore, certain characters tend to be referred to by the whole name more than others: Anthony Weaver, Gareth Randolph, Adam Jenn. This explains the ostensible inconsistency in my usage of the names. While one of the narrator's aims is to vary the narration by different references to the same character, I shall aim at maximum clarity, which often means sticking to the most frequent one of the names.

I shall follow the inner temporality of the novel, which is practically chronological. First, I will examine the first part of Chapter 1, where Elena herself is the focaliser, then I move on to examine what other characters think and say about Elena. One subchapter will be devoted to the representation of a socio-culturally Deaf character, Gareth Randolph, another for a less central, partly deaf character, Mrs. Gustafson. In connection with Gareth Randolph, the description of DeaStu, the organisation of Deaf students, is analysed. Furthermore, I will cast a glance at the portrayal of British Sign Language, BSL, in the novel.

A choice had to be made concerning the disposition of the analysis. I have decided to be consistent and divide the analysis into strictly thematic subchapters according to who (or what) is mainly portrayed in the extracts. A drawback of such an organisation is that one long scene (for instance, Thomas Lynley's first interview with Gareth Randolph) may be dealt with in three different chapters (the portrayal of Elena through Gareth Randolph, the portrayal of Gareth Randolph through Thomas Lynley, and the portrayal of DeaStu, the Deaf organisation). However, a disposition on a strict scene-by-scene basis would suffer from thematic discord and confusion. I have tried to alleviate the occasional, inevitable incoherence frequent metatextual references (for example, "see 6.5.8"). It is best for a reader interested in entire scenes of the novel to find the original; I have given the page numbers for each scene.

Detective Inspector Thomas Lynley, the protagonist and the major focaliser of the narration, is the common denominator for almost all of the extracts surveyed. Thus, his stand on Elena's (or Gareth's) deafness pops up every now and then, while he does not give it special thought at any point. Therefore, it makes sense to deal with Lynley's views in connection with each examinee, where applicable.

6.1 Narration in *For the sake of Elena*

In the following I shall try to write an anatomy of the complex position of the narrator in the novel and deal with the issues spelled out in 4.1. Basically, the whole novel is told by an outside third-person narrator. Despite the frequent

portrayals of the characters' thoughts, the narration does not shift to the first person at any point. This type of narrator can be regarded as an invisible observer at the spot of events, either beside the characters involved in the scene, or rather, *above* them. This type of narrator can be conceived either as 'omniscient' (who knows absolutely everything that happens physically and in the characters' minds but only shares a part of that knowledge with the reader) or 'human-like', or 'non-omniscient' (who in spite of its abstract, fleshless form, observes and perceives like a human, that is, only in a limited way, but shares everything with the reader). I would rather consider the narrator in *For the sake of Elena* fully omniscient, since it has access into the characters' minds. In the end, it does not matter here which type the outside narrator exactly represents; more important is to examine *why* just certain things are portrayed and others not, and *what effect* these narrative choices produce.

However, as we examine the narrative in more depth, certain complexity is revealed. First of all, we can separate - in the order of decreasing neutrality - direct dialogue, descriptions of physical action and space, and characters' thoughts. Direct dialogue is nearly neutral: it consists basically of the participants' lines, sometimes followed or preceded by neutral words such as 'said', 'asked', 'told' or 'spoke', less often by more descriptive verbs or modifiers, such as 'frowned' or "gave a tiny mewl of protest" (p.222), or:

> "Why?" Havers' tone was belligerent, a suggestion that Lynley's response implied impossibility. (p.264)

> "This was once the centre of my world," Sarah Gordon said with simple resignation. (p.143)

On the one hand, these additions to the direct speech illustrate what could be heard by anyone present (as if the outside narrator conveys it to the reader). On the other, however, they can be interpreted as perceptions of the focaliser (most often Detective Inspector Thomas Lynley). Anyhow, when discussing direct dialogue we must remember that its representation is also always a choice: the narrator chooses what to include, what to exclude, what kind of words, main clauses or modifiers to add in between the participants' lines, etc. (See, for instance, Leech and Short 1983:159-173).

Physical action and space is mainly depicted as if seen by a passer-by; however, the ostensible neutrality of the portrayal of physical action is again broken by the narrator's choices about what is said, what is left unsaid, what is emphasised at the expense of what, etc. In fact, completely neutral descriptions of action (for example, "she drank from the tap", p.147) are rare: usually some kind of focus of attention can be noticed. For example, "Sarah headed for the lavatory the moment after she closed and locked the front door" (p.146) suggests by its word order and word choices (in the context, of course) that Sarah felt sick and rushed to the lavatory but wanted to make sure that no one would come in. A sense of panic is the focus of attention, rather than the physical performance of walking through the certain rooms to get to the lavatory.

Characters' thoughts constitute the third - the least objective and the most frequent - building block of the narration. All perception by the five senses belongs to this category as well, indicated in the text by such words as 'heard', 'saw', 'felt', 'smelled', or 'tasted'. There are at least three types of characters at different levels as regards the narration. The first group are the 'access-to-mind' characters; i.e. the characters whose thoughts and feelings the reader is allowed to read about. In the text these can be clearly marked by explicit indicators such as "she knew the importance of warming up" (p.3), or "her mind had to accept what her body was telling her" (p.151). Here the given character's thoughts are depicted as straightforwardly and explicitly as possible. However, most of the time the characters' thoughts just 'flow' without further explanations, clear and precise enough to be understood by the reader: "yet he couldn't at the moment come up with a reason why Gareth Randolph would lie about the identity of the man who made Elena pregnant" (p.222). However, George's narrator does not seem to use any marked or sophisticated stream-of-consciousness narration. Instead, even the most quickly 'flowing' stream of thought in *For the sake of Elena* is written about in rather standard sentences and structures.

The second group at the second level of access consists of important characters (suspects or key witnesses) about whom the reader only learns through dialogue or through other (first level) characters. There is no direct access into these characters' minds, important as they may be for the story. Elena Weaver, the deaf girl murdered at the beginning, has her own 'narrating voice', albeit not

first person, only on pages 1-8; after that she falls into this second category, and the reader learns about her through other persons. Gareth Randolph, the other deaf character in the novel, is also in this category. On pages 213-222 Lynley investigates Gareth with the help of an interpreter (character portrait through dialogue), while at other points Gareth 'lives' in the discussions between the detectives and the examinees. Thus, the portrayal of deaf characters - my main interest in the novel - is a rather complex chain.

The third character category consists of less important minor characters. As was the case with the second category, the narrator gives no access into their minds. Unlike the second category, they hardly get their own voice 'heard' at all as they are neither close to Elena nor suspects for the murder. Their contribution to the narrative is minimal, and they do not become round characters. They may serve a function in the investigations or the plot in general: Miranda Webberly, Rosalyn Simpson and Melinda Powell are such characters. Moreover, there are minor characters in the book who appear in a few scenes and may be important, say, in the private lives of the detectives but who do not have anything to do with my research problem. For instance, Lynley's female friend Lady Helen and Havers's mother belong here.

So far I have written about the three rough building elements of the novel: direct dialogue (neutral, as if heard by anyone), physical space and action (seemingly neutral but selected on a biased basis), and character's thoughts ('the chosen few' = 'the access-to-mind characters'). However, it can be difficult to separate the three elements from each other. There are quick shifts from one to another, and often two or three of them occur within the same sentence. For example:

> He admitted defeat, standing and saying, "Not at the moment." (p.203)

> Here, Lynley thought, would be his interpreter.
> "Gareth Randolph?" the woman behind the desk said in answer to Lynley's question and after an inspection of his warrant card. "He's just in the conference room. Bernadette, will you . . . ?" And then to Lynley, "I assume you don't sign, Inspector." (p.214)

> The air seemed fresher as she approached the river, dodging two dust carts that were manned by the first living creature she had seen out on the streets this morning, a workman wearing a lime green anorak. (p.6)

Elena's point of view is so strong in Chapter 1 that it seems impossible to separate Elena's experience from the objective description of physical action and space. Does the reader see the scene through Elena's eyes or 'from above'? The depiction is so physical and concrete in this particular extract that even if the reader is positioned *above* the situation along with the narrator most of the time, it could here be *inside* Elena as well. The same goes possibly for Sarah Gordon, while Lynley, Havers, and Justine Weaver are clearly 'more rational' or 'cooler', and the reader is perhaps positioned above rather than inside them. In other words, the reader is an 'observer' (as usual) rather than an 'experiencer'. These differences are quite subtle, often just differences of degree: it can only be intuitively felt that the portrayal of Elena's or Sarah's thoughts is somehow 'stronger', more physical, more vivid (so that it becomes easier to identify with them or 'feel as they feel') than is the case, say, with the distant Justine Weaver. In Leech and Short's terms, the 'mind style' of different characters differ from each other so as to affect the reader's position and to produce a different reading experience (see Leech and Short 1983:187-207).

Back to my actual interests: when deafness or deaf characters are portrayed, whose voice is doing it? Obviously Elizabeth George the author has chosen a narrator that she thinks suits best the purposes of the novel, which has to fulfil certain qualifications. Here I will have to consider the requirements of the detective genre, too.

The narrator narrates action, describes space or reports dialogue (in fact, dialogue fills a great part of the pages of the novel). Elena is the impetus for the whole narrative, while the reader mainly follows Thomas Lynley and Barbara Havers's investigation work. In other words, the events and the psychological motives are revealed to the reader largely at the same pace and in the same order as to the detectives. However, at some points the reader arguably knows more than Lynley and Havers (due to the access into the other characters' minds), at some points perhaps less (because Lynley is meant to be smarter than the reader).

6.2 Questions of voice in *For the sake of Elena*

Typically of crime novels, the omniscient third person narrator remains strictly non-intrusive, in other words, does not draw attention to itself as an actor in the story. The focalisation changes constantly, and the readers are fully let into the characters' minds. Most of the time, the narration follows Thomas Lynley; what *he* learns from suspects and witnesses, how *he* thinks about things, how *he* feels about other characters. However, he is not the only focaliser in the narrative: other characters' points of view are represented as well. Several times the reader can follow Barbara Havers's (Detective Sergeant) or Anthony Weaver's (Elena's father, professor) thoughts. At a few points we learn what goes on in Justine Weaver's (Anthony's wife, Elena's stepmother), or Glyn Weaver's (Elena's mother), or Sarah Gordon's (painter, suspect, Anthony's mistress) mind. The murdered Elena Weaver focalises eight pages in the beginning; Elena's escort, a postgraduate named Adam Jenn focalises eight pages later.

Entering many characters' minds in a mystery may be necessary to keep up the suspense or to effectively focus on the psychological motives, but driven too far, it can result in incoherence. Non-intrusive and 'invisible', the narrator is here also meant to be reliable, so that we readily believe that what we are told is how the characters, each in turn, really think. However, the requirements of suspense often prevent the omniscient narrator from revealing *everything* a suspect has in mind – the reader should not find out too much too early. The running text of *For the sake of Elena* is realistic depiction of thoughts and (secondarily) action, spiced with bounteous direct dialogue. At a few points a conversation is presented indirectly, as if 'remembered' afterwards by a character, often Lynley.

The novel deals with multiple overlapping themes, about which I shall only briefly write here. The psychosexual dimension is the chief driving force of the narrative. Among the most central themes are love, sex, marriage, passion, betrayal, lust for power, parenthood, personal ambitions, careers, deviation, deafness and envy. The portrayal of these themes is very individual-centred: the narration focuses on individual psychological processes. This is done in one of two ways, by inner reflection of the characters, or by dialogues, direct or reported.

Above all, the characters that are given attention *think*, whereas they *act* to some extent only. The suspense and the meanings in the novel consist of the inner 'worlds' of the characters and of how these inner worlds come in contact, often violently. However, as is typical of crime novels, the impetus for the whole story is a concrete murder, and there is also room for the 'obligatory' action at the end of the novel.

Most of the action is explained through the dead Elena, and most characters are important because of their connections with her. Elena's deafness is inevitably brought up by many characters: suspects, family members and friends alike. Most of the talk about Elena is in the form of direct presentation (dialogue) or conversations focalised through Thomas Lynley; however, the narration regularly shifts inside other characters' minds as well.

The bulk of the novel is externally communicated; if there is or has been action, it is often revealed in conversation and in flashbacks. Clearly, certain characters (first Elena and Sarah Gordon, then Thomas Lynley) are more active: they generate the concrete action and leave others (Anthony, Adam Jenn, Gareth Randolph) to passively experience and react. Most of the interest of the novel is in how different characters *feel* about or *react* to certain key events, and how these feelings and reactions are intertwined.

6.3 *For the sake of Elena* as a crime novel

Following the conventions of the crime genre, *For the sake of Elena* is not highly based on symbolism or figures: the text is rather matter-of-fact, realist, and concrete. Whenever it reaches for the abstract - that is, in the numerous accounts of different characters' thoughts - ideas and meanings are made as explicit as possible, leaving little for the reader to work out. This appears to be in contrary to the more respected ('non-detective', 'non-popular') literatures of the 1990s. Minor characters and suspects in the novel are clearly metaphoric: they represent certain human stereotypes, such as the upper class academic man, the lower class working woman, the middle class career woman, etc. However, George avoids hackneyed stereotypes by giving readers somewhat unexpected and fresh

combinations of characteristics, such as a sexually attractive rash deaf girl, or a tempered Deaf rights activist.

Despite its alleged (and undisputed) psychological and literary value, *For the Sake of Elena* clearly represents the detective genre, and thus more broadly, popular fiction - if such labels or divisions are needed in the first place anymore. The structure is very conventional, even typical of detective stories: in the beginning there is a murder, and the remainder simply consists of the detectives trying to solve it. A few main suspects are represented, each of which appears guilty in their turn. In the last chapter(s), the murderer is revealed and proved guilty. Most of the lesser mysteries that emerged during the investigations are solved, most clues get their explanations - the strings are pulled together. However, the novel also represents new detective fiction (cf. Palmer's 'post-thriller' in 4.2) where the psychological and human relationships get more emphasis at the expense of action. While crime novels are allegedly about action, they are predominantly made up of speech or reported speech. We can claim that language, dialogue in particular, is the primary 'trigger' for action, or even, language *is* the action, of crime stories. Such is the case largely with *For the Sake of Elena* as well. (See also Hayes 1988:118.)

Presumably among the purposes of Elizabeth George the author were to weave an exciting and somewhat unpredictable web of events, to create a character gallery with sufficient depth to maintain the readers' interest, to make those characters act in a credible yet interesting way. In other words, she wanted to compose a good detective story capable of engaging and rewarding its audience. Now the question is: why has the author chosen a deaf girl as the central character? What purpose does Elena serve in the novel? And moreover, why does she die on page 8, being given little chance to express her voice? The deaf experience, the deaf point of view, is represented in 8 pages. In contrast, the rest of the narration represents hearing characters' views, and Thomas Lynley's in particular. Is this a conscious choice? It probably is, but is the purpose to make the murder a bit unusual and thus intriguing, or to really deprive the deaf characters of a fictional voice?

6.4 Elena Weaver as focaliser

This is the only extract with a deaf character as focaliser. As the rest of the novel, it is narrated in the third person. The narration tries to covertly convey certain practical and everyday facets of the deaf experience: Elena's morning routines and her experience of the daily jog through the town, along the River Cam.

In the first paragraph of the novel, the alarm light wakes Elena up "as a blast of music or a jangling alarm" (p.1). This is a clear example of what I shall call 'an etic simile', a simile used to convey from an outsider's point of view an event that is experienced by a deviant (in the neutral sense of the word) person. At this particular point, the 'outsider', the implied reader of the text, is a hearing person, and it makes sense to juxtapose Elena's alarm light with a sonic alarm, a more common device for hearing people. It should be noted, however, that if the addressee is assumed to be a Deaf readership, they might identify with Elena's (mainly visual and olfactory) experience to a great extent, while the etic simile might produce an awkward effect, or even pass unnoticed, without greater response. A slightly different case is the "telephone" (mentioned on page 1) which later turns out to be, in fact, a Ceephone for the deaf (see 6.5.2). On the one hand, etic terminology is used to express what function the device has for Elena, the focaliser of the scene in her room. On the other, "telephone" can even be seen as an emic usage of the word (the deaf do not have much use for a normal telephone; so why not think of the Ceephone as 'telephone'). Furthermore, the convention of the genre dictates that Elena's deafness must not be explicitly revealed here: it would not make sense to describe the exact nature of the Ceephone here, as for Elena, the focaliser, it is nothing special, nothing to be explained.

Then, Elena's speech as she talks aloud to her pet mouse is direct presentation, as if heard by the omniscient narrator. (Thus, strictly speaking, Elena is not the focaliser of these points.) Elena says "muh-owz" for 'mouse', "tibbit" for 'titbit', "mornun" for 'mornin'', and "awright" for 'alright' pp.2-3). These spellings reflect a somehow unexpected, 'abnormal' manner of speech, a deaf person's idiosyncratically deviant way of speaking English. With a change of one or two letters from the standard spelling, an impression is created that the

corresponding sounds in Elena's pronunciation are non-standard. Later investigations reveal that Elena was born deaf but learned to lip-read very well and to speak comfortably. Her lips make exactly the right movements, but the invisible speech organs do not, thence the 'incorrect' sounds in Elena's direct speech. In reality, it is rare for the prelingually deaf to learn to speak well; even the skill of lip-reading is not acquired by all of them. Thus, the picture of Elena as an extremely ambitious, self-assured and talented young deaf woman is actually in evidence already on the first pages.

We should note that Elena chooses speech for the means of communication with her pet mouse. I would assume that a relationship to one's pet often becomes very personal and emotionally laden, and that the owners would use their language of emotions, with some 'cuddling phrases' thrown in, in communication with the pet. Thus prelingually Deaf people, with some sign language as their native tongue, would probably *sign* to their pets. In contrast, Elena, who was from her birth compelled by her ambitious parents to learn to speak and write in English, and not introduced to BSL until her days in Cambridge, certainly considered English as her language of deepest emotions, and thus, *spoke* to her mouse in a manner she expected people to talk to their pets.

Later, Elena's thoughts are presented directly in the form of 'inner dialogue' or 'stream-of-consciousness', marked in the text by italics in contrast with the normal face of the narrator's normal account: "*Damn, damn, double damn. Where is she?* [. . .] *I've joined Hare and Hounds, Daddy.* [. . .] *Stuff it,* she thought, and ran back to the bridge." (pp.6-7). This time the non-standard spelling of Elena's idiosyncratic language is not used as the words are not spoken but they are mere propositions in Elena's mind.

Of course, there is no mention of sounds or hearing on pages 1-8 of the novel: Elizabeth George has done her job more carefully than did, for example, Alfred de Musset, whose deaf heroine Camille is assured of her uncle's presence "by his noisy slumber" (Batson and Bergman 1985:7). In the following passage, in particular, Elena quite credibly uses her vision to notice things that are usually heard:

> Out of the corner of her eye, Elena saw the mouse scooting back and forth across the top of her desk, pausing to raise himself on hind legs and sniff the air. [. . .]
>
> She glanced at the bookshelf to see the toast had popped up. She broke off a piece for the mouse and tossed it in his cage. He scrambled immediately in that direction, his tiny ears catching the light like diaphanous wax. (p.4)

Noteworthy in the following passage is the unique use of "silently". True, there is not necessarily any sound like 'splash' when ducks go to water, but it can hardly be a totally silent act either. For Elena it is undoubtedly silent, but this is the only occasion where that word is explicitly used in the extract focalised by Elena:

> As she ran, ducks plopped silently from the bank into the water, and Elena reached into her pocket for the last wedge of morning toast which she crumbled and tossed their way. (p.7)

As Elena then dashes outside for a jog, there are references to smell and feeling, but they are not exceptionally frequent. Even a hearing character would not perhaps hear that many sounds at six in the morning in a small town, but rather, receive other sensory information. Taste is mentioned at one point: "The air – with the fog taking its origin in the river and the fens – tasted of humus and woodsmoke, and it covered her skin quickly with a watery down." (p.4). However, as Elena is about to reach Robinson Crusoe's Island, she is able to draw exceptionally precise conclusions about a nocturnal bonfire solely by smell (pp.7-8).

Moreover, on her way to jogging paths Elena perceives a great deal by smell. The description of the environment is very precise, particularly on page 7 as Elena approaches the murder site. The reliance on vision, however, is not striking here, perhaps because physical space is so often depicted in detail in fiction – that is to guide the reader. Such description is generally vision-biased at the expense of sounds, not only where there are deaf characters. This sort of description sometimes goes beyond what the character(s) in question actually perceive(s); in such cases an outer narrator-focaliser, who looks at the scene from a bird's perspective, is used. In this extract, however, the focaliser is strictly Elena, who really perceives plenty of details during her short jog. In a detective

novel, moreover, detailed description of the setting may also be used to build up suspense, or to create a contrast between a peaceful setting and a hideous crime.

There is one example on how Elena's memory works in flashbacks. The previous night, just a few hours before she wakes up in the morning, Elena had been having sex with a man. While jogging, Elena 'almost sees' the scene again in her mind:

> She pressed her palms against her hips, just where his had been last night. But unlike last night, her breathing was steady, not rapid and urgent and centred single-mindedly on that frantic rise to pleasure. Still, she could almost see his head thrown back. She could almost see him concentrating on the heat, the friction, and the slick profusion of her body's desire. She could almost see his mouth form the words *oh God oh God oh God oh God* as his hips thrust up and his hands pulled her down harder and harder against him. And then her name on his lips and the wild beating of his heart against his chest. And his breathing, like a runner. (p.5)

Were Elena not deaf, she would certainly have had the man's voice as well in her recollection of the act; now, however, she remembers what she had read on his lips.

