

Proceedings from  
the Second International  
Interdisciplinary Conference on  
**Perspectives and Limits of Dialogism  
in Mikhail Bakhtin**

Stockholm University, Sweden

**June 3–5, 2009**

Editors: Karin Junefelt, Pia Nordin





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# Preface

Interest in the work of Mikhail Bakhtin among Western scholars has been particularly and increasingly evident since the 1980s. His ideas about dialogism have been and continue to be a source of inspiration for various approaches across scientific fields because they are versatile, multidimensional and open. Bakhtin's original concepts have widened both theoretical and empirical approaches in a wide range of scientific fields. These include most notably anthropology, art, education, economy, gender studies, history, linguistics, literature, medicine, technology, pedagogy, philosophy, political science, psychoanalysis, psychology, rhetoric, religion, semiotics, sociology, speech pathology, and theatre.

This conference focused on the core of Bakhtin's theory, which concerns dialogue and dialogicality. The conference themes reflected his notion that the "I" and the "self", the "you" and the "other" are embedded in each other so that each affects the other and as a whole they create a centrifugal force around which communication and life circle. The choice of the two-faced Janus figure as the symbol of the conference reflects the inward and outward aspects of communication's inherent dialogue and dialogicality. As an ancient Roman god of beginnings and doorways, of the rising and setting sun, looking in opposite directions, Janus has been associated with polarities, that is, seeing different and contrasting aspects and characteristics. As a metaphor it describes Bakhtin's view on dialogues and dialogicality within or between "selves" and "others". As a metaphorical symbol it captured the intent, purpose and outcome of the conference as reflected in this collection of papers.

The Second International Interdisciplinary Conference on Perspectives and Limits of Dialogism in Bakhtin took place at Aula Magna at Stockholm University, Sweden, June, 3–5, 2009. The conference was opened by the vice-chancellor of Stockholm University, professor Kåre Bremer. One hundred and sixty four participants from 22 countries attended the conference. The countries represented were: Canada, Chile, Denmark, Finland, France, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America, and Ukraine.

Five keynote speakers framed the presentations and discussions of the conference.

- Michael Holquist, professor emeritus at Yale University, USA, and doctor honoris causa at Stockholm University, Sweden, is in the Western world known as the introducer of Bakhtin. He is also the researcher who most thoroughly has interpreted and developed Bakhtin's ideas thus making him the acknowledged world expert. Professor Holquist talked about: "Chronotope's central role in dialogue."
- Ragnar Rommetveit, professor emeritus in psychology at Oslo University, Norway, is one of the most prominent researchers in the world on dialogism and intersubjectivity. His notion of the concept of intersubjectivity has been extensively quoted by researchers dealing with the concept of dialogue and dialogicality all over the world. Professor Rommetveit talked about: "A transdisciplinary dialogical paradigm as a fight against dichotomies."
- Hugo Lagercrantz, professor in pediatrics at The Karoliska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden, is a world-famous researcher on newborn children. His research is extensive. It spans medical problems from within the newborn to interaction between child and caregiver. During the last years his research has focused on consciousness in the newborn child. Professor Lagercrantz talked about: "The making of the human brain."
- Per Linell, professor at Linköping University, Sweden, is one of the most prominent world scholars in the study of spoken language. Using dialogue and dialogicality as the point of departure, he challenges the predominant grammatical view of

linguistics, which for decades has been based on written language. Professor Linell talked about: "Taking Bakhtin beyond Bakhtin: Some trends in contemporary dialogical theories."

- James V. Wertsch, professor at Washington University, St. Louis, USA, and doctor honoris causa at Linköping University, Sweden, is known worldwide as the researcher who developed Vygotskian and Bakhtinian ideas by integrating them into sociocultural theories about action and mind. Professor Wertsch's paper was entitled: "Text and dialogism in the study of collective memory".

A series of presentations were held within the following topics within the perspectives of dialogue, and dialogism. These concerned: clinical and medicine issues with regard to dialogism; dialogue with regards to classroom, pedagogy, and writing from the perspective of dialogism; linguistics: interaction; language, and thought, and identity, based on Bakhtinian theory.