Now I have looked at a few points in Chapter 1 which either give the reader rather implicit hints about Elena's deafness, or emphasise the other four senses at the expense of hearing. However, it should be noted that most of the narration in this scene, the only one which portrays Elena's thoughts or actions, does not reveal her deafness in any way. For instance, "the telephone" mentioned on page 1 turns out later to be a Ceephone (British version of the American TDD, Telecommunications Device for the Deaf; see also 6.5.2); from Elena's point of view, however, it is simply a 'telephone' at this phase.

Part of this can clearly be attributed to the requirements of the detective genre, where suspense is absolutely crucial for a successful, meaningful plot. A great part of the appeal of the genre is derived from suspense: the narrator holds information from the reader, readers are challenged to work out meanings, 'read between the lines', have clever guesses, but they are also supposed to be struck by surprise at appropriate points. Elena's deafness is not overtly revealed until Chapter 4 (p.59), where Lynley hears College Master Terence Cuff about the

murder case. This is a good example of the use of suspense in the novel, although some readers might well have worked out Elena's deafness at an earlier point.

So, what is implied (and later explicitly revealed) about Elena's deafness, how and at what point it is done, what is held secret by the narrator, and where emphasis is put are all issues that are closely connected with the conventions of the crime genre. These conventions are rather centred round the plot if compared with prose in general. I shall not, however, regard differences of this kind as fundamental at all; I shall rather base my study on the assumption that in any genre, various elements of a novel (story, language, characters, actions, narrators, themes, symbolism, metaphors, focalisation, etc) are intertwined and affect one another in a complex web that cannot be described in a single model.

There is another example of suspense:

> She jogged across the south end of New Court, sprinting through the two passageways to Principal Court. No one was about. No lights were on in rooms. It was wonderful, exhilarating. She felt inordinately free.
> And she had less than fifteen minutes to live. (p.4)

The whole extract we are dealing with now, the only extract with Elena's perceptions, actions, and most importantly, her stream of thought, is systematically unfolded to the reader from Elena's point of view. The only exception to this is the last line of page four: "And she had less than fifteen minutes to live". Here the narrator quite drastically intervenes with the narrative: so far - four full pages – and for four more pages to come, the reader has learned nothing that Elena is not seeing, feeling, smelling or thinking about. It has been in Elena's consciousness that we have been placed so far, but suddenly, and quite dramatically, we are let outside it for an awesome little while, to get a single item of information. Strictly speaking, this shift of focalisation has no direct link to deafness, the research problem of this thesis. However, as the first chapter of the novel is otherwise very unique, as deafness is inevitably intertwined with the genre here, and as I constantly have to consider issues of focalisation in my analysis, I feel that it is appropriate to pay some attention to this particular intervention by the narrator.

Moreover, at the very end of the first extract, where Elena is brutally murdered, focus is removed like the zoom of a camera from Elena to an outer focaliser. Elena does not hear the murderer approaching; she only feels and sees the movement caused by the blow:

> [. . .] the heavy air splintered before her. A movement flashed on her left. The first blow fell.
>
> It hit her squarely between the eyes. Lightning shot through her field of vision. Her body flew backwards.
>
> The second blow crashed against her nose and cheek, cutting completely through the flesh and shattering the zygomatic bone like a piece of glass.
>
> If there was a third blow, she did not feel it. (p.8)

As long as Elena is conscious, she is the focaliser of the horrible events. The last but one paragraph works as a dividing line in the focalisation, marking Elena's painful experience a moment before her death on the one hand, and the fatal blow from an outsider's point of view on the other. As we come to the last sentence, the focalisation has shifted from the dead girl to the outside.

It has been necessary to dig deep in the tiniest details of the extract in order to produce an in-depth analysis of the portrayal of deafness in it. It is, after all, details such as subtle word choices, emphases, or shifts of focalisation, that make up the narration and help the reader to build a holistic picture of the narrative. My approach is that not a single one of these choices made by the narrator is absolutely important as such, but that together, one by one, subtly strewn all over the text, which should be examined as an entity, they do create a coherent portrait of a deaf girl. By the kind of means and allusions discussed above, the narrator creates an overall picture of some half an hour in a deaf girl's life. On the basis of this thin 'slice of life', Elena's deafness is not yet raised as a very decisive factor in her life. So far Elena has by no means become a round character, but what have we actually learned about her?

At least the portrait of Elena so far is not at all subdued, pitiable, or handicapped. Nor is it particularly virtuous, saint-like or idealised. So far we have learned just a few things about her: that she is an ambitious runner and somewhat defiant of her patronising father. The most striking observation about this extract is perhaps the great emphasis on the physical and on the sexual. Even if we are led inside Elena's mind to follow her course of thoughts, too definite conclusions

cannot be drawn about her character. After all, few people would be completely representative of themselves during some thirty hasty minutes early in the morning, immediately after interrupted sleep.

6.5 Elena Weaver through other focalisers

As the driving force behind the entire novel is to find out Elena Weaver's murderer, Elena continually pops up in the discussions by other characters. I do not attempt to cover here every passage where Elena is referred to by name or by other means. Instead, I shall limit this section of the analysis to passages where Elena's deafness plays a role (is mentioned, implied, given subjective meanings, etc). It is not so simple, though: a holistic picture of Elena is gradually created by the narrator by unfolding the characters' views and knowledge of Elena. This is the context where Elena 'exists' after her physical death. Thus, those passages that are connected to Elena but without a mention of her deafness cannot be mechanically disregarded as irrelevant: they can be crucial in building up the context or the base for my interpretations.

In this analysis, my procedure is chronological, scene-by-scene, character-by-character, in the same order as the extracts appear in the novel. However, I have chosen to divide 6.5 into further subchapters according to *who* speaks or thinks about Elena. *Whose* attitudes towards deafness are the ones that are found in the narrative, and *what kind of* characters are they? *In what light* are they, in turn, portrayed? What function do these portrayals have in building up an image of Elena? With the help of such questions we will be better able to link the views to the context of the entire novel, where a number of voices tell their own 'story'.

Consequently, there are a few deviations from the chronological order as most characters (for instance, Adam Jenn and Lennart Thorsson) appear twice or more often in the course of the investigations. Furthermore, in some passages of the novel both Elena Weaver and Gareth Randolph are described. The outcome of this is that my analysis of the portrayal of Gareth (6.6) overlaps somewhat with my treatment of the portrayal of Elena (fully examined in 6.4 and 6.5), and vice versa. There is further overlapping between the subchapters of 6.5. There is no

alternative disposition that would avoid this overlapping; it does not make sense to repeat entire paragraphs at several points, either. My metatextual references (in parentheses) will help to locate the deviations from the overall disposition of this analysis.

I have labelled the characters who take a stand to Elena with stereotypical roles based on their position to or relationship with Elena; hence 'master of College', 'protective father', 'bitter mother', 'male escort', etc, as headings of the subchapters.

6.5.1 Master of College

It is not until the beginning of Chapter 4 that Elena is taken up for a second time. (In between, investigations are launched and the central character gallery of the novel is introduced.)

Terence Cuff, the Master of the imaginary St. Stephen's College, where Elena was majoring in English for the second year, is the first character in the book to refer to Elena's deafness. He provides Lynley with facts about Elena as a student, but is reluctant to part with any information that would set the university circles in an unpleasant light. From Cuff's point of view, Elena had potential for good performance. However, she had missed supervisions and lectures, and preferred going out and partying to disciplined work. In consequence, a senior tutor had been put to help "with Elena's adjustment" (p.58), a measure that implies personal problems rather than academic. Moreover, Elena had been monitored by her professor father as well as allowed to keep a pet mouse - to "develop her sense of responsibility and no doubt get her back to the college at night" (p.59).

The peak point of suspense in that chapter comes, however, as Lynley learns about Elena's deafness. This comes as a surprise to him, while Cuff is equally surprised at the Inspector not yet knowing it.

> "[. . .] And we brought in a young man from Queens' - a chap called Gareth Randolph - to act as an undergraduate guardian and, more importantly, to

> get Elena involved in an appropriate society. Her father didn't approve of that last item, I'm afraid. He'd been dead set against it from the very first."
>
> "Because of the boy?"
>
> "Because of the society itself. DeaStu. Gareth Randolph's its president. And he's one of the more high-profile handicapped students in the University."
>
> Lynley frowned. "It sounds as if Anthony Weaver was concerned that his daughter might become romantically linked with a handicapped boy." Here was potential for trouble indeed.
>
> "I've no doubt of that," Cuff said. "But as far as I was concerned, becoming involved with Gareth Randolph would have been the best thing for her."
>
> "Why?"
>
> "For the obvious reason. Elena was handicapped as well." When Lynley said nothing, Cuff looked perplexed. "Surely you know. You would have been told."
>
> "Told? No."
>
> Terence Cuff leaned forward. "I'm terribly sorry. I thought you'd been given the information. Elena Weaver was deaf." (p.59)

This passage of half a page is extremely important with our present focus in mind. The portrayal of Gareth Randolph (including his ambition DeaStu) will be done in a separate chapter below (6.6); for a time let us look at the representation of Elena Weaver. Cuff's lines are full of contradictions: on the one hand, he calls DeaStu "an appropriate society" and is sorry for Elena's father's negative attitudes towards it. On the other, he himself resorts to the discourse of the hearing hegemony (the word choice "handicapped") and patronising ideas (telling that a handicapped girl needs handicapped company instead of promoting her freedom of choice, an important theme in disability movements). Thus Terence Cuff seems a prototype of what could be called 'a pseudo-liberal conservative'.

Cuff goes on to inform Lynley about DeaStu (of which more in 6.6.1), after which the discussion turns to the relationship between Elena and her parents. It turns out that both parents, albeit long divorced, preferred the 'normal' hearing world to the 'other' Deaf society.

> "Yet you say that Anthony Weaver wanted his daughter to stay away from them. If she herself was deaf, that hardly makes sense." [Lynley said.] [. . .]
>
> "Elena read lips," Cuff explained. "She spoke fairly well. Her parents - her mother especially - had devoted themselves to enabling her to function as a normal woman in a normal world. They wanted her to appear for all

> intents and purposes as a woman who could hear. To them, DeaStu represented a step backwards."
>
> "But Elena signed, didn't she?"
>
> "Yes. But she'd only begun that as a teenager when her secondary school called in Social Services after failing to convince her mother of the need to enroll Elena in a special programme to learn the language. Even then, she wasn't allowed to sign at home. And as far as I know, neither of her parents ever signed with her." (p.60)

If we (simplifying a little) assume that Cuff is reliable and sincerely descriptive, simply reporting to Lynley what he had noticed, the Weavers' view becomes clear. They represent the extreme of Hearing hegemony. For them, deafness is a handicap, cultural Deafness a danger, and its purest manifestation, BSL, a threat to Elena's 'normality'. In their discourse, 'normality' and Hearing identity are progress, or 'forward', whereas Deaf culture is "backwards" (p.60). Even the official society, represented here by Social Services, where the appreciation of Deaf culture and BSL has never been high, is less extreme than Elena's mother Glyn. Glyn would have liked to take BSL totally away from Elena; she eventually succeeded in that only at her home. It is notable that Cuff does not mention Elena's free will or own choice at all: he seems to accept that decisions concerning her life are left to other, Hearing people, as if one could read 'for her best' between the lines.

Lynley does not at first see any sense in Anthony Weaver's obsession to keep Elena away from Deaf students (p.60); Cuff's approach is slightly more diplomatic:

> [. . .] she wasn't allowed to sign at home. And as far as I know, neither of her parents ever signed with her."
>
> "Byzantine", Lynley mused.
>
> "To our way of thinking. But they wanted the girl to have a good chance to make her way in the hearing world. We might disagree with the way they went about it, but the final result was that she ended up with lip-reading, speech, and ultimately signing. In effect, she had it all." (p.60)

Cuff defends Elena's treatment by suggesting that she had obtained the opportunity to function in two cultures, the mainstream and the 'other'. Truly, research on deafness often regards this as the best possible situation. It certainly looks good from the Hearing point of view, and it is often convenient for a deaf

person. However, it is Lynley who first gives Elena a more active role in this discourse:

> "Those are the things she could do," Lynley agreed. "But I wonder where she felt she belonged."
>
> The mound of coals shifted slightly as the fire took them. Cuff rearranged them deftly with a poker. "No doubt you can see why we were willing to make allowances for Elena. She was caught between two worlds. And as you yourself have pointed out, she wasn't brought up to fit completely into either."
>
> "It's such an odd decision for an educated person to make. What's Weaver like?"
>
> "A brilliant historian. A fine mind. A man of deep, committed professional integrity." (pp.60-61)

Lynley takes up an important point here: how did Elena herself feel about her deafness? The ability and right to a personal identity and self-definition is an aspect hugely emphasised in modern disability (ethnic, gender, etc) movements. Cuff admits that Elena might have occupied a grey area by not identifying totally with any of the cultures. Then it seems that Anthony's stubborn Hearing conservatism does not fit in Lynley's opinion of the educated. Does Lynley identify high education with wisdom? Or is he merely bluffing or provoking as his professional position might require? Thereafter the investigation turns into Anthony Weaver's position at the University. Cuff's transparent attempts to protect Anthony Weaver are brought in an ironic light: Lynley is experienced enough to see different personal motives behind people's talk, even when much better hidden than Cuff's praise.

This is again one of the key passages in the novel for us. Here Lynley learns for the first time (p.59) that Elena was deaf, and from this point on he has to continuously consider that fact in relation to the investigation. Through numerous examinations Lynley learns different views of Elena's deafness and starts to see it in a new light. Here, I believe, an average reader's course of thought follows that of Lynley's to some extent.

College Master Cuff says that Elena "was caught between two worlds" and tells how great efforts Elena's parents - Glyn especially - had taken to give her all the opportunities that the hearing have. On the other hand, Cuff knows the tenets of DeaStu as well. As Cuff is such a marginal character in the novel, it

remains difficult to say anything definitive about his stand to the issue. He seems to serve the purpose of a valuable, independent outside observer, helpful for Lynley and Havers's investigations. However, he is eager to defend Anthony, a most respected professor, in any case.

The communication process here is rather complicated and multi-layered: multiple messages are conveyed at the same time. Even though most of the passage is seemingly neutral, direct presentation of a dialogue, it is absolutely clear that Lynley is the focaliser here. We, the readers, experience the events through Lynley's mind and perception. Lynley's primary role in the investigation is to elicit 'the right' information with short, manipulative questions. The main topic at this point is Elena's parents' attitudes towards her deafness. While Cuff obviously aims at descriptive objectiveness, he constantly reveals his own standpoint as well.

The outside narrator narrates about what Lynley hears and thinks about the topic. Lynley hears about what Cuff thinks about the Weavers' attitudes to Elena's deafness. Simultaneously, Lynley can hear what Cuff himself thinks about Elena's deafness. Yet at the same time, Lynley's attitudes are revealed to the readers. These processes are simultaneously ongoing as Lynley investigates Cuff at the Master's Lodge. This kind of chain is perhaps typical of the detective novel, where the dertective learns bits and pieces from a number of people, who may not always be reliable or objective.

The most explicit attitudes to Elena's deafness are so far held by her father and mother, albeit through Cuff's report. Then, Terence Cuff's own views come up as implicit, and finally, we get some hint of Thomas Lynley's view, which perhaps had never consciously developed until now that he gets in touch with deafness issues. The readers are challenged to adopt a position, too. Presumably a Deaf reader would be angrily opposed to Elena's parents, while a hearing reader uninitiated to Deaf issues might hesitate and balance between the represented voices.

6.5.2 Protective father

Elena's father Anthony Weaver is a very respected professor, specialising in English medieval history. He has successfully effaced the most conspicuous traces of his German Jewish background (his grandfather had changed his surname from Weiner to Weaver in hope of social climbing) and secured a firm position within the University, even nationally. At the time of the dismal events of the novel, he stands as a candidate for a prestigious advancement. He has divorced from Elena's mother Glyn fifteen years ago and later married Justine, a young graduate who is always externally flawless and well dressed. Anthony's main pursuit besides his career has been to integrate Elena to his new family in Cambridge. This means, by necessity, Elena's disintegration from Glyn's London home. Elena had been the apple of his eye; he wanted Elena to be successful at her studies while at the same time offer her love and familial security. This involved, however, constant surveillance and overprotective patronising, which Elena aspired to evade. Anthony's state of mind is, here at the beginning of the novel, extremely confused, a mixture of loss, deep sorrow, guilt, remorse, and shame. Lynley is on a visit at the Weavers' home, investigating:

> Weaver continued to speak. As he did so, his eyes filled with tears. "She was tender. Fragile."
>
> "Because she was deaf?"
>
> "No. Because of me." When Weaver's voice cracked, his wife looked his way, pressed her lips together, and once more lowered her eyes. "I left her mother when Elena was five, Inspector. You're going to learn that eventually, so you may as well know it right mow. She was in bed, asleep. I packed my bags and I left and I never went back. And I had no way to explain to a five-year-old child - who couldn't even *hear* me - that I wasn't leaving her, that it wasn't her fault, that the marriage itself was so filled with unhappiness that I couldn't bear to live in it any longer. And Glyn and I were at fault for that. Not Elena, never once Elena. But I was her father. I left her, betrayed her. And she struggled with that - and with the idea that somehow *she* was at fault - for the next fifteen years. Anger, confusion, lack of confidence, fear. Those were her demons. (pp.65-66)

Lynley makes an etic assumption here: he associates tenderness and fragility with deafness. This is in accordance with the pathological view of deafness and with most Hearing portrayals of the deaf. However, as is customary of detective novels, Lynley may well be bluffing by pretending to be simpler than

he is in order to elicit information. Through Anthony's overwhelming sorrow and guilt an understatement is found: "couldn't even *hear* me". As Elena was not mentally retarded in any way whatsoever, she could have learnt a sign language pretty well by the age of five, if only her parents had chosen her to. While Anthony (and the mother Glyn) had been the de facto handicapped ones as they did not bother to find out about BSL, Anthony's line reveals his attitude: Elena was handicapped because one could not communicate with her by speaking. Anthony and Glyn represent the oralist point of view on the education of the deaf.

A little later Lynley and Justine Weaver discuss Elena's difficulties in the University. Anthony defends Elena:

> "How could she have made the change easily?" Weaver demanded. "She was struggling with her life. She was doing her best. She was trying to be whole." [. . .] "But that didn't matter. Not a bit of it to me. Because she was a joy. An innocent. A gift." (pp. 66-67)

Anthony is probably referring indirectly to the same fact as Terence Cuff had a few pages before: Elena did not "fit completely into either [world]" (p.61), neither the Hearing nor the Deaf. Anthony's conception of Elena is coloured by his deep, genuine love, but also blindly biased: he considers Elena a pure, innocent child untouched by the evils of adulthood, an impression quite a few of the multiple voices in the novel will later challenge. When Lynley asks whether Elena's troubles caused Anthony embarrassment, he replies:

> "Nothing about my daughter was an embarrassment, Inspector. Nothing. Not a single part of her. And nothing she did." (p.67)

The remaining part of Lynley's first investigation with Anthony and Justine is about Gareth Randolph (see 6.6) and the Ceephone, a device for the deaf with which people can communicate simultaneously by writing and reading the discourse on a screen. Anthony demonstrates the Ceephone for Lynley (p.69). The Ceephone has a double function in the novel. First, it is an integral part of the suspense and the plot. The stepmother Justine went jogging with Elena every morning; however, Justine had received a Ceephone message where Elena told "she wasn't going to run this morning" (p.69). Lynley is the first to notice that,

instead of Elena, the sender of the message could have been anyone with access to Elena's Ceephone (or, for that matter, to any Ceephone). Later, there turn out to be Ceephones in many places where Lynley goes. We remain unaware of who sent the message under Elena's name; this creates suspense.

> Lynley stared at the house, waiting for answers and knowing that ultimately everything in the case narrowed down to one fact: Elena Weaver was deaf. Narrowed down to one object: the Ceephone. (p.240)

The second function of the Ceephone is that it builds plausibility: a deaf student *would*, after all, have a Ceephone. It functions as one of the many indicators of Elena's deafness. A deaf person is, more or less, tied to certain technology, as the hearing are tied to theirs. Things, artefacts, inventions, machines, and devices are part of any culture. The existence of the Ceephone in the story makes the portrayal of deafness 'rounder', more total, more thorough. In prose fiction, there are few records of technology for the deaf, let alone of the Ceephone. Now there is at least one, actually a rather realistic and plausible one.

Anthony Weaver's attitudes to Elena's deafness pop up every now and then in the narrative: they seem to be connected to a number of motives. The picture gets clearer and stronger all the time: Elena's deafness was a major problem for Anthony. He felt stronger than ordinary guilt for having left Elena as a child because she was also 'handicapped'. He made every effort to integrate Elena into the realm of academic success, he wanted his external circumstances to look good in others' eyes, he wanted to get rid of the abnormality and otherness that Elena's deafness represented, he wanted a 'clear record', he needed envy and respect from everyone.

> [Lynley] evaluated the manner in which Elena Weaver might have used him [Gareth Randolph] as an instrument of revenge. If she was acting out of a need to rub her father's face in his own desire that she be a normal, functioning woman, what better way to throw that desire back at him than to become pregnant. She'd be giving him what he ostensibly wanted - a normal daughter with normal needs and normal emotions whose body functioned in a perfectly normal way. At the same time, she'd be getting what she wanted – retaliation by choosing as the father of her child a deaf man. It was, at heart, a perfect circle of vengeance. (p.202)

Here Lynley is reconstructing what he, on the basis of his clues so far, believes were Anthony's and Elena's central motives. The word choice 'function' can be discussed further. It has turned out that in Elena's two families, the emphasis was put on Elena's *lack* of hearing, on the fact that her ears did not function. Thus it should be plausible that Elena had an enormous urge to emphasise her functioning sides, especially those that were related to bodily functions (we remember Elena's heightened sense of the bodily). All this is, at this phase, Lynley's reflections and assumptions. However, as Elena and Anthony reveal their 'true' stands only at a couple of passages (that is, when they are focalisers), their alleged views remain even in the end largely based upon Lynley's reflection, which is to be taken the most neutral and the most reliable as he is the protagonist of the story.

More observations on Anthony Weaver's stand to Elena's deafness are found in 6.5.5, the subchapter on Adam Jenn's views, and 6.6, the chapter on Gareth Randolph, as these are at certain points closely intertwined.

Then, what kind of man had such a marked obsession of his daughter's deafness? As the investigations unfold the secrets of the characters, Anthony Weaver turns out to be a more and more selfish, more and more unsympathetic character, truly the secondary villain of the story. Little by little, Lynley's impression of him gets more negative. Moreover, there are scenes where Lynley is not present, focalised by Anthony, his wife Justine, or his ex-wife Glyn, which support this negative portrayal not to the main focaliser Lynley, but to the actual reader. In the last chapter, after Anthony Weaver has attempted revenge by his own hand on the murderer Sarah Gordon, Lynley feels that Anthony too deserves punishment but is pessimistic about that:

> Lynley and Havers arrived at St. Stephen's College at half past eleven. They'd spent the early part of the morning assembling their reports, meeting with Superintendent Sheehan, and discussing what sort of charges might be filed against Anthony Weaver. Lynley knew that his hope for attempted murder was a futile one at best. (p.434)

What has this to do with Elena's deafness? Earlier in this study, I set out to survey what kind of attitudes towards deafness are found in the narrative, and particularly, *whose* attitudes they are? Having analysed Anthony Weaver's stand

and found it essentially Hearing, we must now consider *what kind of* character he is and *in what light* is he himself portrayed. Only then can we link Anthony's Hearing views to the context of the entire novel, where a number of voices each tell their own 'story'.

However, all of Anthony's attitudes and actions are perfectly understandable and psychologically credible. He made every effort to guarantee his own career, but he also loved Elena the best he could. Even the ever-critical Lynley shows some understanding of Anthony's efforts to make Elena Hearing:

> Lynley wondered what kind of blame - if any - ought to be assessed upon the Weavers for the efforts they had made with their daughter. For in spite of the manner in which they had apparently tried to create an inaccurate fantasy out of the reality of their daughter's life, hadn't they in fact given Elena what Gareth himself had never known? Hadn't they given her her own form of hearing? (p.224)

6.5.3 Flatmate

Miranda Webberly shared a college residence with Elena Weaver. Moreover, she is the daughter of New Scotland Yard's Superintendent Malcolm Webberly, Thomas Lynley's superior. Consequently, Miranda and Lynley are on familiar, casual terms. This position renders her one of Lynley's first examinees.

Miranda's primary feeling about Elena is, at the first examination, guilt of *not* feeling anger or grief. She feels in hindsight that she should have been closer to Elena, and replies to Lynley's question "But she wasn't a friend?" vaguely with "I wasn't a runner" (p.87). As a flatmate Miranda is able to inform Lynley that Elena associated most often with the girls in her running team. She liked parties and dancing, and was very frequently visited by men, Gareth Randolph and Adam Jenn particularly, but also twice by one of her supervisors, Lennart Thorsson. Furthermore, Miranda confirms Elena's disliking of her father's patronising visits.

Now the partial picture of Elena drawn in Chapter 1 is further enhanced: she seems to have been a markedly sexual young woman, attached to the world of body. Her strong sense of physicality seems, however, to hold an exceptionally

holistic and mental dimension, at least partly due to her deafness: "She liked to dance. She said she could feel the vibrations from the music if it was loud enough." (pp.90-91, Miranda to Lynley). For the first time, moreover, Elena's deafness is implied to be one cause of her exceptional appeal to men:

> "[. . .] I could see why they [men] did [like Elena]. She was lively and funny and she liked to talk and to listen, which is awfully odd when you think she couldn't really *do* either, could she? But somehow she always gave the impression that when she was with you, she was only and completely interested in you [. . .]" (p.91)

Besides challenging the general attitude that deaf people are grotesque or unappealing to the hearing, this portrayal is psychologically credible. Adam Jenn's portrayal of Elena (see 6.5.5) will explain part of that.

6.5.4 Supervisor, alleged harasser

Lennart Thorsson teaches English at the University: he was one of Elena's supervisors. Although Swedish and supposedly ignorant of British class aspirations, he overtly lets his upper-class manner show, spiced with a perfect accent. Elena's flatmate Miranda Webberly is the first to inform Lynley about Thorsson, who had visited their residence twice.

Lynley and Havers catch Thorsson finishing his lecture on Shakespeare, after which they start investigating him for the first time (pp.114-117). In the secrecy of his own study Thorsson turns out to be somewhat different from his well-mannered public figure: he is extremely uncooperative and arrogant, shows disdain for Cambridge, uses offensive language, and holds the lower-class Havers in deep contempt. During the first interview he hardly answers the questions concerning Elena at all; just his last two lines reveal his attitude to the dead girl.

> "Why did you go to see her Thursday night?" [Lynley asked.]
> "I thought we could sort things out if we talked like two adults. I discovered I was wrong."
> "So you knew she was intending to turn you in for harassing her. Is that what she told you Thursday night?"

> Thorsson hooted a laugh. He dropped his legs over the side of the bed. "I see the game now. You're too late, Inspector, if you're here to sniff up a motive for her murder. That one won't do. The bitch had already turned me in." (p.122)

Thorsson's last but one line implies how he regarded Elena as a silly child incapable of adult behaviour, whereas the word choice 'bitch', which is in perfect accordance with his prior use of language, already anticipates the second interview with him.

When Lynley and Havers go to Thorsson's house for the second time, he becomes even more impudent and intractable. He shows deep contempt at the detectives and Elena.

> " [. . .] Have you ever been charged with harassment before?"
> "Of course not. Never. Ask at the college if you don't believe me."
> "I've spoken to Dr. Cuff. He confirms what you say."
> "But his word's not good enough for you, it seems. You'd prefer to believe the stories cooked up by a little deaf tart who would have spread her legs - or opened her mouth - for any idiot willing to give her a try."
> "A little deaf tart, Mr. Thorsson," Lynley said. "Curious choice of words. Are you suggesting that Elena had a reputation for promiscuity?"
> Thorsson went back to his coffee, poured another mugful, took his time about drinking it. "Things get around," he settled on saying. "The college is small. There's always gossip."
> "So if she was a" - Havers made a production of squinting down at her notes - "'a little deaf tart', why not poke her yourself along with all the other blokes? [. . .] (pp.267-268)

Lynley almost takes my position as the analyst here by saying "curious choice of words" (p.268); 'tart', of course, is highly offensive, and 'little' might refer to Elena's age. Furthermore, Thorsson chose to use 'deaf' as an attribute. Said spontaneously, it shows that not only Elena's sexuality (or her academic performance) but also her deafness had left an impression on Thorsson. This could be due to conversations with Elena, where her deafness played a major role (her idiosyncratic speech, observant lip-reading). Both Lynley and Havers repeat Thorsson's insult: Lynley shows disapproval, while Havers uses the phrase to attack back. Slightly later, Thorsson's story does not match, the detectives go on investigating, and Thorsson goes berserk, raving "if you think I murdered that fucking little cunt - " (p.270). Here, the extremely offensive swear words have replaced the earlier 'deaf', which would not suffice to express Thorsson's

growing frustration. Thorsson does not show any respect to Elena Weaver whatsoever.

6.5.5 Male escort

Adam Jenn is Anthony Weaver's ambitious graduate student. He had been asked by Anthony to keep Elena company on a regular basis, and he had agreed, feeling that he was in gratitude to Dr. Weaver due to the professional and practical help he had received from him. Partly due to his urge to protect Dr. Weaver, partly to his ambivalent feelings about Elena (to which I shall get back later), Adam evades talking to Lynley about Elena for a while. It turns out that Anthony had wanted Adam to replace deaf Gareth Randolph in Elena's life; it makes more sense to examine that part of the interview below in 6.6 in connection with the portrayal of Gareth's deafness.

> "She took it all as a joke," he [Adam] said finally. "She took everything as a joke."
> "In this case, what?"
> "That her father was worried she'd marry Gareth Randolph. That he didn't want her to hang round the other deaf students so much. But most of all, that he . . . I think it was that he loved her so much and that he wanted her to love him as much in return. She took it as a joke. That's the way she was. (p.170)

Adam suggests that Elena was a light-hearted girl who did not care much for her father's, or for that matter, for anyone's approbation. Her behaviour was reckless and indiscreet, whether with Anthony, with Adam, with Gareth, or with anyone. A picture is sketched of an independent, determined young woman who did not let anyone control her. Her indiscretion was a shield or a weapon in the power struggles she was engaged in.

Later on, Lynley asks Adam about the relationship between Elena and her father Anthony:

> "Not genuine?"
>
> "It was like he felt he had to keep pouring on the love and devotion. Like he had to keep showing her how much she meant to him so that maybe she'd come to believe it someday."
>
> "He would have wanted to take special pains with her because she couldn't hear, I should think. She was in a new environment. He'd have wanted her to succeed. For herself. For him."
>
> "I know what you're getting at. You're heading back towards the Chair. But it's more than that. It went beyond her studies. It went beyond her being deaf. I think he believed he had to prove himself to her for some reason. But he was so intent on doing that that he never even saw her. Not really. Not entirely." (pp.170-171)

Lynley suggests that it was Elena's deafness that caused Anthony Weaver to work so hard for her good. Adam seems to confirm this, adding an assumption that Anthony did not quite succeed in his urge, after all. The word choices can be discussed: while Adam uses 'deaf' in a clearly neutral sense, Lynley emphasises what Elena lacked by "she couldn't hear" (p.170). We cannot seem to get a grasp of Lynley's attitude: is he open-minded and unprejudiced towards deafness, or disparaging in a culturally Hearing way? Perhaps his views are still unfixed and developing in the course of the novel, while the examinees have all more or less formed their views as they had known Elena longer. We have to remember that these may well be Lynley's first days in touch with deafness issues.

Between the lines above and Lynley's final routine questions, well over a page is devoted to Lynley's inner reflection on Anthony's relationship to his daughter. (Temporally a reflection of such detail and precision could hardly fit in in the middle of the interview with Adam - reading the passage takes one or two minutes. There are three alternative interpretations: the passage is 'later' complemented by the narrator with Lynley's later thoughts, or Lynley really let his thought flow through all those things very quickly, or there is a remarkable silent pause in the narrated interview.) Anyhow, the relevant part comes in the middle of that inner reflection:

> The situation was worse for Anthony Weaver. To achieve peace of mind - which society told him was not his due in the first place - he had ended a marriage only to find that the guilt attendant to divorce was exacerbated by the fact that, in escaping unhappiness, he had not merely left behind a small child who loved and depended upon him. He had left behind a handicapped child as well. And what kind of society would ever forgive him that? (pp.171-172)

Once again, interpretation becomes very problematic. It is explicit that "a handicapped child" (p.172) is somehow a special case of the more general "a small child" (p.172). 'Handicapped' belongs to the etic, Hearing, clinical-pathological discourse, where 'deaf' would be a more neutral choice. Even the very fact that a distinction is made in the first place between a hearing child and a deaf child in this context is telling. Is it necessary in the context of a father leaving his family?

But whose voice is doing this discrimination really? Who claims that Elena is 'handicapped'? Is it purely Lynley's idea, his current view of Elena (or Elena as five-year old)? Or is it what Lynley *assumes* Anthony Weaver thinks? On the basis of what Lynley has now heard about Elena's parents stand to her deafness, the latter might be a more likely interpretation. It is not Lynley, after all, who supports the Hearing discourse; he simply reflects upon Anthony's attitudes, with an estranged, purely descriptive attitude. However, while he is often right in his assumptions about people and reflections on human nature, Lynley may also be mistaken. In detective fiction, it is the detective's task to form hypotheses, part of which may turn out wrong in the end. It seems that Lynley is simultaneously resorting to pathological discourse and yet rather descriptively connecting that discourse to Anthony on the basis of his knowledge.

Moreover, there is a little detail worth attention earlier in the same interview. When Adam has eluded talking about Elena by volubly praising Dr. Weaver for too long, Lynley finally overtly introduces the subject of the dead girl. To Lynley's pseudo-question "I understand you took her out", Adam answers "To foreign films at the Arts. [...]" (p.168). This detail adds credibility to the portrayal of Elena's deafness. Deaf people seldom go to see films without subtitles, and in England there are usually no subtitles in films where English is spoken. Therefore, the choice the deaf have is virtually limited to foreign film. On the whole, references to things that Elena *was* able to do are in abundance in her portrayal, whereas things she could not do because of her deafness are fewer. In this way the novel differs from the majority of earlier fictional portrayals of deafness.

The second time Adam Jenn appears, the narration is his stream-of-consciousness. Even if he is a marginal character, we have access to his thoughts now. Adam is the focaliser of the extract where he sits on duty in Anthony's study and recollects his meetings with Elena (pp.288-290).

> [. . .] Anthony Weaver had taken him on as a graduate advisee. So cooperating with Weaver's request that he take the professor's daughter under his wing in order to make her second year at the University a smoother and more pleasant experience than her first had appeared to be yet another fortuitous opportunity for him to demonstrate - if only to himself - that he possessed the requisite amount of political perspicacity to flourish in this environment. What he had not counted on when first told about the professor's handicapped daughter and first envisaging Dr. Weaver's gratitude for the time he expended on smoothing the troubled waters of his daughter's life was Elena herself.
>
> He had been expecting to be introduced to a stoop-shouldered, concave-chested, pasty-skinned fading wildflower of a girl, someone who sat miserably on the edge of a threadbare ottoman with her legs tucked back and clinging to its sides. She'd be wearing an old dress printed with rosebuds. She'd be wearing ankle socks and scruffy-looking brogues. And for Dr. Weaver's sake, he'd do his duty with an appealing blend of gravity and graciousness. He'd even carry a small notebook in the pocket of his jacket to make sure that they could communicate in writing at all times. (p.288)

We are faced with the disability discourse of the 'abled' hegemony now, to the greatest extent so far in this novel. Adam is recollecting back a couple of months. He had been expecting to meet an essentially unattractive "handicapped daughter". Considering Anthony Weaver's stand to Elena's deafness, the word 'handicapped' might have been his choice. Or Adam himself may have taken 'deaf' as 'handicapped'. However, this stereotype had proved wrong as Elena, the apple of every man's eye, had first come swinging towards him:

> He'd held on to this fictional Elena all the way into the sitting room of Anthony Weaver's house, even going so far as to scan the guests who were there for the history faculty's Michaelmas drinks party. He'd had to give up the idea of the threadbare ottoman quickly enough when he saw the nature of the house's furnishings [. . .] but he did maintain his mental image of the cringing, retiring, handicapped girl alone in a corner and afraid of everyone.
>
> And then she came swinging towards him, wearing a clingy black dress and dangling onyx earrings, her hair catching her movement and subtly duplicating the sway of her hips. She smiled and said what he took for "Hi. You're Adam, aren't you?" because her pronunciation wasn't clear. He noted the fact that she smelled like ripe fruit, that she didn't wear a bra, that

> her legs were bare. And that every man in the room followed her movement with his eyes, no matter the conversation in which he was engaged. (pp.288-289)

An attractive appearance is needed to change Adam's discourse of 'handicapped'. (One might here read some critique of the importance of good appearance, especially to women.) Adam only got sincerely interested in Elena because she looked great; otherwise he would have done his job as her escort just to be able to climb higher in the academic world. Elena is so sexy and naturally beautiful that Adam is obliged to give up the 'handicapped' stereotypes.

This is the second point where Elena's idiosyncratic English is reported, now through another focaliser than Elena herself. The narration does not specify how Elena's speech differed from the norm, or tell 'how it really sounded' but rather, 'what Adam took it for' "because her pronunciation wasn't clear" (p.289).

> She had a way of making a man feel special. He'd learned that soon enough. Astutely, he realised that this feeling of being the sole interest in Elena's life came from the fact that she had to look directly at people in order to read their lips whenever they spoke to her. And for a time he convinced himself that that was the entirety of his attraction to her. But even on the first evening of their acquaintance, he found his eyes continually dropping to the nubs of her nipples - they were erect, they pressed against the material of her dress, they asked to be sucked and moulded and licked - and he found his hands sore with the need to slide round her waist, cup her buttocks, and pull her against him.
>
> He'd done none of that. Ever. [. . .] (p.289)

Elena was a fluent lip-reader and quite good at speaking, and definitely preferred to communicate that way to signing, interpretation, or the pen and notepad method. This is confirmed to Lynley by the interpreter at DeaStu (p.215). Adam's attitude to Elena was that of an admirer, in the erotic sense. Elena's deafness, in fact, appealed to Adam, because it made her look people (including men) in the eye more intensely than is usual between hearing people. This Elena's ability of "making a man feel special" was actually suggested earlier by Miranda Webberly (p.91; see also 6.5.3 of this study); now the major reason why this was so is found in Adam's reflection.

In his mind-talk, Adam faces the painful truth of his sexual orientation, sadism, which he reproduces after his parents' model. He did not really love

Elena, he just wanted her. Thereafter, Adam considers other painful issues: that Anthony apparently wanted to make a pair of Elena and him, that he had to pay high price for his career intrigue, that things might fall now that Elena was dead. Suddenly, Anthony rushes in, outraged by the fresh awareness of her dead daughter's pregnancy. Adam "danced between the truth and a lie, wondering which would better serve his interests" (p.291), but opts for the truth.

> "She was special," Anthony Weaver was saying. "Her baby - *your* baby, Adam - would have been special as well. She was fragile and working hard to find herself, it's true, but you were helping her grow. Remember that. Hold onto that. You were tremendously good for her. I would have been proud to see you together as man and wife." (pp.291-292)

Anthony shows his unease with her daughter's difference continuously (see also 6.5.2). His words "working hard to find herself" (p.291) imply a wish that Elena give up Deaf culture and stick with the Hearing, the 'normal'. Although the main part of this passage is direct representation of the dialogue between the two men, Adam's focalising position is still marked. When Anthony expresses his approval of Adam having made Elena pregnant, Adam truthfully denies this. It would probably be Gareth Randolph.

> [. . .] He could see the grey curtain of knowledge and misery pass across Weaver's features.
>
> "That deaf - " Weaver's words stopped. His eyes sharpened once again. "Did you reject her, Adam? Is that why she looked elsewhere? Wasn't she good enough for you? Did she put you off because she was deaf?"
>
> "No. Not at all. I just didn't - "
>
> "Then why?"
>
> [. . .]
>
> [. . .] "It just didn't happen between us."
>
> "What?"
>
> "The sort of connection one looks for."
>
> "Because she was deaf."
>
> "That wasn't an issue, sir."
>
> "How can you say that? How can you even expect me to believe it? Of course it was an issue. It was an issue for everyone. It was an issue for her. How could it not be?"
>
> Adam knew this was dangerous ground. He wanted to retreat from the confrontation. But Weaver was waiting for his answer, and his stony expression told Adam how important it was that he answer correctly.
>
> "She was just deaf, sir. Nothing else. Just deaf."
>
> "What's that supposed to mean?"

> "That there was nothing else wrong with her. Even being deaf wasn't something wrong. It's just a word people use to indicate something's missing."
>
> "Like blind, like mute, like paralysed?"
>
> "I suppose."
>
> "And if she'd been those things - blind, mute, paralysed - would you still be saying that it wasn't an issue?"
>
> "But she wasn't those things."
>
> "Would you still be saying it wasn't an issue?"
>
> "I don't know. I can't say. I can only say that Elena's being deaf wasn't an issue. Not for me."
>
> "You're lying."
>
> "Sir."
>
> "You saw her as a freak."
>
> "I didn't."
>
> "You were embarrassed by her voice and pronunciation, by the fact that she couldn't ever tell how loud she was speaking so that when you were out in public together, people would hear that odd voice. They'd turn, they'd be curious. And you'd feel embarrassed with all those eyes on you. And ashamed, of her, of yourself, of being embarrassed in the first place. Not the great liberal that you once thought you were. Always wishing that she were normal because if she were - if she just could hear - then you really wouldn't feel as if you owed her something more than you were able to give." (pp.292-294)

In this intense conversation with Anthony, Adam claims that Elena's deafness was "not an issue", whereas Anthony draws from his own set of values: "You saw her as a freak." Because of the explosive situation, Adam has to play liberal, but he is probably giving his real views all the same, only hiding his passion to Elena. "Just deaf", is his choice, suggesting that he was, after all, at ease with Elena's deafness. Anyway, both men agree that deafness is a handicap, where something is 'missing'. Anthony's behaviour is, of course, governed by limitless rage and grief, but his views glare through his lines. He is putting in Adam's mouth his own values, blaming Adam for the same thing of which he himself has been guilty. Anthony draws a parallel between deafness and blindness, muteness, and paralysis: all are disabilities that render their victims 'freaks'.