The social programme of the conference provided participants with opportunities to informally discuss and expand on ideas and materials in the formal presentations. This started in the evening on June 3, with an invitation from the city of Stockholm. All the participants were invited to the City Hall, the place where the Nobel festivities are held. Stockholm City offered not only a magnificent Swedish smörgårdsbord but also an excellent guided tour of the City Hall. The social programme ended with a dinner at Elfviks gård, a place connected to Bellman, which was connected to the most glorious epochs of Sweden, and our former king, Gustav III.

The three key components of the conference, specifically, the keynote talks, the contributions of the participants from around the globe, and the social programme resulted in a highly successful experience. The general consensus was that the quality of the presentations at the conference was high. This was based on initial review of the submissions and participant comments at the end of the conference

The organizers of the conference would like to acknowledge the financial support provided by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond; Kungl. Vitterhetsakademien; and Henrik Granholms stiftelse.

We would also like to thank those who worked continuously to make the conference possible. This includes those who presented papers and have sent their articles in for this book of proceedings.

On behalf of the organization committee,

Karin Junefelt  
Stockholm, June 2010

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# *Keynote Speakers*



# The Role of Chronotope in Dialog

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“...parables [Gleichnisse] are older than reasoning.”

Johann Georg Hamann

“Language most shews a man; speak that I may see thee—“

Ben Jonson

Chronotope has been one of the most frequently invoked items in the toolbox of Dialogism. It remains, however, one of the most vexed categories in the Bakhtinian canon. A recurring dilemma is the question, “What—precisely—is the field of inquiry in which the term has its greatest relevance?” It is clearly about time and space, but time and space as experienced *where*: in literature or in real life? Time/space as experienced by whom—characters in fictional texts, by the author, by the characters, by readers of literature, or by human beings in life as well as literature? Is the chronotope a literary, or an anthropological, metaphysical, or existential category? Or does it share boundaries with all these disciplines, and if so, how shall we discriminate between their applications? There are many reasons for this confusion, beginning with Bakhtin’s own expository imprecision in the long essay he devoted to the subject in 1937–1938. Problems associated with the term were compounded when in 1973 Bakhtin added a new set of “concluding remarks” to his earlier text.

In the end, however, I believe difficulties in understanding chronotope derive fundamentally from the central place it occupies in Bakhtin’s core conception of dialog. In what might be called the paradox of ubiquity, we fail to see the tree for the forest. Chronotope is so omnipresent throughout Bakhtin’s total *oeuvre* that it is difficult to see as a freestanding topic in its own right. Today I am going to argue that the chronotope is everywhere in Bakhtin, because chronotope is, in fact, the master key to his whole theory of dialog.

Dialog, no matter how defined, is a relationship. A question that is so obvious that it often goes unasked, much less answered, is why the particular relationship of dialog became the topic that dominated Bakhtin’s thinking throughout his whole career. I will say more about this later, but suffice it here that I interpret Bakhtin’s lifelong commitment to dialog as a late reaction to Kant’s Copernican revolution in epistemology, founded as it was on the primacy of relations over mere things.

In a one line zinger, my thesis is that the claim in the *Critique of Pure Reason* that human perception is confined to representations of things (phenomena, *Darstellungen*), and that we can never know the world as it is (noumena, the *Ding-an-sich*) transforms our perception and thinking into a necessary give-and-take between mind and world, mind and other minds. Without the absolute assurance that comes from contact with things in themselves, knowledge ineluctably transforms into a gamble with reality, an experiment, a dialog of inference in the mind and responses from the world that more or less confirm or disconfirm our hypotheses. Kantian epistemology makes knowing the product of work. It converts thinking into an endless dialog between minds and world in which we more or less correctly gauge the appropriateness of our response. In Bakhtin’s post-Kantian universe the basic tool or instrument for judging the accuracy of our epistemological experi-

ments is time/space. The chronotope is the instrument that permits calibration of the time/space coordinates without which thinking and communication—human understanding, indeed—would be impossible. Quite simply, chronotopes provide the clock and the map we employ to orient our identity in the flux of existence.

This is a large claim that requires grounding in both a historical and a theoretical analysis.

## History of conceiving time/space in Bakhtin

Let me begin by rapidly reviewing the role of chronotope in Bakhtin's own thinking over the course of his life. Bakhtin's concern for time/space expresses itself in one form or another throughout his whole career, beginning long before he invoked the term itself.