This is the first mentioning of Elena's inability to control the volume of her voice. That is true with deaf people who can speak. The problem, however, is not theirs: it is the tolerance of the hearing people that is at stake. The eternal human need to maintain face is at odds with going in public with a speaking deaf person. When Anthony claims that Adam had felt "embarrassed" and "ashamed"

of Elena's company, we do not know for sure whether he is mirroring his own frustrating experiences of trying to turn Elena into Hearing, or if he is just expecting everyone else to think like that. Anyhow, Adam's voice is suffocated by Anthony's lament, and no more heard in the remainder of the novel.

This conversation between Adam Jenn and Anthony Weaver also contains references to Gareth Randolph. I have chosen to examine them in 6.6 at the expense of the analysis of this scene being spread over two places.

6.5.6 Jealous stepmother

Justine Weaver's relationship to her stepdaughter Elena is rather cool and distant; she had to compete with the girl about Anthony's love. Feeling ambivalent and edgy, she is alone at home as Lynley makes his second visit there. Justine confirms how sexually active Elena had been for the past year or so, and is not surprised at Elena's pregnancy. Justine thinks Elena "wanted her father to know" (p.200) about her sexual life; Lynley interviews:

> "What gave you that impression?"
>
> "There were times when she'd come by quite late and we were still up and she'd hang on her father and hug him and press her cheek against his and rub up against him and all the time she was reeking like . . " Justine's fingers felt for her wedding band.
>
> "Was she trying to arouse him?"
>
> "I thought so at first. Who wouldn't have thought so with her carrying on like that?" But then I began to think that she merely was trying to rub his face in normal."
>
> It was a curious expression. "An act of defiance?"
>
> "No. Not at all. An act of compliance." She must have seen the next query on his face, for she went on with, "I'm being normal, Daddy. See how normal I am? I'm partying and drinking and having regular sex. Isn't this what you wanted? Didn't you want a normal child? (p.200)

Similarly with Adam Jenn, Justine Weaver avoids making too definite statements of her own. Instead, she reports that Anthony and Elena behaved in a certain way. Beyond her ostensible neutrality, her loathing of Elena is strongly implied (for example, in "she was reeking like . ."; p.200). Terence Cuff and Adam Jenn had already told Lynley how the Weavers wanted to identify Elena

with 'normal' rather than with 'deaf'; Justine's story supports this. Furthermore, according to her, Elena herself preferred the normal, non-deaf identity on the one hand. On the other, Elena used that as a weapon against her father: "Isn't this what you wanted? Didn't you want a normal child?" (p.200) contains an ironic, bitter, revengeful tone. Anyhow, when talking about Elena, Justine's emphasis is on Elena's propensity to licentious lifestyle and frivolous sexuality rather than on her deafness.

> Lynley saw how her words reaffirmed the picture which Terence Cuff had painted obliquely on the previous night about Anthony Weaver's relationship with her daughter. "I know he didn't want her to sign," Lynley said. "But as for the rest - "
>
> "Inspector, he didn't want her to be deaf. Nor did Glyn, for that matter."
>
> "Elena knew this?"
>
> "How could she help knowing? They'd spent her entire life to shape her into a normal woman, the very thing she could never hope to be."
>
> "Because she was deaf."
>
> "Yes. For the first time, Justine's posture altered. She leaned forward fractionally to make her point. "Deaf - isn't - normal - Inspector." She waited for a moment before going on, looking as if she were gauging his reaction. And he did feel the reaction course swiftly through him. It was an aversion of the sort he always felt when someone made a comment that was xenophobic, homophobic, or racist.
>
> "You see," she said, "you want to make her normal as well. You even want to call her normal and condemn me for daring to suggest that being deaf is different. I can see it on your face: Deaf is as normal as anything else. Which is exactly what Anthony wanted to think. So you can't really judge him, can you, for wanting to describe his daughter in the very same way as you've just done?"
>
> There was sheer, cool insight behind the words. Lynley wondered how much time and reflection had gone into Justine Weaver's being able to make such a detached evaluation. [. . .] (pp.200-201).

Now Lynley's and Justine's attitudes differ. Although Lynley had only just become acquainted with deafness issues, he seems to be able to draw an analogy to foreigners, homosexuals and different ethnicities. His natural reaction to Justine's point is aversion. However, Justine turns the issue upside down: she blames Lynley - who did not have anything to do with Elena while she was alive - for normalising Elena. Justine's thorough disliking of Elena is apparently combined with an attitude that Elena was 'awkward' in an unpleasant way. Justine's comment "the very thing she could never hope to be" (p.200) implies the inferiority of being deaf. Justine's subsequent argument, where she draws a

parallel from Lynley's stand to that of Anthony's, is weak: Anthony wanted Elena to abandon any deaf identities and pass for a hearing person, while Lynley's critique is directed towards attempts to change what was not anything wrong in the first place. Moreover, Lynley does not even suggest that Elena was normal. The narration, with Lynley as the focaliser, creates the impression that Lynley, the hero, is tolerant and virtuous, while Justine, the villain (albeit not the stereotypical villain of the entire story), acts wrong in her intolerance.

When Lynley has left, Justine becomes the focaliser for the second time (pp.205-212; the first time was pp.71-76): we are let into her mind to follow her reflection and action. Justine is gnawed by the guilt of not having told Lynley the truth and by her ambivalent feelings about Elena's death. Justine had not shared Anthony's love for Elena; instead, her jealousy of Elena had grown immensely during Elena's first fourteen months in Cambridge. This jealousy was further enhanced by Elena's pregnancy - Justine would have wanted a child with Anthony, while he did not even consider the possibility. As Justine recalls it:

> He had one child. He would not have another. He could not betray Elena again. He had walked out on her, and he would not make the implied rejection worse by having another child that Elena might see as a replacement for herself or a competitor for her father's love. Nor would he run the risk of her thinking that he was seeking to satisfy his own needs of ego by producing a child who could hear. (p.206)

It is problematic to explain this notion. Now Justine is not speaking to anyone and there would be no need to protect anyone or lie about anything in such an inner reflection. A diagram helps to describe the situation:

JUSTINE thinks: ANTHONY thinks: ELENA would think: ANTHONY's primary needs are egoistic

Whether Anthony would actually want a hearing child is not stated anywhere by anyone. Instead, we are faced with a complex chain of emotions and beliefs. Even though Justine is well aware of Anthony's Hearing attitudes and his urge to normalise Elena (and although Justine herself does not either consider Elena normal), Anthony's alleged reasons for a childless second marriage seem far-fetched. Are these Anthony's words, or words put in his mouth by Justine?

Considering Elena's playful and indiscreet attitude towards her father, she would not really have felt inferior to a hearing younger half-sister just because she herself could not hear. Elena's deafness seems, then, to be an obsession for Anthony. He has never become comfortable with it, and it lurks behind all his thinking, even to the extent that Justine is carried away with obsessive thoughts as well.

Justine's reflection becomes even darker, full of anger and jealousy:

> [. . .] Elena. The wild and contradictory currents of life that ran through her - the restless, fierce energy, the probing mind, the exuberant humour, the deep black anger. And always beneath everything, that impassioned need for unequivocal acceptance at continual war with her desire for revenge.
>
> She had managed to achieve it. Justine wondered with what sort of anticipation Elena had looked forward to the moment when she would tell her father about her pregnancy, exacting a payment beyond his every expectation for the well-intentioned but nonetheless revealing crime of wanting her to be like everyone else. How Elena must have triumphed in the potential embarrassment to her father. And how she herself ought to be feeling some small degree of triumph at the idea of being in possession of a fact that would forever dispel Anthony's illusions about his daughter. She was, after all, so decidedly glad that Elena was dead. (p.207)

While Justine earlier suggested to Lynley that Elena could never be normalised, she disapproves of Anthony's attempts, thinking of it as a "crime". Or, once again, is it Elena's pattern of thought as conceived and 'reported' by Justine? Whose voice is really heard in "the well-intentioned but nonetheless revealing crime of wanting her to be like everyone else" (p.207)? Perhaps Anthony's obsession was a crime both in Elena's and Justine's opinion. The difference is that Elena wanted to be accepted in her own terms, the way she was, while Justine was unable to give such approbation in any case.

As can be seen, there is a strong psychological focus in this novel. One thing that comes out here is the complexity of the human psyche: attitudes, feelings and opinions are mixed and conflicting. In a way this could be seen as a covert assertion that no one is only innocent or good.

6.5.7 Bitter mother

Elena's mother Glyn Weaver appears just four times in the novel. Struck by grief and outraged, she has come to Cambridge to see Elena's body and bury it. Unlike her former husband Anthony, Glyn has not made a success of her life, at least not materially: she had brought Elena up "in one of the roughest areas of London" (p.178). The two parents go together to a mortuary to make the practical arrangements of Elena's burial. Glyn is outraged and tries to pick a quarrel in a confused state of mind, while Anthony tries stoically to stay calm. On the surface, the quarrel is about the choice of the coffin, but there are deeper threads:

> She jerked away. "You bastard," she hissed. "Bastard! Who brought her up? Who spent years trying to give her some language? Who helped her with her schoolwork and dried her tears and washed her clothes and sat up with her at night when she was puling and sick? Not you, you bastard. And not your ice queen wife. This is my daughter, Anthony. My daughter. Mine. And I'll bury her exactly as I see fit. Because unlike you, I'm not hot after some big poncey job, so I don't have to give a damn what anyone thinks." (p.182)

Along with other passages where Glyn's voice is heard, this dialogue shows her devotion to 'make Elena normal'. The context of ultimate sorrow, hatred and frustration, however, turns Glyn's lines into extreme statements against Anthony and Justine. Clearly, Elena was genuinely loved by each parent, but in this emotional chaos, she serves as the object of bitter power struggle between the two parents. "Who spent years trying to give her some language?," (p.182) hisses Glyn, covertly representing the Hearing view of deafness as a handicap and of the knowledge of spoken language (English) as the primary step to 'normal' life. As pointed out earlier, Glyn had stubbornly rejected the tuition of BSL to Elena; thence "some language" (p.182) implies English, which Elena actually learned to use exceptionally well.

Later, Glyn directs her frustrated hatred at Justine, as the two parents have returned to Anthony and Justine's home. Anthony is present as well:

> Glyn continued, as if following a course she'd determined in advance. "We never knew for certain why Elena was born deaf. Has Anthony told you

> that? I suppose we could have had studies done - some sort of genetic thing, you know what I mean - but we didn't bother."
>
> Anthony leaned forward, put his teacup on the coffee table. He kept his fingers on its saucer as if in the expectation that it would slide to the floor.
>
> Justine said, "I don't see that -"
>
> "The reality is that you might produce a deaf baby as well, Justine, if there's something wrong with Anthony's genes. I thought I ought to mention the possibility. Are you equipped - emotionally, I mean - to deal with a handicapped child? Have you considered how a deaf child might put a spanner in the works of your career?" (p.283)

The same phenomena are found in this passage: Glyn's behaviour is directed by the most horrible sorrow that can be imagined. She rages at the couple: "[...] if there's something wrong with Anthony's genes. [...] Are you equipped [...] to deal with a handicapped child?" This shows great bitterness not only at the premature death of her daughter, but also at Elena's deafness. It is rather expectable behaviour from a parent to 'want the best' for their children. If 'the law of the jungle' favours the fittest, parents may set out to do all they can to make the child fit. If the child is born with some kind of deviation from norms or expectations, often referred to as 'a handicap' or 'a disability', parents turn to look at the mirror to find out 'whose fault?'. Glyn's comments on genetics feature this pattern of thinking. Confused and bitter, she suggests that Elena's deafness is due to Anthony's genes. Again Elena is a pawn in a game, an object in the power struggle, while the course of that struggle is distorted by the genuine love and sorrow. Glyn represents the most extreme stereotype of Hearing attitudes and shows true hostility towards cultural Deafness. It is her intention to hurt Justine badly by saying "you might produce a deaf baby as well", as if this was the worst thing that could happen to the married couple, or at least the worst thing that could happen to a married couple with Anthony as the husband. These strong emotions are, of course, inseparably connected to motherhood, but has this hostility developed *in spite of* her being the deaf girl's mother, or *because* of it? I would suggest the latter.

The narrator gives equal representation of the members of this trial drama: the next time Glyn appears, she herself is the focaliser of the scene. Later, still in the Weavers' house, Glyn hears the couple from another room, arguing about Justine's possible attendance at Elena's funeral and the duties Anthony has to the two women, and goes to attend.

> "I said why don't you finish what you were saying?" she [Glyn] insisted. "Glyn put Elena through paces, Anthony. Glyn turned your daughter into a little deaf whore. Elena gave a poke to anyone who wanted it, just like her mum." (p.369)

Glyn is putting words in Justine's mouth here. She certainly did not think of her daughter as a 'whore' - even though Elena might well have reproduced the sexual behaviours of her mother once she had come of age. Glyn just assumes that this would be the kind of reference Justine would use.

GLYN thinks: JUSTINE thinks: GLYN made a whore of ELENA

(Despite hating Elena, Justine in fact never uses such offensive images of her in this narrative.) The determiner 'little' is rather neutral, but 'deaf' is again used offensively, as if a 'deaf whore' were a step worse than just a 'whore'. Using 'deaf' in an extremely negative and offensive context (even if the words were meant to be Justine's) illustrates perfectly well Glyn's negative stand to Elena's deafness.

The extracts analysed above are focalised by Anthony, Justine, and Glyn, respectively. We are let to be inside the mind of each of them in turn, which is characteristic of the polyphonic narration. It is not until the last (the fourth) appearance of Glyn that Lynley meets her. Now Lynley, who goes to the Weavers' house (p.380) with the intention to investigate Anthony and Justine, is the focaliser. The outraged Glyn tries to convince Lynley that Justine, the evil stepmother, is the murderer (pp.381-384) by showing him devastated paintings of Elena, which she thinks are painted by Anthony and wrecked by the jealous Justine. Glyn's views are characterised not only by her motherhood and by her indescribable anger but also by her black-and-white conception of Anthony and Justine being the bad ones.

6.5.8 Deaf friend and admirer

The portrayal of the Deaf Gareth Randolph deserves a subchapter of its own later (6.5). Here I shall only deal with Gareth's attitude to Elena Weaver. The chief notions in this respect are Gareth's love for Elena, and his urge to make her acculturate into the Deaf world. The best example of the latter comes when Lynley interviews Gareth at the offices of DeaStu (for the anatomy of that interview, see also 6.5):

> "I've been hearing a great deal about your relationship with Elena Weaver," Lynley said. "Dr. Cuff from St. Stephen's apparently brought you together."
>
> "For her own good," Gareth replied, the hands again sharp and staccato in the air. "To help her. Maybe save her."
>
> "Through DeaStu?"
>
> "Elena wasn't deaf. That was the problem. She could have been, but she wasn't. They wouldn't allow it."
>
> Lynley frowned. "What do you mean? Everyone's said - "
>
> Gareth scowled and grabbed a piece of paper. With a green felt-tip pen he scrawled out two words: *Deaf* and *deaf*. He drew three heavy lines under the upper case *D* and shoved the paper across the desk.
>
> Bernadette spoke as Lynley looked at the two words. Her hands included Gareth in the conversation. "What he means, Inspector, is that Elena was deaf with a lower case *d*. She was disabled. Everyone else round here - Gareth especially - is Deaf with an upper case *D*."
>
> "*D* for different?" Lynley asked, thinking how this assessment went legions to support Justine Weaver's words to him that day.
>
> Gareth's hands took over. "Different, yes. How could we not be different? We live without sound. But it's more than that. Being Deaf is a culture. Being deaf is handicap. Elena was deaf."
>
> Lynley pointed to the first of the two words. "But you wanted her to be Deaf, like you?"
>
> "Wouldn't you want a friend to run instead of crawl?"
>
> "I'm not sure if I follow the analogy." (p.217)

With great certainty, this passage is the first time that Woodward's (1972) Deaf/deaf distinction is made in prose fiction. It is only logical that the distinction is made by the probably first Deaf rights activist character. A native signer, Gareth is an inside member of the Deaf community and as a consequence, very qualified to define who belong to it. It turns out that despite Gareth's efforts, Elena had not reached the stage of being Deaf before her death. From a Deaf person's point of view, then, Elena was 'handicapped': she could not navigate in

the Deaf world, the world to which her parents would not let her belong. Gareth's final question above is very telling: for him the knowledge of sign language and membership in the Deaf community make a deaf person truly alive ("run"). Still ignorant, Lynley cannot understand Gareth's metaphor.

Gareth's love for Elena is first implied by a number of witnesses: Justine Weaver (p.68), a member of Gareth's boxing team (p.213), and the interpreter Bernadette (p.221). The two interviews with him confirm this. The first of them is analysed in detail in Chapter 6.5 of this study, but the most logical place for the second one is here. Lynley and Havers are in Gareth's bed-sitting room at the college; the interview is conducted on the screen of Gareth's Ceephone.

> *Were you the father?* Lynley typed.
>
> The boy looked long at the words before he replied with: *Didn't know she was pg. She never said. Told you already.*
>
> "Not knowing she was pregnant doesn't mean sod-all," Havers remarked. "He can't take us for fools."
>
> "He doesn't," Lynley said. "I dare say he just takes himself for one, Sergeant." He typed: *You had sex with Elena*, deliberately making it a statement, not a question.
>
> Gareth answered by hitting one of the number keys: *1.*
>
> *Once?*
>
> *Yes.*
>
> *When?*
>
> [. . .]
>
> *London*, he typed. *Just before term. I saw her for my birthday. She fucked me on the floor of the kitchen while her mum was out buying milk for tea. HAPPY BIRTHDAY, YOU BLOODY STUPID BERK.*
>
> "Great." Havers sighed.
>
> *Loved her*, Gareth went on. *I wanted us special. To be* - he dropped his hands to his lap, stared at the screen.
>
> *You thought the lovemaking meant more than Elena intended it to mean*, Lynley typed. *Is that what happened?*
>
> *Fucking*, Gareth answered. *Not lovemaking. Fucking.*
>
> *Is that what she called it?*
>
> *Thought we build something. Last year. I took real care. To make it last. Didn't want to rush anything. Never even tried with her. Wanted it to be real.*
>
> *But it wasn't?*
>
> *Thought it was. Because if you do that with a woman it means like a pledge. Like you say something you wouldn't say to anyone else.*
>
> *Saying that you love each other?*
>
> *Want to be together. Want to have a future. I thought that's why she did it with me.*
>
> *Did you know she was sleeping with someone else?*
>
> *Not then.*
>
> *When did you learn it?*

> *She came up this term. I thought we'd be together.*
> *As lovers?*
> *She didn't want that. Laughed when I tried to talk to her about it. Said what's matter with you Gareth it was only a fuck we did it it felt good that's the end of it right why you getting so moon-eyed over it it's not a big deal.*
> *But it was to you.*
> *Thought she loved me that's why she wanted to do it with me didn't know* - He stopped. He looked sapped of energy.
> [. . .]
> [. . .] *The argument you had with Elena on Sunday. Is that when she told you she was involved with someone else?*
> *I talked about us*, he responded. *But there was no us.*
> *That's what she told you?*
> *How could there be no us. I said what about London.*
> *That's when she told you it hadn't meant anything?*
> *Just a poke for fun Gareth we were randy we did it don't be such a twit and make it more than that.*
> *She was laughing at you. I can't imagine you liked it.*
> *Kept trying to talk. How she acted London. What she felt for London. But she wouldn't listen. And then she told.*
> *That there was someone else?*
> *Didn't believe her at first. I said she was scared. Said she was trying to be what her father wanted her to be. Said all sorts of things. Wasn't even thinking. Wanted to hurt her.* (pp.361-363)

At first Elena had apparently seemed a perfect match for Gareth: she was attractive and deaf. Moreover, she proved a challenge as she had not really mixed with deaf people before. However, the purposes of the two characters did not match. The picture of Elena drawn by Gareth is not very positive at all: she played with Gareth's emotions and humiliated him. It has to be noted that the representation of Elena's 'darker side' is significant as well. As discussed in 3.1, deaf characters have been traditionally portrayed not only as miserable, pathetic losers, but also perfectly noble and virtuous saints. Elena certainly breaks both conventions rather effectively.

Later in this Ceephone interview, Gareth confesses how he had followed Elena to her lover's (see 6.5.9 below) study. The presentation has shifted from direct (conveyed in italics as above) to indirect:

> [. . .] He'd waited in the street for her to emerge, he told them. And when she'd come out, he'd confronted her again, furiously angry at her rejection of him, bitterly disappointed in the loss of his dreams. But most of all he was disgusted with her behaviour. For he thought he'd understood her intentions in involving herself with Victor Troughton. And he saw those intentions as an attempt to attach herself to a hearing world that would

> never fully accept or understand her. She was acting deaf. She wasn't acting Deaf. They'd argued violently. He'd left her in the street. (p.364)

Gareth's relationship with Elena ends in a violent argument. Not only has Elena ridiculed, hurt, and humiliated him with the powerful weapons of love and sex, but she continuously rejected the opportunities offered to her by the Deaf world, and took every effort to make it in the power struggle of the Hearing world.

6.5.9 Middle-aged lover

Victor Troughton appears first rather anonymous, as a passing, insignificant name: Elena had picked a puppy from his dog's litter (p.72). He is introduced by the narrator very scarcely. For a reason unknown for readers, Justine Weaver goes to seek Troughton after Lynley's second investigation in the Weavers' house. Troughton is referred to as 'Victor'; he appears as one of Justine's acquaintances (pp.210-212). Justine and Troughton exchange a few words about Elena's death and about the fact that Troughton had been Elena's lover.

This secrecy around Dr. Troughton's character is dictated by the requirements of the plot. That he has been Elena's lover is discovered incidentally by Lynley much later (p.333). Troughton, too, is Professor at one of the Colleges. Exceptionally, Lynley is not with Detective Sergeant Havers but with his long-time crush Lady Helen as he gets a chance to investigate Troughton. The interview is narrated in two parts. The beginning is presented directly (pp.334-339), while the latter part (pp.340-347) is in the form of a flashback when Lynley and Lady Helen are sitting on a bench outside slightly after their visit to Troughton's study, as if immediately remembered and reflected upon by Lynley. Lynley is the focaliser of the whole Chapter 19, where these scenes are found.

Troughton is only happy to get a chance to confess everything: that he had begun loathing his wife, that he had continued the unhappy marriage just for the sake of their children, that he had had a vasectomy in order to enable sex adventures, that he had particularly chased after young flesh, that he had managed a sexual relationship with Elena for months, that Elena (who does not appear to

have loved anyone she slept with) had apparently only used Troughton for her intentions to shock her father, that he himself had genuinely wanted to marry Elena, some twenty-seven years junior to him, when he heard about her pregnancy. All this and more Troughton delivers in "a low, frank voice" (p.341), relieved to get rid of the pretence and the pressure of such skeletons.

> [. . .] That's what men my age do, isn't it, when they've puffed themselves up with a successful seduction that, over time, grows just a little bit tedious. And it was supposed to grow tedious, wasn't it, Inspector? I was supposed to start finding her a sexual millstone, living evidence of an ego-boosting peccadillo that promised to come back to haunt me if I didn't take care of her in one way or another." (pp.336-337)

But Elena had been no "sexual millstone" (p.337) for Troughton; instead, he had truly loved her. Troughton goes as far back as his first images of Elena. The short lines in the following passage are Lynley's:

> [. . .] "I've known her father for years, so I'd met her before, on one visit or another when she was up from London. But it wasn't until he brought her to my house last autumn to choose a puppy that I really thought of her as anything other than Anthony's little deaf girl. And even then, it was just admiration on my part. She was lively, good-humoured, a mass of energy and enthusiasm. She got on well in life in spite of being deaf, and I found that - along with everything else about her - immensely attractive. But Anthony's a colleague, and even if a score of young women hadn't already given me sufficient evidence of my undesirability, I wouldn't have had the nerve to approach a colleague's daughter."
>
> "She approached you?"
>
> Troughton made a gesture that encompassed the room. "She dropped by here several times during Michaelmas term last year. She'd tell me about how the dog was doing and chat in that odd-voiced way of hers. She'd drink tea, pinch a few cigarettes when she thought I wasn't looking. I enjoyed her visits. I began looking forward to them. But nothing happened between us until Christmas."
>
> "And then?"
>
> Troughton returned to his chair. He crushed out his cigarette but did not light another. He said, "She came to show me the gown she'd bought for one of the Christmas balls. She said, I'll try it on for you, shall I, and she turned her back and began to undress right here in the room. Of course, I'm not entirely a fool. I realised later that she'd done it deliberately, but at the time, I was horrified. Not only at her behaviour but at what I felt - no, what I knew in an instant that I wanted to do - in the face of her behaviour. She was down to her underthings when I said, For God's sake, what do you think you're doing, girl? But I was across the room and her head was turned, so she couldn't read my lips. She just kept undressing. I went to her, made her face me, and repeated the question. She looked me straight in the

> eye and said, I'm doing what you want me to do, Vittor. [. . .] Elena knew what I was after. I've no doubt she'd known the moment her father brought her to my house to see those dogs. If she was nothing else, she was brilliant at reading people. Or at least she was brilliant at reading me. She always knew what I wanted and when I wanted it and just exactly how." (pp.343-344)

In the beginning, while Elena still lived in London, Troughton had regarded her as "Anthony's little deaf girl" (p.343). Once again, 'deaf' is used in a most neutral sense. However, that was the determiner that automatically went together with 'little' and the very obvious 'girl'. So deafness, for Troughton, was a determining feature in Elena from the very beginning. But unlike the Weavers, he had found it just attractive. There is yet another reference to Elena's odd voice, which is certainly true from a Hearing, standard English-speaking point of view. Then Troughton depicts the first sexual intercourse he had with Elena. It contains a point on the communication process between them: Elena was unable to read lips while her back was turned, Troughton had to made her face him in order for communication to take place, Elena looked him straight in the eye. This is a plausible course a discussion between a deaf lip-reader and a hearing person would take. Troughton recalls Elena having called him "Vittor" (p.344); which is probably again Elena's non-standard pronunciation rather than deliberate mediterraneanising. Finally, Troughton credits Elena with significant ability to read people. For once more Elena's abilities are emphasised at the expense of her faults. Troughton's attitude towards Elena is excessively admiring:

> "Why I went along with the game?" Troughton set the cigarette case next to the balloon glass. He studied the picture they made, side by side. "Because I loved her. At first it was her body - the incredible sensation of holding and touching that beautiful body. But then it was her. Elena. She was wild and ungovernable, laughing and alive. And I wanted that in my life. I didn't care about the cost." (p.346)

Victor Troughton's testimony is the first genuinely positive description of Elena, and what is more, the first positive reference to Elena's deafness. No one else had been content with what Elena was like: while Gareth Randolph would have wanted to make her truly 'Deaf', others interviewed so far would have wanted her 'less deaf'. While Victor Troughton first had used Elena for his

egoistic purposes no less than everyone else had done, his feelings about Elena had changed to genuine love and respect (provided that we consider him a reliable informant).

6.5.10 Painter, murderer

Sarah Gordon, painter and Anthony Weaver's former lover, turns out to have been the murderer of Elena. Her motive is revenge on Anthony Weaver, who had rejected her and, in the presence of Justine and her, devastated a masterful painting of Elena, which Sarah had painted and given as a gift and on which she had truly put a lot of herself. Sarah had been Anthony's art teacher and mistress; he had asked her to paint Elena, who then had come regularly to her place to pose as a model. All this time, she had liked Elena a lot: she definitely did not hate the one she ended up killing.

Filled with pain, guilt, and anticipation of getting arrested, Sarah lies on her back and recalls Elena's fondness of Sarah's dog:

> She'd come to Grantchester two afternoons a week for two months, rolling up the drive on her ancient bicycle with her long hair tied back to keep it out of her face and her pockets filled with contraband treats to slip to Flame when she thought Sarah was least likely to notice. Scruff-dog, she called him, and she tugged affectionately on his lopsided ears, bent her face to his, and let him lick her nose. "Wha' d' I have for li'l Scruffs?" she said, and she laughed when the dog snuffed at her pockets, his tail thumping happily, his front paws digging at the front of her jeans. It was a ritual with them, generally carried out on the drive where Flame dashed out to meet her, barking a frantic, delighted greeting that Elena claimed she could feel vibrating through the air. (p.397)

Here we find the third occurrence of Elena's idiosyncratic speech, as heard by hearing native speakers of English. A phonetician could make an in-depth analysis of these occurrences; suffice it to say here that Elena constantly drops sounds that are not formed on the lips (labial) or with teeth (dental). /t/ is a palatal phoneme; hence she says "wha'" for 'what', and "li'l" for 'little'. Naturally, deaf people who learn speaking and lip-reading find it most difficult to learn non-labial and non-dental sounds.

> "Ready?" she'd say in that half-swallowed manner that made the word sound much more like *reh-y*. She seemed shy at first, when Tony brought her by those few nights to model for the life-drawing class. But it was only the initial reserve of a young woman conscious of her difference from others, and even more conscious of how that difference might somehow contribute to others' discomfort. Once she sensed another's ease in her presence - at least once she'd sense Sarah's ease - she herself grew more forthright, and she began to chat and laugh, melding into the environment and the circumstances as if she'd always been a part of them. (p.397)

This paragraph, still Sarah Gordon's inner recollection, begins with one more example of Elena's idiosyncratic speech ("*reh-y*"; p.397). But Sarah shows deeper understanding of Elena's difference than perhaps any other character before her. While Elena's parents wanted to make her as Hearing as possible, and Gareth Randolph to make her as Deaf as he could, Sarah Gordon is able to see to the heart of the matter. Elena *was* different, absolutely conscious of it herself, and even proud of her difference, but only when people around her felt comfortable with it too. Elena was pretty aware that most did not (not only Sarah noticed this: there is enough testimony in other characters' speech and deeds). After many different characters related to Elena in different ways, a true artist was needed to realise perhaps what was Elena's true essence. In Sarah's companion - and this is the first time that a depiction of this sort is heard in the novel - Elena was capable of "melding into the environment and the circumstances as if she'd always been a part of them" (p.397).

We must not, however, forget Sarah's personal background. She was in love with her pupil Anthony Weaver, which certainly helped her to like the similarities that the father and the daughter shared:

> Her eyes danced round the room, scouting out whatever pieces had been worked on or were new since her last visit. And always she talked. She was, at heart, so like her father in that. (p.397)

Another point in this passage is the reference to Elena's enhanced reliance on vision. Moreover, her eagerness to talk confirms the ease she had felt with Sarah; she knew perfectly well that it took people special effort to tolerate and understand her exceptional speech.

The next scene Sarah recalls is an accurate depiction of the practical communication situation she once had with Elena:

> "You never married, Sarah?" Even her choice of topic was the same as her father's, except unlike his, her question came out more like *You ne'r mah-weed, Seh-ah?* and it was a moment before Sarah mentally worked through the careful if distorted syllables to comprehend their meaning.
>
> "No. I never did."
>
> "Why?"
>
> Sarah examined the canvas on which she was working, comparing it to the lively creature perched atop the stool and wondering if she would ever to be able to capture completely that quality of energy which the girl seemed to exude. Even in repose - holding her head at an angle with her hair sweeping round and the light glancing off it like sun hitting summer wheat - she was electric and alive. Restless and questioning, she seemed eager for experience, anxious to understand.
>
> "I suppose I thought a man might get in my way," Sarah replied. "I wanted to be an artist. Everything else was secondary."
>
> "My da' wan's to be an ar'ist as well."
>
> "Indeed he does."
>
> "Is he good, d'you think?"
>
> "Yes."
>
> "An' d'you like him?"
>
> This last with her eyes riveted on Sarah's face. It was only so that she could easily read the answer, Sarah told herself. [. . .] (p.398)

In Elena's reported lines, palatal sounds are missing and a couple of vowels are, credibly enough, altered. In Sarah's opinion, Elena's sounds were "careful if distorted". However, this passage focuses on Sarah's part of the communication process: how she struggled to understand Elena, how Elena constantly looked her in the face. Not one character - not even Sarah - mentions the fact that they had to adjust their speech or repeat often what they said when talking to Elena. Perhaps such difficulties did not exist with Elena. With a real deaf person, this would be unlikely: it could theoretically be result of absolutely exceptional lip-reading abilities. The portrayal of Elena as an energetic and restless person is supported, while it is also enriched as regards her eagerness to experience and to understand.

Another sample of Elena's idiosyncratic speech, which is again characterised by swallowed sounds ("Dad'll be s'prised when he sees this", "When c'n I see it?"; p.399), is followed by a subtle description of how Sarah

teaches to Elena what music is like (Sarah always turned on her stereo before starting to paint):

> "Wha's it like?" Elena asked her casually one afternoon.
>
> "What?"
>
> She nodded towards one of the speakers. "That," she said. "You know. That."
>
> "The music?"
>
> "Wha's it like?"
>
> Sarah dropped her gaze from the girl's earnest eyes and looked at her hands as the haunting mystery of Vollenweider's electric harp and Moog synthesiser challenged her to answer, the music rising and falling, each note like a crystal. She thought about how to reply for such a length of time that Elena finally said, "Sorry, I jus' thought - "
>
> Sarah raised her head quickly, saw the girl's distress, and realised that Elena thought she herself was embarrassed by being accosted with an unthinking act of mentioning a disability, as if Elena had asked her to look upon a disfigurement she'd prefer to avoid seeing. She said, "Oh no. It's not that, Elena. I was trying to decide . . . Here. Come with me." And she took her first to stand by the speaker, turning the sound up full volume. She placed her hand against it. Elena smiled.
>
> "Percussion," Sarah said. "Those are the drums. And the bass. The low notes. You can feel them, can't you?" When the girl nodded, pulling on her lower lip with her chipped front teeth, Sarah looked round the room for something else. She found it in the soft camel hairs of dry fine brushes, the cool sharp metal of a clean pallet knife, the smooth cold glass of turpentine in a jar.
>
> "All right," she said. "Here. This is what it sounds like."
>
> As the music changed, shifted, and swelled, she played it against the girl's inner arm where the flesh was tender and most sensitive to touch. "Electric harp," she said, and with the pallet knife she tapped the light pattern of notes against her skin. "And now. A flute." This was the brush, in a wavering dance. "And this. The background, Elena. It's synthetic, you see. He's not using an instrument. It's a machine that makes musical sounds. Like this. Just one note now while all the rest are playing," and she rolled the jar smoothly in one long line.
>
> "All at once it happens?" Elena asked.
>
> "Yes. All at once." She gave the girl the pallet knife. She herself used the brush and the jar. And as the record continued to play, they made the music together. While all the time above their heads on a shelf not five feet away sat the muller that Sarah would use to destroy her. (pp.399-400)

An unprejudiced and open-minded artist, Sarah does not even consider the option of giving up the task of explaining music to Elena. It seems that 'disability' is not part of Sarah's vocabulary: she clearly believes in what people *can* do, rather than sticking to what they *cannot*. Her initial hesitation just signifies that she needed a little time to work out how to solve the task best.

There were cases of 'etic symbols' in the passage focalised by Elena: the juxtaposition of Elena's light alarm to "a blast of music or a jangling alarm" (p.1), and "the telephone" (p.1) instead of 'Ceephone'. Now a hearing focaliser tries to translate her experience into Deaf discourse. 'Emic metaphors' are used this time. Sarah uses visual means as well as Elena's sense of feeling to illustrate the creative power of music. And most important, Sarah lets Elena make music herself together with her. A picture of deep mutual understanding, achieved through art, is drawn. True, Sarah was the only one who understood Elena deeply, but was Elena also the only one who understood Sarah?

However, Sarah had to kill Elena for revenge. As Anthony finds out and drives to Sarah's home, his anger is justified:

> "How could you bring yourself to it? You met her, Sarah. You *knew* her. She sat in this room and let you sketch her and pose her [*sic*] and talk to her and . . ." His voice caught on a sob. (p.415)

Intending to shoot Sarah with a shotgun, Anthony is extremely confused; his fragmentary words do not make perfect sense here and the sentence structure is ambiguous. The noteworthy point is "[Elena] let you [. . .] talk to her [. . .]" (p.415); this baffling sentence can be understood literally. Indeed, anyone can talk to a hearing person without asking for permission, but deaf people (those who can lip-read) really have to *let* their companion speak to them by first looking at the speaker's face.

Finally, Sarah wants to show Anthony that murdering Elena was *her* revenge on him. The police discover a folded paper that Sarah had, with great certainty, taken to Anthony's study the day after the murder: "Lynley took the paper from her [Havers] and unfolded it to see a sketch, a beautifully rendered tiger pulling down a unicorn, the unicorn's mouth opened in a soundless scream of terror and pain." (p.419). Like Sarah Gordon has murdered Elena, the tigress in the picture has devoured the helpless unicorn. This is further explained by the fact that Anthony, Sarah's secret lover, had called her '(La) Tigresse'. Another interesting word here is "soundless" (p.419), as it evokes the connotation to Elena's 'soundless' world. Albeit not in a spoken line (direct presentation), it is clearly marked as Lynley's language as Lynley is the focaliser of the scene. To

begin with, pictures are, if we stick strictly to the physical concept of the world, generally 'soundless'. Considering Sarah Gordon's undisputed talent as a painter, however, she might have been able to create a particularly 'soundless' picture to depict Elena's world. (It must be remembered that in spite of her deafness, Elena herself was able to make plenty of sound.) Or it can be just Lynley's intuitive (or intended) interpretation of the picture.

In a highly realistic, straightforward detective novel (such as *For the sake of Elena*), symbolism is rather scarce. This sketch is perhaps the strongest metaphor found in the narrative, and it is only proper that it should come from a gifted artist. However, the metaphor is explicitly interpreted by Lynley a moment later:

> "She was telling him that she'd murdered his daughter."
> Havers' jaw dropped. She snapped it closed. "But why?"
> "It was the only way to complete the circle of ruin they'd inflicted on each other. He destroyed her creation and her ability to create. She knew he'd done so. She wanted him to know that she'd destroyed his." (p.419)

Lynley does not, however, fully explain the unicorn part of the message. Havers remembers that there were posters of unicorns in Elena's room (p.419, 109). It is apparent that Sarah had an artistic intention behind the choice of creature beyond her knowledge of Elena's fondness of them. The unicorn, a white horse with a horn, evokes positive, mystical images. Considering that Sarah actually liked, even admired, Elena, the unicorn might stand for purity, beauty, and the mystic on the one hand, for duality and difference on the other - Elena was different, after all. Just like Elena was not a 'normal' hearing person, the unicorn is not an ordinary horse - it is somehow stranger but somehow even more beautiful. It is ironic that the one who could depict Elena in the most beautiful way became the one who should destroy her.

6.6 Gareth Randolph

Gareth Randolph is another deaf student at Cambridge University. He is first mentioned by Master of St. Stephen's College, Terence Cuff (p.59; see the quote

in 6.5.1): "Gareth Randolph's its [DeaStu's] president. And he's one of the more high-profile handicapped students in the University." Anthony Weaver's attitude seems more negative from the start: according to Cuff, "he'd been dead set against it from the very first." (p.59) At the Weavers' house, as Lynley is interviewing them for the first time, Anthony Weaver indeed shows his disliking of Gareth: "If he was the one, I'll kill him" (p.67). Justine Weaver, in contrast, adopts a more positive stand to Gareth: "Elena liked Gareth well enough, I dare say. But not, I imagine, the way he liked her. And he's a lovely boy, really. I can't think that he - " (p.68).

One can see that already from the outset Gareth Randolph is a cause for contradictory emotions. No research on deafness in fiction has reported any other Deaf rights activists before; Gareth might even be the first ever. Cuff's tone is rather respectful, while Anthony cannot stand Gareth at any level. Justine's position is between the two extremes, while Lynley, the focaliser of the passages, is purely curious for relevant information and does not take any stand at this stage.

Gareth Randolph does not act as the focaliser of the scenes where he appears. Unlike the representation of Elena Weaver, the entire portrayal of Gareth Randolph is done through other focalisers. Gareth Randolph's character is built little by little for Lynley: the name of the boy pops up in many contexts as a kind of cue that must be followed. The next occurrence is in the interview with Miranda Webberly, who recalls Gareth's regular visits to their residence:

> "[. . .] I could always tell when Gareth came to call because the air got heavy, he's so intense. Elena said she could feel his aura the moment he opened the door to our staircase. Here comes trouble, she'd say if we were in the gyp room. And thirty seconds later, there he would be. She said she was psychic when it came to Gareth." Miranda laughed. "Frankly, I think she could smell his cologne." (p.91)

Gareth Randolph is slightly ridiculed here by the girls; Miranda recalls Elena saying, "he was just a friend" (p.91). He does not appear as a total loser, however: in any case he went out with Elena often, which can be considered success of a kind. The final thing Miranda reveals about him is his temperament:

> " [. . .] I just caught a glimpse of them in Elena's room before she shut the door and when Gareth left he was in quite a temper. He banged his way out. Only it could mean nothing because he's so intense anyway that he'd be acting like that even if they'd been discussing the poll tax."
>
> [. . .]
>
> [. . .] "I don't think Gareth had anything to do with what's happened, Inspector. He has a temper, true, and he's on a tight string, but he wasn't the only one . . . " (p.93)

Also Adam Jenn, Gareth Randolph's rival when it comes to winning Elena's favour, gives his account of Gareth. (Actually Adam put his academic career first and was not genuinely in love with Elena, whereas Gareth might even have set Elena's approbation and love before DeaStu, his great ambition.) Anthony Weaver had asked Adam, his faithful graduate student, to be Elena's companion (see also 6.5.5). Lynley investigates Adam:

> "In what way were you helping him?"
>
> "There was this bloke he preferred she didn't see. I was supposed to run interference between them. A bloke from Queens'."
>
> "Gareth Randolph."
>
> "That's him. She'd met him through the deaf students' union last year. Dr. Weaver wasn't comfortable with them going about together. I imagine he hoped she might . . . you know."
>
> "Learn to prefer you?"
>
> He dropped his leg to the floor. "She didn't really fancy this bloke Gareth anyway. She told me as much. I mean, they were mates and she liked him, but it was no big deal. All the same, she knew what her father was worrying about."
>
> "What was that?"
>
> "That she'd end up with . . . I mean marry . . "
>
> "Someone deaf," Lynley finished. "Which, after all, wouldn't be that unusual a circumstance since she was deaf herself." (p. 169)

Adam Jenn is careful not to take a stand to Gareth's deafness here. He even hesitates to mention the word 'deaf' - Lynley has to complete Adam's utterance. Instead, Adam merely seems to report Anthony Weaver's Hearing attitudes towards Gareth. When talking with others, Adam Jenn remains consistent in not saying anything negative about anyone. However, as discussed in 6.5.5, when we are let into his mind (pp.287-294), he reveals his true inclinations. He does not overtly disparage or dislike Gareth Randolph; he just tells how Anthony did so. He does not take a stand to Gareth's attractiveness or

chances with Elena, he just reports how Elena had belittled them. He refers to Gareth three times with 'bloke', an informal but neutral noun.