The original chronotope essay was written between 1934 and 1938, thus during a period when the peculiar status of the novel among other literary genres was at the center of Bakhtin's attention. It is not surprising, then, that the definition of chronotope he gives at that time is couched in terms of literary analysis. But at least a decade earlier, in his long, uncompleted ms. on "Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity," he had already devoted attention to questions concerning the 'spatial form of the hero,' and 'the temporal form of the hero'. (Bakhtin, pp. 22–52, 99–138, 1990) And, as we shall see, time/space continued to play a role in Bakhtin's thinking during the last years of his life as well.

The title of the chronotope essay from the 1930s would appear on the surface of things to be completely forthright in proclaiming its status as purely literary category: "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel: Notes Toward a Historical Poetics." And the initial definition is equally unambiguous: "We ... We understand the chronotope as a formally constitutive category of literature..." (Bakhtin, , p. 84, 1981)

Historical and biographical considerations kept the original essay from being published at the time it was composed. However, forty years later, when the essay did see the light of day, Bakhtin seems to have recognized that despite the exclusive focus on literature that he claimed, the vast scope of topics he in fact assembles under the rubric 'chronotope' might nevertheless create for any reader trying to grasp the term's precise limits. He thus added a coda of several pages that sought to address possible confusion about what he himself calls the most important problem associated with the term, "the boundaries of chronotopic analysis. (Bakhtin, p. 257, 1981, *emphasis added*).

However, far from clarifying the appropriate boundaries of the term, the 1973 "Concluding Remarks" make connections between literature, life, and philosophy even more confusing. "the boundaries of chronotopic analysis. (Bakhtin, p. 257, 1981, *emphasis added*). Yet he concludes by advancing a definition of the term that is so broad as to be almost boundaryless: : "We...endow all phenomena with meaning, that is, we incorporate them not only into the sphere of spatial and temporal existence, but also into the semantic sphere." By concluding with this turn to epistemology, Bakhtin signals the distinctive place the chronotope essay plays in the evolution of his own thinking both early and late. Time/space coordinates serve to ground what is in effect a first philosophy: they are the fundamental constituents of understanding, and thus provide the indices for measuring other aspects of human existence, first and foremost, the identity of the self. While this claim may strike some as inflated, a brief overview of Bakhtin's career clarifies at least the lifelong importance he assigned to the issues that in 1934 he gathers under the conceptually overloaded neologism of chronotope.

There are many ways to conceive the outlines of Bakhtin's creative life, but most would now agree that he is most overtly concerned with philosophical issues during two distinct phases of his biography. The first is the decade of the 1920s, when he works on the project published in English as *Art and Answerability* and *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*. During an intervening period in the 1930s and 40s he devoted himself more exclusively to theory of the novel. But In a third and concluding period, he once again occu-

pied himself with philosophical issues, when, after his move to Moscow in the late sixties, he produces the notes and essays published in English as *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. This is not, of course, to deny that Bakhtin at any point in his career ceased to be preoccupied by philosophical questions, merely that they emerge more directly at the beginning and end of his life.

If so much is granted, we are in a position better to understand some of the ambiguities in the original text of the Chronotope essay. Even during the years when he most obsessively concerned himself with the history and theory of the novel as a literary genre, Bakhtin's thinking continued to be informed by insights from his youthful immersion in German Idealism and its Neo-Kantian aftermath. The impact on Bakhtin of Kant and such Neo-Kantians as Hermann Cohen and Ernst Cassirer has been well documented. Perhaps the most obvious evidence for such influence is contained in the Chronotope essay itself. As is well known, the 1930s version of the essay specifically cites Kant's first critique in its opening pages, (Bakhtin, p. 85, 1981).

Bakhtin was not overly generous in supplying footnotes indicating his source, so it is significant in this instance that he not only names Kant as inspiration for the concept of chronotope, but also does so in some detail. After proclaiming "The image of man is always intrinsically chronotopic," (Bakhtin p. 85, 1981) he appends the following (now infamous) footnote:

In his "Transcendental Aesthetics" (one of the main sections of his *Critique of Pure Reason*) Kant defines space and time as indispensable forms of any cognition, beginning with elementary perceptions and representations. Here, we employ the Kantian evaluation of the importance of these forms in the cognitive process, but differ from Kant in taking them not as 'transcendental' but as forms of the most immediate reality... (Bakhtin, 1981, 85) ["...формы самой реальной действительности." p. 235, 1975]

Whatever else this gnomic formulation portends for later commentators, it seems relatively unambiguous that Bakhtin was here seeking to make clear his conviction that time and space are understandable only—to use Kant's own terminology—as 'pure intuitions'. They are unconditioned in the sense that there is no perception, no thinking or understanding of the self or the world without them. In other words, when he says "we employ the Kantian evaluation of the importance of these forms in the cognitive process," he seems to be agreeing with Kant that the other categories listed in the first critique (such as quantity, quality, relation, etc.) are secondarily derived, conditioned as they are by the necessity of the prior existence of time and space.