Lynley shows his open-minded, understanding and tolerant side once more. He disagrees with Anthony Weaver, who did not accept an intimate relationship of the two deaf students, by acknowledging the possibility of a bond shared by two deaf people.

A little later, after Lynley has admonished Adam for his too protective, uncooperative attitude:

> "She took it all as a joke," he [Adam] said finally. "She took everything as a joke."
>
> "In this case, what?"
>
> "That her father was worried she'd marry Gareth Randolph. That he didn't want her to hang round the other deaf students so much. But most of all, that he . . . I think it was that he loved her so much and that he wanted her to love him as much in return. She took it as a joke. That's the way she was. (p.170)

Again (see also 6.5.5) Adam Jenn is speaking for Anthony Weaver, not for himself. According to Adam, "deaf students" represented a threat to Anthony. Anthony's genuine love for Elena and his efforts for her well-being are inseparably intermingled with his academic ambitions and his obsessive need to look good in other people's eyes. Anyhow, it has become absolutely explicit by this point that Anthony regarded Deaf culture as inferior to his Hearing world, to which he wanted Elena to belong.

Justine Weaver avoids taking a stand to Gareth Randolph; she just mentions his name during the investigations when Lynley is in course of finding out who had made Elena pregnant. Lynley becomes more interested in Gareth:

> The deaf boy. Lynley reflected upon the fact that Gareth Randolph's name was becoming like a constant undercurrent, omnipresent beneath the flow of information. He evaluated the manner in which Elena Weaver might have used him as an instrument of revenge. If she was acting out of a need to rub her father's face in his own desire that she be a normal, functioning woman, what better way to throw that desire back at him than to become pregnant. She'd be giving him what he ostensibly wanted - a normal daughter with normal needs and normal emotions whose body functioned in a perfectly normal way. At the same time, she'd be getting what she wanted - retaliation by choosing as the father of her child a deaf man. It was, at heart, a perfect circle of vengeance. He only wondered if

> Elena had been that devious, or if her stepmother was using the fact of the pregnancy to paint a portrait of the girl that would serve her own ends. (p.202)

Gareth Randolph now gets an important position in the *plot*: his deafness offers one explanation for one part of the mystery that is at the heart of the story. All the time, Gareth is marked as 'deaf': it is his primary characteristic ("the deaf boy", "a deaf man"; p.202). It is utterly ironic, then, that Elena should have used him to show that she herself was 'normal'. Once again the portrayal of the deaf characters is far from simple and straightforward: Lynley does not describe directly either of them. Instead, he makes hypotheses and weighs motives. Anthony Weaver's voice is again lurking behind. The following courses of thought can be traced:

LYNLEY thinks: ELENA knew: ANTHONY thinks: GARETH is inferior because deaf
LYNLEY thinks: ELENA had an urge to look 'normal'
LYNLEY thinks: ELENA merely used GARETH as instrument of revenge
LYNLEY thinks: JUSTINE wants to blacken ELENA's reputation

It must be noted that everything is open as yet: Lynley cannot decide between the interpretations, he cannot tell which of the voices that offer different information and imply different personal motives are reliable. As is typical of the detective genre, the polyphony is baffling, and there are more voices to be heard.

(At the end of the narrative, Elena's pregnancy and her reasons for wanting it are left slightly open; she was not alive to be able to disclose the truth herself. We are to take Lynley's reasoning the most plausible answers. The most likely explanation is that Elena had really chosen the exact day to make Gareth more likely to become the biological father of her baby. Whether she had a wish to increase the likelihood of a deaf baby is, however, perhaps too far-fetched an idea.)

So far Gareth has had merely an instrumental role; he appears to evoke strong emotions but we do not know what he is like. His portrayal is opaque and flat, until Lynley actually meets him for the first time,. A key extract for my study, the first part of Chapter 11 (pp.213-222) sees Lynley visit the Deaf world and, for the first time, feel insecure. Lynley interviews Gareth Randolph at the

offices of DeaStu with the help of an interpreter. The depiction of the communication process deserves our attention. It begins with Lynley's feeling of uncertainty:

> Lynley had given lengthy thought to how he was going to communicate with Gareth Randolph. He had played round with the idea of calling Superintendent Sheehan to see if he had an interpreter associated with the Cambridge police. He'd never spoken with anyone deaf before, and from what he had gathered over the last twenty-four hours, Gareth Randolph did not have Elena Weaver's facility for reading lips. Nor did he have her spoken language.
>
> Once inside the office, however, he saw that things would take care of themselves. For talking to a woman who sat behind the desk piled with pamphlets, papers, and books was a knobby-ankled, bespectacled girl with her hair in plaits and a pencil stuck behind her ear. As she chatted and laughed, she was signing simultaneuosly. She also turned in his direction at the sound of the door opening. Here, Lynley thought, would be his interpreter. (p.214)

Even though Lynley has never talked with a deaf person before, he is aware of the possible communication barrier and of the fact that some deaf people do not use a spoken language, in this case English. Lynley's Hearing point of view is manifest, however. He thinks that Gareth Randolph lacks the ability to use English, but does not mention that he himself lacks the knowledge of BSL.

The girl in front of the desk proves hearing, which paves Lynley's way in the first place. The two females in the room are using some kind of indefinable pidgin form: although both turn out to be hearing, their exposure to Deaf culture and the context where they are now dictate the communication mode they use. Strictly speaking, sign languages are fully functional as such and do not require simultaneous speaking (in the same way as a spoken language does not necessarily require manual signs); instead, the subtle movements of face and lips have their own syntactic and semantic function (see, for example, Kyle and Woll 1985:86-87, 131-161; or Lane et al. 1996:91-93). However, to serve the heterogeneous communication needs that arise within Deaf communities, intermediate forms do occur. In Deaf Studies, one of these forms is called *sim-com* (Simultaneous Communication), in which signs and speech are produced at the same time (for more information about different codes used with deaf people, see Lane et al. 1996:270). Experienced signers are able to adjust their mode of

communication according to their partners. Thence, the depiction "as she chatted and laughed, she was signing simultaneously" (p.214) is neither impossibly unrealistic nor out of place here. In the BSL-English bilingual setting, the bilingual girl is using sim-com (or another mixed code) even with a hearing person, such as the woman behind the desk.

Although Lynley gets an interpreter without further efforts, he is still reminded of now being the handicapped one in the new environment. The woman behind the desk asks:

> [. . .] "I assume you don't sign, Inspector."
> "I don't."
> Bernadette adjusted the pencil more firmly behind her ear, grinned sheepishly at this momentary display of self-importance, and said, "Right. Come along with me, Inspector. We'll see what's what." (p.214)

So Bernadette (the standing girl mentioned in the previous passage) becomes Lynley's interpreter for the occasion. She confirms Gareth Randolph's love of Elena (p.215), on which Lynley had heard earlier. As they enter a conference room where the weary and miserable Gareth is sitting and waiting for clues to Elena's murder, Bernadette flashes the lights off and on to get Gareth's attention (pp.215-216). This is yet another realistic and credible detail in the narration: politeness code of Deaf communities requires that some visual signs be made when approaching another person. And so, "Gareth Randolph looked up." (p.216). Lynley evaluates him:

> He wore typical student garb: blue jeans and a sweatshirt onto which had been stencilled the words *What's your sign?* superimposed over two hands making a gesture which Lynley couldn't interpret. (p.216)

Again, the semiotics of this world is different from the dominant Hearing world: Lynley has to admit his inability to interpret the sign on Gareth's shirt. The portrayal of Gareth as a Deaf rights activist is strengthened by his choice of dressing.

> The boy said nothing at all until Bernadette spoke. And even then, since his eyes were on Lynley, he made a rough gesture so that Bernadette had to repeat her first remark.

> "This is Inspector Lynley from New Scotland Yard," she said a second time. Her hands fluttered like quick, pale birds just below her face. [. . .] (p.216)

In the actual interview, all Gareth's lines are actually signed and interpreted for Lynley, and Lynley's speech is interpreted for Gareth, but the narration shifts gradually to imitate ordinary dialogue by fading out Bernadette's intermediary role and presenting just Lynley's questions and Gareth's answers. In the beginning of the interview, however, as well as occasionally towards its end, Bernadette's act of interpreting gets explicit attention as well in the narration. The entire interview is focalised by Lynley; in other words, seen from a Hearing perspective. The signing, unintelligible to Lynley, is depicted as movements of hands and body. "Her hands fluttered like quick, pale birds just below her face" (p.216) is another 'etic simile', and "He replied, hands chopping the air" (p.216) can be regarded as an 'etic metaphor'. Those depictions have a different semantic meaning to users of BSL (emic view), while for outsiders they are just 'gestures' (etic view), even if the outsiders may well be aware that these signs have some meaning. I shall here assume that Bernadette is an honest and responsible interpreter who does not distort Lynley's or Gareth's utterances. This is a most sensible assumption: were Bernadette a deliberately cunning misinterpreter, there would not be much sense in analysing the interview at all.

When Lynley directs his words at Bernadette and refers to Gareth as 'he' (p.216), she interpolates:

> [. . .] "Speak to Gareth directly, Inspector. Call him *you*, not him. Else it's quite dehumanising."
>
> Gareth read and smiled. His gestures in response to Bernadette's were fluid. She laughed.
>
> "What did he say?"
>
> "He said, Ta, Bernie. We'll make you a deaf woman yet." (p.216)

Bernadette makes a fair point: it is an essential claim of such many civil rights movements that people be regarded as people. Gareth is satisfied; a devoted activist such as he certainly enjoys occasions where his message is passed on to yet new ignorant people. One can notice how subtly Gareth implies that a hearing child of deaf adults ('coda', see 2.2), such as Bernadette, is not quite one of

'them', in spite of her excellent knowledge of BSL: "we'll make you a deaf woman yet" (p.216). This might also imply that Deafness, belonging to the community, is really seen by Gareth as an advantage for any signer or anyone who shares the right values and attitudes, no matter if they are physiologically hearing or deaf.

One can also pay attention to the lower-case 'd': the narrator does not yet make the distinction between physical and cultural deafness, which gives Gareth's comment unintentional humour and ambiguity, implying bodily harm. (Slightly later, the 'Deaf/deaf distinction' is indeed made, perhaps for the first time in the history of prose fiction. See below.)

Whether Lynley is embarrassed upon his dehumanising and incorrect addressing of Gareth Randolph is not narrated in any way. He is perhaps learning a lesson in silence. At least he notices that he is on foreign ground:

> Lynley realised with his first question that he would be at a disadvantage in this sort of interview. Since Gareth watched Bernadette's hands in order to read Lynley's words, there would not be an opportunity to catch a revealing if fleeting expression quickly veiled in his eyes should a question take him unaware. Additionally, there would be nothing to read in his voice, in his tone, in what he stressed or what he deliberately left unaccentuated. Gareth had the advantage of the silence that defined his world. Lynley wondered how, and if, he would use it. (pp.216-217)

Lynley's viewpoint is still essentially Hearing: he wonders at the problems that this new situation imposes on his detective work. However, he begins to acknowledge his own handicap: while Lynley would normally control the interview due to his professional position, it would have to be conducted on Gareth's home ground. Lynley's concern is still mainly professional rather than socio-cultural. This passage touches upon the problems of interpreting as well. While an interpreter may do well as far as the translation of semantic content is concerned, pragmatic aspects such as tone and stress are much more difficult to convey in another language. Apparently, this phenomenon is particularly observable between a sign language and a spoken language.

Lynley starts the actual interview by asking Gareth about his relationship with Elena (see 6.5.8 for the analysis of that passage). Then the discussion moves

to Deaf culture (see 6.5.1). Whether completely earnest or just intending to provoke Gareth, Lynley now defends Elena's parents' choices:

> "From what I understand, her parents did everything possible to allow her to fit into a hearing world. They taught her to read lips. They taught her to speak. It seems to me that the last thing they thought was that deaf meant disabled, especially in her case."
>
> Gareth's nostrils flared. He said, "Fug at sht, *fug* 't," and began to sign with hands that pounded through his words.
>
> "There is no fitting into a hearing world. There's only bringing the hearing world to *us*. Make them see us as people as good as they are. But her father wanted her to play at hearing. Read lips like a pretty girl. Talk like a pretty girl."
>
> "That can't be a crime. It is, after all, a hearing world that we live in."
>
> "A hearing world *you* live in. The rest of us without sound get on fine. We don't want your hearing. But you can't believe that, can you, because you think you're special instead of just different." (p.219)

Now Gareth shows his temper, which was implied earlier by Miranda Webberly (see 6.5.3). He resorts to speech only when he needs swear words to express his angriest mood at the presence of a non-signer such as Lynley: "fug at sht, *fug* 't". This is the first occasion where Gareth's idiosyncratic speech is portrayed. His command of English is remarkably weaker than Elena's; this is confirmed sufficiently by the minimal sample that attempts to represent his swearing. Deeply devoted to his cause, Gareth speaks intensely for the Deaf way of life. In his opinion, Elena was just 'deaf', disabled but well in with the Hearing. In contrast, he himself and the members of DeaStu are 'Deaf, and proud of it. The interview continues:

> Again, it was only a slight variation on the theme Justine Weaver had introduced. The deaf weren't normal. But then, for God's sake, neither were the hearing most of the time.
>
> Gareth was continuing. "We are her people. DeaStu. Here. We can support. We can understand. But he didn't want that. He didn't want her to know us."
>
> "Her father?"
>
> "He wanted to make believe she could hear."
>
> "How did she feel about that?"
>
> "How would you feel if people wanted you to play at being something you weren't?"
>
> Lynley repeated his earlier question. "Did she want to be Deaf?"
>
> "She didn't know - "

> "I understand that she didn't know what it meant at first, that she had no way of understanding the culture. But once she did know, did she want to be Deaf?"
>
> "She would have wanted it. Eventually."
>
> It was a telling response. The uninformed, once informed, had not become an adherent to the cause.
>
> "So she involved herself with DeaStu solely because Dr. Cuff insisted. Because it was the only way to avoid being sent down."
>
> "At first that was why. But then she came to meetings, to dances. She was getting to know people."
>
> "Was she getting to know you?" (pp.219-220)

This passage begins with Lynley's rather superficial inner reflection on normality: "The deaf weren't normal. But then, for God's sake, neither were the hearing most of the time." (p.219). Through Lynley's focalisation, we get the implied message that Elena was not very enthusiastic of DeaStu after all. Gareth still sticks to his firm opposite opinion. This is a prime example on the polyphony of the novel: the reader is left to wonder between two conflicting interpretations. On the one hand, Lynley's interpretation seems more sensible: Lynley is sane, intelligent and experienced to draw quick conclusions with the help of his sharp psychological insight. On the other, Gareth (along with Bernadette) has the expert's role here for a little while, as long as the interview is conducted on his terms. He knows Deaf culture and its obvious appeal. Moreover, unlike Lynley, he knew Elena personally. However, Gareth's strict devotion and loyalty to his group together with his confused state of mind may make him an unreliable informant here. He does not answer to Lynley's question, "Was she getting to know you?":

> Gareth yanked open the centre drawer of the desk. He took out a pack of gum and unwrapped a stick. Bernadette began to reach forward to get his attention, but Lynley stopped her, saying, "He'll look up in a moment." Gareth let the moment drag on, but Lynley felt it was probably harder for the boy to keep his eyes fixed upon and his fingers working over the silver wrapper of the Juicy Fruit than it was for himself to wait him out. [. . .] (p.220)

Noteworthy here is the detail how Bernadette has to reach to Gareth to get his attention while he hangs his head. The interview continues for two more pages. Lynley strikes Gareth and Bernadette by surprise by revealing Elena's pregnancy to them, and distresses Gareth with questions about Gareth's

relationship with Elena. Gareth is abrupt, while Lynley becomes more and more aggressive as he tries to elicit information from Gareth. There is nothing more that would complement much the portrayal of Gareth. Bernadette interrupts the interview a couple of times and there are frequent references to the interpreting process:

> [. . .] And her hands conveyed the information. [. . .]
>
> When he replied, his hands moved as slowly as his jaws. [. . .] (p.220)

> [. . .] [Lynley] said, "You don't mourn someone you don't love, Gareth," even though the boy's attention was not on Bernadette's hands.
>
> Bernadette said, "He wanted to marry her, Inspector. I know that because he told me once. And he - "
>
> Perhaps sensing the conversation, Gareth looked up. His hands flashed quickly.
>
> "I was telling him the truth," Bernadette said. "I said you wanted to marry her. He knows you loved her, Gareth. It's completely obvious."
>
> "Past. Loved." Gareth's fists were on his chest more like a punch than a sign. "It was over." (pp.220-221)

> "Oh, dear," Bernadette murmured, although she cooperatively continued to sign. (p.221)

These narrative sentences serve to make explicit that the interview is carried out in two languages with two different modalities, with an interpreter between the two parties. All references to signing are through Lynley's lens: for him the signs do not make sense until Bernadette interprets them in English. He only notices the way the signs are made: "slowly" (p.220), "quickly" (p.221), or "on his chest [. . .] like a punch" (p.221). The difficult role and the strict professional ethics of the interpreter is also given attention:

> Bernadette said, "Oh, Inspector, you can't really think that Gareth had anything to do - "
>
> Gareth lunged across the desk and grabbed Bernadette's hands. Then he jerked out a few signs.
>
> "What's he saying?"
>
> "He does not want me to defend him. He says there's nothing for me to defend." (p.221)

In an unusual and tense situation as this interview, Bernadette slips from the ethic and interpolates the interview with her own comments, of which Gareth

does not approve. Lynley's question expresses here the fact that he does not understand Gareth's BSL unless Bernadette interprets it for him.

The next time that Gareth appears in other characters' discussions is the encounter of Adam Jenn and Anthony Weaver.

> Adam hesitated to bring forth the single piece of information which he knew Anthony Weaver was avoiding, perhaps deliberately, perhaps unconsciously. He knew that giving it voice would also mean giving voice to the professor's worst fears. Yet there seemed to be no other way to convince the man of the truth about his own relationship with Elena. And he was an historian, after all. Historians are supposed to be seekers of truth. (p.292)

Anthony's "worst fears" (p.292) are that Elena should slip into the Deaf world, embodied in Gareth Randolph's character. Adam then reminds Anthony of the 'official' deal that Elena and Gareth were to spend time together:

> [. . .] He could see the grey curtain of knowledge and misery pass across Weaver's features.
>
> "That deaf - " Weaver's words stopped. His eyes sharpened once again. "Did you reject her, Adam? Is that why she looked elsewhere? Wasn't she good enough for you? Did she put you off because she was deaf?" (p.292)

One can anticipate the word Anthony was about to use for Gareth: 'bastard' or something in that vein is the most plausible alternative. For Anthony, Gareth is clearly less comfortable choice than Adam Jenn. For Anthony, Deaf culture is a threat, while he would have warmly welcomed Adam's culture, which was pretty much the same as his. I have dealt with the same dialogue in 6.5.5.

Finally, Lynley and Havers find Gareth at his college in order to investigate him for another time (see also 6.5.8). Upon arrival at Gareth's bed-sitting room, they notice posters of London Philharmonic and photographs of some musicals.

> Gareth pointed first to the posters, then to the photographs. "Mutha," he said in his strange guttural voice. "Sisser." He watched Lynley shrewdly. He seemed to be waiting for a reaction to the irony of his mother's and sister's modes of employment. Lynley merely nodded. (p.361)

This is the second (and the last) presentation of Gareth's idiosyncratic speech. His voice is, again, depicted from a hearing person's perspective as Lynley is the focaliser of the scene. Moreover, Lynley interprets Gareth's look as irony-evoking: both his mother and his sister have occupations in which hearing is essential. A little later, Havers shows her sarcastic side, while Lynley disparages Gareth somewhat:

> "Not knowing she was pregnant doesn't mean sod-all," Havers remarked. "He can't take us for fools."
>
> "He doesn't," Lynley said. "I dare say he just takes himself for one, Sergeant." (p.361)

During this second interview, Gareth breaks down completely, as the interview is about his relationship to Elena. We can also note that Gareth is an experienced user of the Ceephone: he uses plenty of abbreviated forms of the words, while Lynley writes in full sentences. (The typing errors that would happen in a real screen interview are presumably omitted from the narration.)

> [. . .] He [Lynley] typed: *You had sex with Elena,* deliberately making it a statement, not a question.
>
> Gareth answered by hitting one of the number keys: *1.*
>
> *Once?*
>
> *Yes.*
>
> *When?*
>
> The boy pushed away from the desk for a moment. He remained in his chair. He looked not at the computer screen but at the floor, his arms on his knees. Lynley typed the word *September* and touched the boy's shoulder. Gareth glanced up, read it, dropped his head again. A hollow sound, akin to a stricken bellow, rose from his throat.
>
> Lynley typed: *Tell me what happened, Gareth* and touched the boy's shoulder again.
>
> Gareth looked up. He had begun to cry, and as if this display of emotion angered him, he drew his arm savagely across his eyes. Lynley waited. The boy moved back to the desk. (pp.361-362)

In addition to his infinite sadness, Gareth is also thoroughly humiliated. Lynley reflects after the investigation:

> "Havers, I can understand why he would lie in wait at Crusoe's Island for Elena Weaver. He was in love with her. She'd rejected him. She'd made it plain that their lovemaking was just a bit of sweaty frolic on her mother's

> kitchen floor. She'd declared her attachment to another man. She'd teased and humiliated and made him feel a perfect fool. [. . .] " (p.366)

There is a second murder of a female student in the novel. Havers considers the possibility of Gareth Randolph as murderer:

> "[. . .] Perhaps it's what we thought before. Symbolically killing Elena Weaver again and again by seeking out all the young women who resemble her."
>
> "If that's the case, why not go to her room, Havers? Why not kill her in the college? Why follow her all the way out past Madingley? And *how* did he follow her?"
>
> "How . . . "
>
> "Havers, he's deaf."
>
> That stopped her.
>
> Lynley pressed his advantage. "It's the country, Havers. It was pitch dark out there. Even if he got a car and followed her at a distance until they were safely out of town and then drove beyond her to lie in wait in that field, wouldn't he have had to hear something [. . .]" (p.366)

Gareth Randolph is a major suspect for the two murders, but his deafness proves a nearly perfect alibi for the second (and thus, logically, to Elena Weaver's murder as well, as everyone presupposes that the two crimes are connected). Only a hearing person could possibly have done the deed in darkness. This is another example of the use of deafness for the purposes of the plot, a means utilised so often before in fiction and also a number of times in this novel.

All in all, Gareth Randolph explicitly represents the truly, socio-culturally Deaf. He belongs to the most devoted wing of Deaf Civil Rights activists. Although Gareth is neither the protagonist nor the hero of the story - he is actually one of the suspects - he is truly a milestone from the point of view of this study. We can say with great certainty that never before had such a Deaf character appeared in the history of Western fiction.

In spite of his uniqueness, the overall impression of Gareth Randolph remains rather one-dimensional. The only personal features that are conveyed are his devotion to his ideals, his hot temper and his ultimate sadness. Just like the majority of deaf characters in the history of fiction, also Gareth is largely a representative one. The crucial difference is just that he represents something that

has not been before depicted in fiction in the first place: Deaf culture, Deaf pride, Deaf communities, native signers, and British Sign Language.

Contrary to most central characters in the novel, Gareth Randolph is not the focaliser in any of the scenes in which he appears. This is a conscious narrative choice, with purposes that can only be guessed at. Perhaps the advancement of the plot requires that Gareth Randolph remains impersonal, or that not too many characters function as focalisers. As Anthony Weaver, Glyn, Justine, Sarah Gordon, and even Adam Jenn are made rounder by the depiction of their inner consciousness at one or more points, why does Gareth remain a second-hand creation? Elena Weaver got eight pages before she died; the truly Deaf Gareth does not get any - he is portrayed through Lynley's lens. Lynley's focalisation of Gareth is, implicitly, slightly disparaging: a feeling of superiority is conveyed in the narration. The question arises: would it have been too difficult a task to narrate a Deaf person's stream-of-consciousness? With focus in Elena's mind (pp.1-8) the narration is plausible enough, but would Gareth's inner world have been impossible to depict for the narrator - or for the actual author, one can only ask.

6.6.1 DeaStu

It makes sense to examine the portrayal of DeaStu here as Gareth Randolph is virtually the only character in the novel who represents it. Terence Cuff is the first to inform Lynley (and the reader) of the organisation (pp.59-60). Cuff's account is very matter-of-fact: it could be from a reference book or from an encyclopaedia. The core of Cuff's definition is not direct dialogue like the rest of the scene but indirectly focalised by Lynley:

> DeaStu, Terence Cuff explained, was the informal name given to the Cambridge University Deaf Students Union, [. . .] On the surface, they were a support group for the not insignificant number of deaf students who attended the University. Beyond that, they were committed to the idea of deafness being a culture in itself, rather than a handicap. (pp.59-60)

The narration shifts to direct dialogue again:

> "They're a group with a great deal of pride," Cuff explained. "They've been instrumental in promoting tremendous self-esteem among the deaf students. No shame in signing rather than speaking. No dishonour in being unable to read lips."
>
> "Yet you say that Anthony Weaver wanted his daughter to stay away from them. If she herself was deaf, that hardly makes sense." (p.60)

This short depiction of DeaStu is realistic and up-to-date. Terence Cuff is aware of Deaf rights and the importance of signing and while he is being descriptive and neutral, his attitudes seem liberal and tolerant. This could be due to his position as College Master, where it would be politically incorrect to have any bias towards any group. Speaking of Elena's parents, he suggests: "To them, DeaStu represented a step backwards." (p.60) Cuff is also aware of the controversy such promotion of cultural Deafness may cause among the uninitiated. This fictional setting corresponds very strongly to the situation in the real world.

Cuff's view of Elena's role in DeaStu is confirmed by Justine Weaver: "that was one of the stipulations set up by Dr. Cuff and her supervisors last year" (p.68). The next occurrence of DeaStu is when Lynley goes to Cambridge police headquarters.

> A glass-enclosed notice board stood in front of the doors, on which were fastened posters about child safety in cars, drinking and driving, and an organisation called Crimestoppers. Over this last had been taped a hand-out giving the superficial details of Elena Weaver's death and asking for information from anyone who might have seen her yesterday morning or Sunday night. It was a hastily composed document with a grainy, photocopied picture of the dead girl upon it. And it had not been generated by the police. *DeaStu* and a telephone number were printed prominently at the bottom of the page. Lynley sighed when he saw this. The deaf students were launching their own investigation. That wouldn't make his job any less complicated. (p.100)

The focaliser of this scene is Lynley, the prominent focaliser of the novel. The positive civil rights activist's role that DeaStu were credited with earlier is slightly blemished here as Lynley sees the organisation as a retarding force. It is open to interpretation whether this is due to Lynley's disparaging etic attitudes towards a group of 'handicapped' or just the usual frustration felt by a

professional when amateurs intrude into his territory. In any case, the portrayal of DeaStu suffers a mild blow.

Just an hour or so later, Lynley and Havers are examining Elena's room at the university's halls of residence. Lynley spots Elena's calendar, which has still the old months left. "*DeaStu* appeared with increasing regularity from January through May, indicating Elena's adherence to at least one of the guidelines set down by the senior tutor, her supervisors, and Terence Cuff for her social rehabilitation." (p.110) Then Lynley confirms the state of affairs to Havers: "The University wanted her in DeaStu" (p.111).

Halfway into the story, Lynley visits the offices of DeaStu (pp.213-222). From our present point of view, this scene is like a story within a story, a dive into a micro-world embedded in the actual world. For once, Lynley is not the self-assured, omniscient hero: he is the one who is handicapped as he confronts another culture and another world. His position as Inspector, however, allows him to win control of the situation even on foreign soil.

> The main office door of opaque glass bore the words *Deaf Students of Cambridge University* and beneath that the less formal *DeaStu* was superimposed over two hands crossed, fingers extended, palms outward. (p.214)

As Lynley reaches the door, the place is no more like any other office. He is faced with powerful symbolism of a foreign world. The English words are there to guide him, but the deep meaning of the picture remains elusive. It has obviously something to do with the skill of signing.

Gareth shows Lynley a photograph and article album about DeaStu activities, saying, "This is Deaf" (p.218), and Lynley has a look.

> The record [of the activities in which the deaf students had engaged during the previous year] consisted of both written documents and photographs. It encompassed everything from DeaStu's American football team whose plays were called by students on the sidelines who beat an enormous drum to signal the team via vibration-code, to dances held with the aid of powerful speakers which conveyed the rhythm of the music in much the same way, to picnics and meetings in which dozens of hands moved at once and dozens of faces lit with animation.
>
> [. . .]

> Lynley continued through the book. He saw three rowing teams whose strokes were orchestrated by coxswains utilising small red flags; a ten-member percussion group who used the movement of an oversized metronome to keep their pulsating rhythm together; grinning men and women in camouflage setting out with banners that read *DeaStu Search and Pellet;* a group of flamenco dancers; another of gymnasts. And in every photograph, participants in an activity were surrounded and supported by people whose hands spoke the language of commonality. (p.218)

This is a good example of (emic) Deaf cultural features translated into Hearing discourse. The narration suggests that Lynley really understands something important of the essence of this foreign culture. However, Gareth is eager to further correct Lynley's misunderstanding:

> "It's quite a group," he [Lynley] said.
> "It's not a group. It's a life." Gareth replaced the albums. "Deaf is a culture."
> "Did Elena want to be Deaf?"
> "She didn't know what Deaf was until she came to DeaStu. She was taught to think that deaf meant disabled."
> "That's not the impression I've been getting," Lynley said. "From what I understand, her parents did everything possible to allow her to fit into a hearing world. They taught her to read lips. They taught her to speak. It seems to me that the last thing they thought was that deaf meant disabled, especially in her case." (p.218-219)

Lynley's comment represents Hearing values now. However, we cannot be sure whether he should be taken as reliable now. The conventions of the detective genre are at play as well: Lynley may possibly be bluffing, or provoking Gareth for further confessions. At least Lynley's utterance is not in perfect accordance with the impression we have got of his stand so far. It has become clear that Elena's parents *did* think she was disabled and took efforts to remove her handicap. It is, however, unrealistic to assume that parents could teach their children the skill of lip-reading. Definitely, a qualified (and good) teacher is needed to teach a deaf child to speak and lip-read. (Many prelingually deaf people never learn it in spite of tuition.) Again, we cannot be sure whether this is ignorance or just bluff from Lynley's part. If we assume that a maximum degree of realism has been one of the novelist's aims, the representation of deafness in *For the sake of Elena* is successful. Just the alleged success of Elena's parents

discussed here is unrealistic - perhaps the only blemish in the credible realism of the novel.

6.6.2 The portrayal of British Sign Language

As DeaStu, also BSL is in this novel closely bound to one character: Gareth Randolph. There was no one else, after all, with whom Elena ever signed. Therefore, the portrayal of BSL will be examined here just after Gareth Randolph and DeaStu.

It is through English that the reader learns what the characters feel or think and how they act. Thus also attitudes towards Deafness and fragments of sets of values or worldviews - the themes we are now most interested in - are portrayed in English. This is fair enough with the majority of characters - the hearing ones. However, as the Deaf characters Elena and Gareth themselves are concerned, the question of code is a little more problematic. Take the investigation with Gareth (see 6.5), for instance. Here the situation can be roughly described as follows: Thomas Lynley speaks to the interpreter Bernadette, who signs to Gareth, who in turn signs back to Bernadette, who answers Thomas in English. On the level of narrative, Gareth's (and Bernadette's) signing is given in written English. However, at points the signs they use are seen through Thomas's eyes, as if movements of hands and head. So here we have the author, the third person narrator, Thomas Lynley's 'filter' (an outsider's experience in the Deaf world), the allegedly neutral interpreter, the dialogue *about a fourth person*, Elena.

In 6.5.3 I have examined Lynley's first investigation with Miranda Webberly, Elena's flatmate. Towards the end of the scene, Lynley insists on eliciting all important facts from Miranda. She recalls:

> "I think she had a row with Gareth on Sunday evening. Only," she added in a rush, "I can't know for sure because I didn't *hear* them, they talked with their hands. I just caught a glimpse of them in Elena's room before she shut the door and when Gareth left he was in quite a temper." (p.93)

There are a number of relatively neutral, matter-of-fact references to Elena's deafness in the novel. By 'neutral' I mean 'not in any way biased, not clearly negative or positive', a line of dialogue or narration that simply refers to the fact that Elena was deaf, or to its consequences. This is one of them. While Elena was an excellent lip-reader, she had learned BSL as well, and apparently also used it at DeaStu. At least she did sign with Gareth Randolph. It is notable that Miranda uses the colloquial expression "they talked with their hands" (p.93), which is considered unnecessarily awkward if not outright faulty by the Deaf – why not use instead one good verb that could replace a phrase of four words. Moreover, 'to sign' has positive connotations within the Deaf, while 'talk with hands' is not better than neutral. Certainly it was not Miranda Webberly's intention to be poetic; probably she just chose the phrase without too much hesitation. This serves as a good example of an etic viewpoint: from an uninformed Hearing perspective, the act of signing is the substitute for talking. It would be misleading, however, if this etic fallacy were credited to the (real) author Elizabeth George. The polyphony found in the novel gives evidence on the contrary. It is not only Gareth Randolph who represents the Deaf discourse, even College Master Terence Cuff talks - in valid terms - about "signing rather than speaking" (p.60). Also Lynley uses the right word as well when interviewing Justine: "I know he [Anthony] didn't want her to sign" (p.200).

The entire scene at DeaStu deals with BSL. At first, Lynley is unsure of the arrangements of the interview with Gareth Randolph. There is an interpreter at hand, however, and she recalls:

> [. . .] "they [deaf students] sometimes like to have an interpreter go with them to their lectures just to make sure they don't miss anything important. That's my function, by the way. Interpreting. I make extra money to see me through the term that way. I get to hear some pretty decent lectures as well. I did a special Stephen Hawkins lecture last week. What a job *that* was trying to sign, Astrophysical whatevers. It was like a foreign language." (p.215)

This is the only reference to the possible *difficulty* of signing. Bernadette turns out to be bilingual in BSL and English, which together with experience and education enables decent interpreting to both directions, but as Hawkins's lecture

was "like a foreign language" (p.215), signing had proved difficult. Bernadette touches upon her family background, too:

> [. . .] "I think she [Elena] was proud that she could read lips. It's difficult to do, especially if someone's born deaf. My mum and dad - they're both deaf, you see - they never learned to read much beyond 'three quid please' and 'ta'. But Elena was amazing. (p.215)

Bernadette is the only so called coda, child of deaf adults, in the story. As discussed in 2.2, codas have a unique place between the Deaf world and the Hearing world. Some of them have adopted an active role in bridging the gap between the two worlds. Bernadette represents this group of 'hearing Deaf' people.

During the interview, a number of references are made to the fact that it is conducted in BSL and English (see also 6.6). Gareth gives DeaStu's scrapbook to Lynley in order to explain what Deaf culture is all about (see 6.6.1 above). As Lynley browses through the scrapbook, Bernadette explains photographs where dozens of hands are moving:

> [. . .] to picnics and meetings in which dozens of faces lit with animation.
>
> Bernadette said over Lynley's shoulder, "That's called wind-milling, Inspector."
>
> "What?"
>
> "When everyone signs at once like that. All their hands are going. Like windmills." (p.218)

The situation can be described as one where a hearing outsider, a clever inspector eager to learn but so far uninformed of Deaf culture, learns its aspects (for example, emic terminology translated from BSL into English) in a rather genuine environment, at DeaStu headquarters. Looking at the album, Lynley realises that the Deaf community comprises "people whose hands spoke the language of commonality" (p.218).

All in all, BSL does not play an important role in the novel. Signing is depicted just at a few points. Only Elena's parents suggest, second-hand through other characters' speech, that signing is inferior to speaking. The focalisation of the polyphony and other narrative choices create, however, the impression that

Elena's parents are selfish and unwise. Otherwise, the depiction of sign language is rather positive.

As was the case with the Ceephone, the occurrence of all these references as above (a Deaf organisation, the Deaf community, BSL and signing, a coda) makes the portrayal of deafness rounder and more complete. Gregory (1990:295) had found many inconsistencies and illogicalities in the portrayals of deaf fictional characters, but in *For the sake of Elena* all references seem consistent and logical.

6.7 Deaf characters through Thomas Lynley

I have dealt with Detective Inspector Thomas Lynley's developing stand to Elena's deafness and Gareth's Deafness in many subchapters (see 6.5.1, 6.5.2, etc). Lynley, the protagonist, the major focaliser of the events, and probably the most readily identifiable character to the readers, has been faced with deafness issues.

There are points where Lynley's inner reflection touches upon the subject. Does Lynley come out of the DeaStu offices newly enlightened or totally indifferent to the first encounter with another culture? Not quite either. Lynley has time to reflect (pp.222-225) upon what he had just experienced.

> He wondered if this had marked the crucial difference between Gareth Randolph and Elena Weaver. *We don't want your hearing.* For because of her parents' well-intentioned if perhaps arguably misguided efforts on her behalf, Elena had been taught to know every moment of her life that something was missing. She had been given something to want. So how could Gareth ever have hoped to win her over to a life-style and a culture that she had been taught from birth to reject and overcome?
>
> He wondered what it had been like for the two of them: Gareth dedicated to his people, seeking to make Elena one of them. And Elena merely following the dictates laid down by the Master of her College. Had she feigned interest in DeaStu? Had she feigned enthusiasm? And if she did neither, if she felt contempt, what kind of effect would this have had on the young man who had been given the unwanted assignment of steering her into a society so foreign to that which she had always known?
>
> Lynley wondered what kind of blame – if any – ought to be assessed upon the Weavers for the efforts they had made with their daughter. For in spite of the manner in which they had apparently tried to create an

> inaccurate fantasy out of the reality of their daughter's life, hadn't they in fact given Elena what Gareth himself had never known? Hadn't they given her her own form of hearing? And if that was the case, if Elena did move with a relative degree of comfort in a world in which Gareth felt himself an alien, how could he come to terms with the fact that he had fallen in love with someone who shared neither his culture nor his dreams? (pp.223-224)

Lynley has shown great tolerance of difference, good understanding of Elena's ambivalent position between two worlds, disapproval of the Weavers' blind normalisation attempts, and understanding of the cultural Deafness represented by DeaStu and Gareth Randolph. Here he also feels uncertain about the complexity of the issues: he gives thought to the concrete benefit that Elena had drawn from being Hearing, knowing English, reading lips, all of which was largely thanks to her parents' efforts. Lynley has enough insight and perception to realise now the insoluble paradox between Elena and Gareth.

While Lynley learns a lot about Elena during the investigations, something inexplicable at the heart of Elena's character remains a mystery: "He knew he was intellectually capable of getting to the root of Elena Weaver's death. But [. . .] he wondered if he was unprejudicially capable of getting to the root of Elena's life." (p.224) The true identity of Elena remains elusive. Lynley's inability to deeply understand Elena Weaver's life is undoubtedly due to the 'otherness' that Elena represents; in the end, due to the her deafness. As Lynley has no previous or first-hand experience of deafness, he has to admit that he cannot fully comprehend Elena Weaver's life. He can understand the multiple motives that the hearing people who belonged to Elena's life had, but he cannot quite grasp the quintessence of Elena's existence. Lynley is wise enough to humbly admit his limits. The inner monologue continues:

> He was bringing to the job at hand the preconceptions of a member of the hearing world. He wasn't sure how to shed them – or even if he needed to do so – in order to get at the truth behind her killing. But he did know that only through coming to an understanding of Elena's own vision of herself could he also understand the relationships she shared with other people. And – all previous thoughts on Crusoe's Island aside – for the moment, at least, it seemed that these relationships had to be the key to what had happened to her. (pp.224-225)

After his visit to DeaStu, and the investigation of Gareth Randolph, Lynley drives to Lennart Thorsson's house (pp.238-239). By then the mystery of Elena Weaver's death is still totally unsolved. Lynley considers Elena's relationship with Lennart Thorsson and Thorsson's possible motives:

> Lynley stared at the house, waiting for answers and knowing that ultimately everything in the case narrowed down to one fact: Elena Weaver was deaf. Narrowed down to one object: the Ceephone. (p.240)

Similarly with the Ceephone, Elena's deafness is at the core of the plot. Virtually all the investigated characters except for Elena's parents are suspects for the murder, and Elena's deafness affects, directly or indirectly, everyone's attitudes to her and gives rise to various possible motives. Here are two examples of how complex these cause and effect relations are in this narrative:

1. Anthony Weaver is ashamed of having a 'handicapped' daughter, and wants her to identify with 'normal' people. Gareth Randolph notices that there is an attractive deaf girl who has not been allowed to mix with the Deaf community. These two presuppositions trigger Gareth's hatred of Anthony. Elena Weaver is tired of her father's protective attitude. However, she continues to act as she has been taught by her parents, but in a rather distorted way: she keeps an emotional distance to Gareth and everything he represents (Deaf culture) and pursues sexual relationships with hearing adults in order to be 'normal'. She even makes attempts to become pregnant in order to upset her father, and succeeds. These facts make Gareth sad. Filled with hatred and sadness, could Gareth (who is a boxer and reportedly hot-tempered) have killed Elena?

2. Anthony Weaver is ashamed of having left his daughter when she was a child. Given that Elena is 'handicapped', his conscience is even worse. Therefore, he takes enormous effort in order to clean his reputation and show Elena how much he cares. (It is not so important whether he really cares of Elena or not, the most important thing to Anthony is what shows to the outer world.) His overflowing care of Elena makes both his wife Justine and his mistress Sarah jealous. Could they kill for revenge?

Many more chains of thought could easily be presented. Elena's deafness is intermingled with virtually all twists of the plot, and Lynley is perceptive

enough to notice this. The suspects and the investigated characters create a polyphony, and Lynley (together with his assistant Havers) functions as the neutral, objective character whose task it is to decide which voices are reliable.

In addition to the symbolism around Elena Weaver and unicorns (see 6.5.10), there is another scene of clear symbolic implications. As Lynley exits the offices of DeaStu, there are powerful images of hearing: Lynley hears the roar of church bells and goes in to a church to hear a soprano boy sing *Kyrie eleison* at Evensong (pp.222-223). This is depicted as having a becalming, purifying effect on Lynley. The importance of the ability to hear such tranquil beauty is emphasised by the word choices of the narration ("one of life's most joyous sounds", "the sheer pleasure"; p.223), but the juxtaposition of Lynley's visit to 'the world of silence' and his strong experience of the sounds immediately thereafter is extremely subtle; it is not made explicit at all.

In the last but one scene of the novel, this juxtaposition is repeated. The first funeral ceremony of Elena (the actual funeral would take place in London, Glyn and Elena's home town) is going on in St. Stephen's Church; Lynley and Havers are watching from the side.