Understanding time/space in these foundational terms helps clarify the importance of these concepts in Bakhtin's early philosophical texts, such as those difficult sections of *Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity* devoted to the temporal and spatial form of the hero. Perceiving the central role of space/time adds as well to our sense of continuity in Bakhtin's thought where they dominate the last essays and fragments, as in the "Notes from 1970–1971," when Bakhtin is once again trying to calibrate similarities and differences between partners in dialog. It is time/space that defines the primordial distinction between I and the other he defines by invoking the Kantian terms of *given /created* (*gegeben/aufgegeben*, or *дан/задан*): "My temporal and spatial boundaries are not given for me, but the other is entirely given. I enter into the spatial world, but the other has already resided in it. The difference between space and time of *I* and the *other*." (Bakhtin, p. 147, 1986) I and the other are, of course, the two poles of any dialog. Why does Bakhtin assign priority to time/space in defining such a fundamental concept?

## Historical sources in Kant

To answer this question, it will help to trace the history of Bakhtin's own account of the influences that brought him to focus on time/space. In the 1934 essay he identifies

Einstein and Ukhtomsky as sources for the actual locution ‘chronotope’, but has very little to say about either. Kant is the figure he turns to for establishing time/space in human existence as “indispensible forms of any cognition, beginning with elementary perceptions and representations.” (Bakhtin, fn, p. 85, 1981).

But as we have seen, Bakhtin famously marks a distinction between Kant’s usage of time/space and his own. He begins by saying “...we employ the Kantian evaluation of the importance of these forms...” However, he immediately adds that he differs from Kant in taking them not as ‘transcendental’ but as forms of the most immediate reality.” [“...формы самой реальной действительности.” p. 235, 1975] The phrase I render as “most immediate reality” Bakhtin emphasizes by using both Western (реальность) and native Slavic terms (действительность). He does so to drive home his point that time/space are at the heart of knowing.

His rejection of Kantian transcendence is Bakhtin’s way of defining another version of the subject who—or which—is the ground zero of perception, the experimental laboratory where understanding is produced. That is, like Kant, he sees time/space as defining of the knowing subject. But Bakhtin differs from Kant in understanding the nature of the subject so defined.

Obviously, much hangs on how we interpret ‘transcendence’, so it is well to remember that it is a term that Kant uses in many different contexts. In the Chronotope essay, Bakhtin himself refers us to an early section of CPR, the first part of the *Transcendental Doctrine of Elements* given the heading (in both editions of CPR), *Transcendental Aesthetic*. It is characterized by Bakhtin as «one of the main sections of the CPR,» (Bakhtin, p. 85, 1981, fn), and indeed it is for it is in these passages Kant establishes the rationale for the categories that are the fundamental building blocks of his system. Bakhtin draws attention to these passages in particular because they contain Kant’s argument for the purity, or the *priority* of the specific concepts of time and space.

‘Transcendental’ in these early pages of CPR is introduced as part of the argument explaining why the categories are necessary in all acts of understanding. ‘Transcendental’ can best be understood as meaning ‘beyond, or not based on experience,’ insofar as time and space are given *a priori*, independent of any particular instantiation of them. By definition, then, ‘transcendent’ stands over against ‘empirical’, a term Kant reserves for any intuition that contains sensation from the experienced world. And since such an intuition is available to mind only *after* it has been processed by the categories (especially time and space), it is always *a posteriori*.

Now, remember Bakhtin’s claim for the decisive power of time/space in human beings: “every entry into the sphere of meaning is accomplished only through the gates of the chronotope...” (Bakhtin, p. 258, 1981, p. 406, 1975. *Emphasis added*). If chronotope is understood in such all-embracing terms, does it not seem to be making something very similar to the claim for universal priority that Kant labels transcendental?