> From the church, they could hear a hymn coming to an end, and rising out of its concluding notes came the high, sweet sound of a trumpet playing "Amazing Grace." Miranda Webberly, Lynley guessed, giving Elena her own public form of farewell. He felt unaccountably touched by the unadorned melody and he marvelled at the human heart's capacity to be moved by something as simple as sound. (p.437)

While Lynley had not considered deafness for a while in the narration - there had been the final burst of hectic action of catching the murderer Sarah Gordon in her house - the juxtaposition is still at work. It is, after all, Elena's funeral. She herself wouldn't have heard Miranda Webberly's playing, although she might well have drawn pleasure from it. It is ironic that Lynley is so moved by the beauty of the simple, lucid music played for the memory of a deaf girl, the deafness of whose played such a central role in her and everyone else's life.

6.8 Mrs. Gustafson

There is a third deaf character in the novel, but her contribution is minimal. However, I cannot totally ignore the portrayal of the "nearly deaf" Mrs. Gustafson (pp.25-28) as the title and the research question of the present thesis oblige me to pay attention to all portrayals of the deaf in the novel. Furthermore, the portrayal of Mrs. Gustafson differs remarkably from those of the other two discussed above, making it a valid point of comparison. Detective Sergeant Barbara Havers has hired her mother's neighbour Mrs. Gustafson, seventy-two, as attendant for the demented mother. This side plot has virtually nothing to do with the investigations; its main function is to maintain the readers' interest in Havers's character for further Lynley and Havers novels. Barbara is the focaliser of the scene: it is her impression of and attitudes towards the deaf Mrs. Gustafson that are portrayed. (In fact, this is the first time in the novel where Barbara is introduced and where her mind penetrated. She is, however, a familiar character from George's earlier novels.)

There are two more extracts where Havers goes to see her mother in London. In the first of them (pp.254-260), Mrs. Gustafson is a pathetic stereotypical character, neglects Havers's mother, even threatens her. She is not anymore just a 'silly elderly woman' but a real fool and nuisance, whom Havers has been obliged to hire for a time.

The third appearance of Mrs. Gustafson (pp.431-432) is just ten pages from the end of the story. The murder solved, Havers goes home to London, determined to take her demented mother to a small care facility. The old mother is half asleep, Mrs. Gustafson is in the house. "The television was roaring at a volume that accommodated Mrs. Gustafson's failing hearing." (p.431) This is the second explicit reference to Gustafson's partial deafness. For a hearing focaliser such as Barbara Havers here, the excessive volume of the television is just needless noise. Moreover, Mrs. Gustafson has neglected Havers's mother so badly that Havers fires her (p.432).

While Gareth Randolph is socio-culturally Deaf, and Elena was caught between the two worlds, Mrs. Gustafson is simply "nearly deaf" (p.25), physically handicapped, a silly old woman with deficits, one of which is the loss

of hearing. If Mrs. Gustafson were the only deaf character in the novel, *For the sake of Elena* would fall, from our present point of view, into the same category as the majority of the depictions of fictional deafness reviewed in Chapter 3. However, as the deafness of the two much more important characters is portrayed in a way exceptional of narrative fiction up until then, a huge contrast is created and Mrs. Gustafson's 'disability' is overshadowed by the much more detailed portrayals of Elena and Gareth. Because of them, *For the sake of Elena* occupies a special place in the history of deafness in literature.

6.9 Discussion

Although the sole extract in the novel where Elena is the focaliser is rather short (pp.1-8), it can carefully be concluded that deafness is not the foremost or the most decisive factor in her identity. We are led to follow Elena's morning routines when alone in her room with her pet mouse, her thoughts, her emotions, even frustrations and passions, her observations as she is running. As I have showed, there are just subtle hints of her exceptional patterns of perception: attention is not explicitly drawn to them by the narrator. At no point does she seem to be disabled in any way or to regret or curse her deafness. However, later in the novel Elena's deafness turns out to have been extremely decisive – from the other characters' point of view. Elena functions as a catalyst for other characters: in encounters with Elena, or when thinking about her, they have to face their own emotions. As suggested by the title of the novel, Elena's life is woven into everyone else's fate; she either directly or indirectly influences the other characters' thoughts and actions, and not any less so when she is dead.

The most dominant sides in the representation of Elena are her beauty and attractiveness, her rash sexual behaviour, and her defiant, determined moves in the turbulent power struggle of the College and her family. From the point of view of the entire narrative Elena is, after all, more markedly 'the dead girl' than 'the deaf girl'. It should be noticed, however, that Elena's predominant features cannot be separated from her deafness: her behaviour is governed by defiance of her father, who desperately wanted her to be Hearing. Sarah Gordon (see 6.5.10)

and Victor Troughton (see 6.5.9) liked Elena all the more because of the energy and joy she expressed *despite* her deafness. Moreover, as is suggested in 6.5.5 and in 6.5.9, Elena's sexual appeal was largely due to her intense face contact when lip-reading.

Although it turns out that Elena had a strong will and pulled quite a few people's strings, she is almost totally defined by others in the novel. As Detective Sergeant Barbara Havers puts it, "a girl like her - with everyone's fingers in her personal pie" (p.111). The title of the novel itself is very telling, in fact: everyone's motives circle round Elena, everyone did what they did 'for the sake of Elena'.

Thus, the key notion seems to be that everyone regards Elena's deafness as an imperfection, as a problem, *except Elena herself.* A number of characters in the novel care about Elena, or have negative feelings for her, but their attitude to Elena's deafness ranges from rather positive (Sarah Gordon, Victor Troughton) to rather neutral or 'irrelevant' (Adam Jenn) to very negative (Anthony, Glyn, Justine). An exception is Gareth Randolph, whose two driving forces are his desperate love for Elena and his urge to get her into the Deaf community at Cambridge University, that is, into real cultural Deafness. In a way, every person and community involved in Elena's life is creating for her a discourse, a reality to live in. While that discourse is disability-centred with the Hearing characters of the novel, DeaStu (represented by Gareth) wish to eradicate that mainstream discourse and create a reality more favourable for the Deaf and British Sign Language. The former discourse, pathologising or medicalisation, is often the discourse of the educated, of those in power. Such is the case here too, even if there are no doctors in the character gallery. The discourse can be seen as a means of gaining and maintaining power. Even the hero, DI Thomas Lynley, occasionally hides behind 'an expert discourse' when making judgements about Elena's or Gareth's deafness.

Even after Elena's death, in the examination phase, other people create the discourse by their words. We learn that Elena was part of two worlds, some claim that she identified more with the Hearing world, others point out that she did not fully belong to either one. Gareth Randolph asserts that she would have preferred

the Deaf world once she had got to know it properly. We do not hear Elena's opinion but we can try to decipher it on the basis of the witnesses' narratives.

Elena can be seen as a pawn in a social game played by the characters. The difference from normal games such as chess is that everyone is a player and a pawn at the same time. Elena was using certain men to pursue her own interests: the lover Victor, the Deaf boy Gareth, the father Anthony. Similarly, she was *being used* by the very same men, as well as by professor Thorsson, and by the postgraduate student Adam. A mingled web of relationships is represented, where such factors as love, sex, careers, power hierarchy and cunning intrigue characterise the people's views of each other. Not even after her untimely death does Elena cease to haunt the people with whom she had been involved.

Many characters serve to create the discourse where Elena was opposed to 'normal' or 'everyone else'. They do not only express what they thought of Elena, but they also try to tell what Elena herself thought. Such indirect characterisation is, however, by definition always unreliable to certain extent; each character has their own interests, their own emotions, and their own biases. Elena does not have the chance to speak for herself as she dies on page 8. The portrayal of Elena is thus essentially sketched by other characters, one Deaf and many hearing ones.

What I call 'etic symbolism' are utilised at a couple of points: Elena's subjective experience is translated into our hearing discourse, for example, when Elena's light alarm clock goes off (p.1), or when Elena notices her "telephone" (p.1). When the situation is reversed, I have talked about 'emic symbolism': when Sarah Gordon teaches music to Elena (pp.399-400), she tries to translate an essentially Hearing experience into the 'language' of the deaf (while not into BSL or any other sign language).

Elena is attractive and clever, even cunning. On the one hand, she is warm, perceptive, and able to 'read' people. On the other, she is a stereotypical femme fatale who brings misfortune to everyone around her: while other people (especially men) try to use her for the sake of their own miscellaneous ambitions, she is equally capable of using them to pursue her own goals. Elena is so much part of the Hearing world that she is able to read people very well, but no one else can know her inner world (totally deaf in the physiological sense, partly Hearing,

to some extent Deaf). Sarah Gordon, the murderer of Elena and a sensitive artist, comes definitely nearest to understanding her.

One more proof of Elena's acculturation into the Hearing world is that she is a skilled lip-reader, something most prelingually deaf people never achieve even if they tried hard. With her lip-reading and speaking abilities, she is capable of navigating in the Hearing world and identifying with Hearing mainstream culture better than most deaf people.

It is noteworthy that Elena is at many points considered 'a creation'. In particular, Justine, Gareth Randolph, Sarah Gordon, and Thomas Lynley are critical of Elena's parents' way to make a creation of her. Moreover, the mother Glyn, herself accused by the characters mentioned above, accuses Anthony of the same.

The modern socio-cultural view of Deafness and Deaf communities is best manifest on pages 59-61, where Lynley learns about DeaStu and Elena's deafness for the first time, and on pages 213-222, where Lynley investigates Gareth Randolph at the offices of DeaStu.

In *For the sake of Elena*, deafness is also a device needed for the plot. Earlier scholars had noticed this one of the main tendencies in the portrayal of deafness in fiction: deaf characters remain flat as their only significant feature is their deafness, and even that is just for furthering the plot. In *For the sake of Elena*, however, this is just one function which the narrative utilises, not the *raison d'être* of deafness in it.

Examined against the brief history of deafness in prose fiction (see chapter 3), the portrayal of Elena Weaver - and to some extent that of Gareth Randolph - in *For the sake of Elena* is fundamentally different and more complicated. As with Camille in Alfred de Musset's *Pierre et Camille* (1847), the main problem with Elena is other people's attitudes towards her deafness. However, George utilises multiple narrators and creates polyphony, and in that polyphony many facets of Elena's (and Gareth's) deafness are portrayed from multiple points of view. However, this is also connected to the detective genre, which sets certain requirements for the narration, such as adequate suspense.

Quite a few critics have noticed the over-representation of excellent deaf lip-readers in fiction. Elena can be added to that group; her ability to

communicate in English with the hearing is portrayed as excellent. However, the inclusion of Gareth Randolph in the story does a lot to balance this issue. As opposed to Elena, Gareth is unable to navigate in the Hearing world alone and sticks very strongly to the Deaf world. Moreover, the interpreter at DeaStu, Bernadette, validly tells Lynley that lip-reading is difficult to master for the prelingually deaf, and quotes her parents as examples.

In the light of what we have learned about Elena Weaver, it becomes valid to claim that she is a very distinguished borderline case: absolutely 'deaf' (in that her ears cannot hear) but hardly acculturated into the Deaf culture represented by DeaStu and Gareth Randolph, who is apparently not attractive enough for her. In fact, Elena fits neither in the clinical-pathological picture where the profoundly deaf are the most unfortunate losers, nor in the socio-cultural picture where the profoundly deaf need to engage in the Deaf community in order to lead a meaningful life. Instead, she is a rare success, who was effectively denied the access to British Sign Language and the Deaf community in London by her mother, but who learned to lip-read and speak exceptionally well - and thence to navigate in the hearing world. More than just that, she had learned to utilise her alleged disability and take control of situations, especially situations involving men. She had done this mainly with the help of her beauty and sexual appeal.

In contrast, we can notice that Gareth Randolph, in spite of the lack of round portrayal, is markedly 'Deaf', both in talks and deeds, in his preference of sign, in his anger at Hearing misconceptions - and in his ambitions concerning Elena. The impression that is left of Gareth is incomplete: he is a man of ideals and devotion, who breaks down due to the double misery of losing a beloved one and being a suspect for murder. Despite his strong tie to the community, allegedly a solid base for a meaningful life, he is one of the great losers in the story.

Finally, I shall approach the question of readership. The process of reading is always an individual one, and one's own knowledge, experience of life, and sensitivity affect that process. However, in our case the difference between Deaf and hearing readers is probably even more significant than the regular variation of subjective readings. Rimmon-Kenan discriminates between the implied reader and the actual reader of a fictional work (1983:86-87). The implied reader can be conceived of as the audience that the novelist has in mind when she

writes the novel. The narrative is directed at the implied reader. Undoubtedly, the implied reader of *For the sake of Elena* is hearing: so many points connected with Elena's or Gareth's deafness are explained through Hearing discourse. Certainly a Deaf readership will experience and respond to the novel differently from an average hearing reader. The gradual construction of Elena's deafness definitely unfolds differently for a Deaf (or deaf) reader. Many Deaf readers will grab the novel in the first place because they know in advance that it features deaf characters. Owing to the possibilities of the information technology, to numerous publications and catalogues, and to the general growth of self-awareness amongst the Deaf, an enlightened and up-to-date Deaf person is likely to know about books (films, plays, etc) with deafness as a theme. I assume that an average hearing reader, in contrast, picks the book because they want to dwell on a good mystery, or because they already like the author, or by pure chance.

7 CONCLUSION

In this study I have examined how deafness is portrayed in Elizabeth George's detective novel *For the sake of Elena*. I have analysed all the extracts of the novel where deaf characters appear, where they are the topic of other characters' discussions, or where their deafness is implied in any way. Moreover, I have examined the portrayal of a Deaf organisation as well as references to British Sign Language. The concept of focalisation, culled from narrative theory, proved useful for this purpose. Different character-focalisers are used in the narration, where multiple voices are manifest, creating a polyphony of representations and room for different interpretations or different emphases. Consequently, the portrayal of deafness in the novel is considerably heterogeneous.

This study was worthwhile to conduct for several reasons. First of all, not many studies have been done on deafness in fiction before. Those that are available are mainly articles that remain rather superficial due to their brevity. In earlier studies, fictional representations of deafness have been primarily reviewed according to the extent of realism and credibility as regards Deaf experience, Deaf communities, or sign languages. While those studies are certainly valid and

noteworthy from the point of view of Deaf Studies, they suffer slightly from the lack of descriptiveness. Moreover, tools from narrative theory (study of character, focalisation, polyphony) or genre studies (such as theories on detective fiction in this case) have not been fully integrated to study of fictional deafness.

Secondly, it is important for any cultural or ethnic group to promote better understanding of themselves *outside* their culture. While there has been a huge improvement in the understanding of Deafness within different sciences, and while the self-awareness of the Deaf has increased significantly to a more positive direction, popular views of deafness held by the Hearing are often outdated. Along with personal contact with Deaf people, one of the most effective ways to fight ignorance and disparaging attitudes is through art and entertainment. Unfortunately, the enormous influence of cinema, theatre, literature, etc, has mostly done the reverse: deaf character have been often portrayed in a negative light or at least with an essentially Hearing perspective. For these reasons, representations of deafness in any mainstream discourse deserve closer scrutiny.

In *For the sake of Elena* two deaf characters are portrayed. The portrayal of Elena Weaver is polyphonic and contradictory. Elena's own experience is narrated briefly in the beginning of the novel, while the bulk of the remaining narrative consists of how other characters conceived her. The investigations carried out by the detective pair reveal varying motives behind different characters, all of whom had a stand to Elena and her deafness. The relationships Elena had with them can be regarded as stereotypical: loving father, bitter mother, stepmother, Deaf admirer, hired escort, supervisor, lover, etc. The attitudes of these characters towards Elena's deafness vary from extremely negative to rather positive: those attitudes are inseparably tied to personal aspirations and motives.

The portrayal of the other deaf character, Gareth Randolph is less round. Gareth does not act as focaliser in the scenes where he appears; he is only represented through dialogue, through other characters' speech, and through Thomas Lynley's inner reflection. Gareth is portrayed as a devoted Deaf rights activist, practically embodied in his active role in DeaStu, an organisation for the Deaf students, and his proclamation for British Sign Language. In the scenes where Gareth appears, Deaf issues, as they were at the time of writing in the early 1990s, are given rather accurate references, although not much of the narrative is

devoted to them. British Sign Language, Deaf community, a local organisation, and devices for the deaf are depicted realistically. The Deaf community is mainly present through the photograph album that Gareth and Bernadette show to Lynley in the middle of the interview. A high degree of realism has clearly been one of the novelist's goals. Undoubtedly, certain (if not great) justice is done to issues that are close to Deaf people.

Furthermore, there is one deafened character in the novel, Mrs. Gustafson. She has no role at all in any of the two main stories (the events that led to the murder of Elena, or the investigations). Instead, she appears in the side story about Detective Sergeant Barbara Havers's personal problems. With our focus on deafness, the silly and irresponsible Mrs. Gustafson is portrayed in much the same way as the stereotypical, pathetic deaf characters found in numbers in the history of fiction. She only brings more trouble to Havers's tiring struggle with her mother's dementia. Although deafness is not the most important property attached to Mrs. Gustafson, we can take her as a contrast to the socio-culturally Deaf Gareth and to the unconventional portrayal of Elena.

The narration contains a great number of details that are realistic and add credibility to the portrayal of deafness. Some of them are explicit and directly available to the reader, whereas others can so be implicit and subtle that they may pass unnoticed in an average reading process. Among the explicit details found in the novel are: Elena's habit of looking people straight in the eye in order to read their lips, and the presence of the bilingual interpreter Bernadette in Lynley's interview with Gareth Randolph. Elena's idiosyncratic utterances as well as the emic and etic symbolism I discussed are somewhat subtle, implicit details connected to deafness. Moreover, Elena's deafness is inseparably connected to other characters' pursuits: it serves the function of making the complex psychosocial web around the other characters even more complicated. It is not my task to judge whether the novel has general artistic value or not, but this study certainly shows that it has great value as a fictional treatment of deafness. Also the ancient dichotomy between 'serious' and 'popular' fiction is challenged as a work of popular fiction undoubtedly surpasses all previous works of serious fiction in one aspect - an aspect which for some may still seem periphery and insignificant but which certainly is not for a great number of others.

The integrated approach seems to be fruitful in an analysis of this kind. Narrative theory offers useful concepts and methods, such as the notion of focaliser, while theories on detective fiction contain insight that helps to understand the structure of a detective novel. While I have been very thorough and surveyed every single reference to deafness found in the data as well as a large part of the context around the references, this study is by no means exhaustive. For instance, the methodology of discourse analysis, or that of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), might provide more insight into the subject. In my discussion I have occasionally referred to the requirements of the detective genre on the narration; I have even suggested that these requirements may often be primary to other aspects of narration in crime novels. A more detailed theory of the detective genre would be needed to distinguish exactly which features in the novel are dictated by the genre. This study operates on a relatively indeterminate level of free interpretation, and my approach could be perhaps developed into a more elaborated set of tools. Then again, study of fiction can never be totally pre-determined: there is always space for the scholar's personal, strictly qualitative views.

This study supports, to some extent, the hypothesis that the tradition of portraying deafness is changing in fiction as well. While attitudes change, the style and content of literature change as well. Also Guella (1983:26, 32) noticed that a more complicated, more representative, and more polyphonic - in a sense, 'truer' or 'fairer' - way of portraying deafness is clearly developing. Other recent novels or short stories dealing with deafness ought to be surveyed before further generalisations can be made on the subject. Among interesting objects of study could be *A maiden's grave* (1995) by Jeffery Deaver, *The raging quiet* (1999) by Sherryl Jordan, The Connor Westphal mystery series (1997-) by Penny Warner, or Melvin Burgess's *Loving April* (1996). Reviews in Deaf magazines and Deafness catalogues suggest that the latter might represent a view of deafness as disability, while the former three might be more in concordance with the current trend, that is, a polyphonic portrayal of deafness as a socio-cultural state of existence. There are also numerous children's books with deaf characters. Moreover, fiction about deafened characters (*Finding Abby* (2000) by Virginia M.

Scott could be a recent example) deserves attention and comparison with fiction about the Deaf.

Also biographies and autobiographies of the deaf could be studied and preferably compared with fictional works. Yet another issue worth examining is whether hearing writers and deaf writers (the rather few existing novelists; authors of biographies) portray the deaf in markedly different ways. For instance, Batson and Bergman suggest that deaf authors, similarly with black authors, have very often confined to first-person narration when representing a character from their own social group (Batson and Bergman 1985:ix-x). The notion of Deaf self-expression is changing rapidly. In the twenty-first century, then, research ought to be done also on its new forms, which go beyond the print medium, as Brueggemann (2000) suggests. For instance, works originally conceived in a sign language, as well as their translations into written languages, could be examined. At least the literature created in ASL is very rich (Lane 1992:16).

My own position as a hearing scholar has inevitably affected my observations on the novel. While I have familiarised myself well with the tenets of Deaf Studies, I cannot claim to know the essence of the Deaf experience. Deaf scholars might be more qualified to assess the portrayal of deafness in *For the sake of Elena*: they would certainly find a slightly different focus, pay attention to different things, and emphasise different points, even if the data and the basic methods were exactly the same as here.

All in all, the portrayal of deafness in various media offers an endless field of survey. Deaf Studies is already strongly linked to many scholarly fields, linguistics and sociology in particular. It can still be successfully linked to many more established branches of research. Creative, cross-disciplinary efforts can, at their best, be mutually benefiting. Our knowledge of phenomena linked to deafness is enhanced with the help of multiple vantage points, while the understanding of the unique socio-cultural nature of Deafness may oblige scholars to adjust and elaborate earlier theories or open new directions anywhere.

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