However you parse them, time/space are ineluctably intertwined with the concept of *perception*, so one way to grasp the subtle, yet crucial difference Bakhtin wishes to make in his allusion to Kant is to ask the question “*Where* does time/space have its agency?” That is, “for *whom* are time/space distinctions relevant?” If we pursue this line of inquiry, it quickly becomes apparent that what is at issue in Bakhtin’s dismissal of Kantian transcendence is really a difference between the two about the nature of the self.

To fully grasp the complex nature of that difference, it will help to begin by recognizing that both thinkers begin by sharing two major premises in common. First, each makes the non-intuitive assumption that the subject at the heart of identity, the agent of perception, is invisible to itself. And secondly, the only self that is visible to the individual subject—despite its defining task of bringing the manifold variety of the world into a meaningful unity G is not noumenal. It is a construction, moreover a construction that is itself not singular. For Bakhtin, ‘self’ belongs to that class of words that includes ‘twin’: when we identify someone as a twin, we recognize that his identity is derivative:

as such, it depends on the existence of another self, the secret sharer who is the other twin.

Let me quickly flesh out these two points—that the self is invisible to itself and that it is therefore a construction—before I address the crux of my argument for the central architectonic role of the chronotope in Bakhtin’s theory of dialog.

### *Two versions of the invisible subject*

Bakhtin is in many ways the last of the German idealists, and as with so much else, the probable source of his view that the self is invisible to itself derives from his early and sustained immersion in Kant. In a late essay seeking to sum up the history of German philosophy and his own place in it, Kant interprets the activity of his eminent predecessors such as Leibniz and Christian Wolff as an attempt to overcome the absolute nature of the knowing subject as defined in Descartes’ *Cogito*. In looking back at his own intervention in this struggle, he references the distinction his first critique posited between the ‘transcendental I’ and the ‘psychological I’. He points to the crucial difference between mere consciousness (perception) and the kind of consciousness he calls *apperception* (the consciousness that it is *I* who is having this perception). The transcendental I sees a house; the psychological *i* sees itself seeing a house. Kant’s point is that neither of these selves is absolute, neither is a unitary substance. Kant says clearly, “That I am conscious of myself is a thought that already contains a two-fold I.” (Kant, p. 73, 1983). This paradox is a necessary consequence of employing *apperception* as part of his explanation for how, —despite the divided state of our selves—we nevertheless find it possible to create a unitary impression out of the constantly changing signals that come to us from the external environment. For consciousness to work as he describes it in his theory of knowledge, it must be sited in both an ‘empirical I’—a subject that responds to the external environment—and a ‘transcendental I’ that is able to organize such responses into a coherent mental representation on the basis of which the mind can then make judgments. And making judgments is how Kant defines thinking, the action of understanding.

Descartes’ assumption that we are transparent to ourselves is decisively ruled out by the distinction that founds Kant’s whole theory of knowledge: every act of perception is a synthesis (*Verbindung*). The subtitle of the section Bakhtin cites is «On the possibility of Synthesis in General.» (B130), making it clear that the *fons et origo*, of his system is to be found in the act of joining of a priori, transcendental categories in the mind with sensed intuitions coming from the external environment. This creates a subject split between pure and empirical *apperception*. The classic formulation goes like this:

...all manifold of intuition has a necessary relation to the **I think** in the same subject in which this manifold is to be encountered. But this representation is an act of **spontaneity**, that is it cannot be regarded as belonging to sensibility. I call it the **pure apperception** in order to distinguish it from the **empirical** one, or also the **original apperception**, since it is that self-consciousness which, because it produces the representation **I think**, which must be able to accompany all others and which in all consciousness is the same, cannot be accompanied by any further representation. (B 132)

The radical nature of this necessarily bifurcated self must be judged in light of the the whole Western metaphysical and theological tradition that conceived the individual person as essentially defined by having a soul. This tradition is questioned over the millennia, but begins to crumble only in the Radical Enlightenment of the seventeenth century. So Kant (who after all died in the nineteenth century (1804) is in a sense the late, but all crushing climax of this history. His bifurcation of the self culminates a process in the West that had glorified the singularity of the self in its doctrine of the soul.



For figures such as Augustine, the source of unity and wholeness was to be found only in a monotheistic God whose gift to men was an equivalent singularity in their souls. Christians were thus encouraged to see themselves by looking into their souls. But at a later date, devout thinkers such as Pascal, a mathematician who helped bring the Radical Enlightenment into being, feared humans might be quite different from Augustine's view. He longed for such a soul, but suspected there were dark recesses in his soul that would not let themselves be seen. He was made anxious by the thought he was a «monstre incon-préhensible, » and he cries out, « Où est donc ce moi ? » (quoted in Bénichou, 420, 323).

In the next century, Rousseau, for all his suspicions of the Enlightenment, writes "J'aspire au moment où délivré des entraves du corps, je serai *moi* sans contradiction, sans partage, et n'aurait besoin que de moi pour être heureux." (I long for the time when, freed from the fetters of my body, I shall be ME without contradiction, without division..." (p. 358).

Kant's attack on the concept of a unified and transparent ego thus flew in the face of an ancient and deeply held desire. It was predictable that there would be a powerful reaction, and indeed the subsequent history of German Idealism is best understood as such a counter attack. Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel are only the best known of those who sought to put back together the humpty-dumpty of the unified self in the Wake of Kant's argument against it.

Thus, Fichte:

Only in the self-intuition of a mind is there the identity of a representation and its object. Hence to explain the absolute correspondence between a representation and its object, upon which the reality of all our knowledge depends, it must be shown that the mind, insofar as it intuits objects, really intuits itself.

And he adds, "If this can be shown, then the reality of all our knowledge will be assured." (quoted in Beiser, p. 12, 1993) But of course such a homogenization could in fact *not* be shown, neither by Fichte himself, nor by his opponents, Schelling and Hegel.

Schelling described himself on several occasions as a physician healing the deep wounds of consciousness, and while there are differences in his emphasis over his long life, it is clear from very early on that the specific wounds he has in mind are those inflicted on consciousness by Kant. This is most obviously the case in his 1803 *Vorlesungen über die Methode des akademischen Studiums*, in which he argues that reality does not depend on an opposition between intelligence and nature (clearly alluding to Kant's distinction between categories and intuitions), but rather is guaranteed by the Absolute (grounded in Reason). The supreme law of reason is not difference but identity,  $A=A$ , independent of temporal and spatial considerations. It was this ultra-monistic view that inspired Hegel to describe it as the night in which all cows are black.

Hegel's whole theory is based on the overcoming of Geist's alienation from itself. In a sense, he put Fichte's absolute ego into time—the subject might not be able to know itself today, but it *will*, and when that absolute fusion of subject and object occurs, history will have exhausted its telos and time will be no more. It can be shown that from very early on, even in his early religious writings, Hegel assumed that Kant had seen a part of the truth, but only a part. It was his, that is Hegel's, duty to see the insight in Kant's blindness. Kant had argued that our thinking was legislated by categories in the human mind itself. Hegel agreed with this, but went on to argue "the nature of our own thought and that of the reality to which Kant always contrasted it are in fact one and the same." (Guyer, p. 171, 1993) His answer to Kant's insistence on difference was—as in Fichte—an expanded notion of unity.

Ultimately, none of the attempts by philosophers to overcome the more troubling aspects of Kant's epistemology was able once and for all to eradicate the doubts raised by the all-crusher. In the still unfolding dialog that was initiated by publication of the Critique of Pure Reason, Bakhtin's intervention is one of the more original and cogent,

largely because Bakhtin—far from suppressing Kant’s dictum that we do not have access to things in themselves—exploits the potential estrangement of such a world as a key to a revitalized understanding of synthesis (*Verbindung*) that has the reverse effect of alienation: indeed, it becomes the foundational element in a new dream of community.

During 1924–1925 Bakhtin gave a series of lectures on Kant, in which he says (among other things):

The genius of Kant consisted in the destruction of...objective unity because it is only the unity of a natural subject. Objectivity (reality) are (sic) given neither in nature nor in consciousness, but in history and culture; objectivity and ceaseless objectification in cultural work. Not in the image, not in fixity but in work... The main danger consists in the possibility that an image [of unity of consciousness] may become something more than subsidiary; the forgetting of the fact that the unity of consciousness is only an image – this is the main danger for philosophy. (Bakhtin, p. 331, 2003.)

I take this passage to be the *ENS ORIGINARUM*, the key to understanding Kant’s role in the development of the foundational concepts in Bakhtin’s theory of dialog, such as the person conceived an activity in the world and society; that reality is experienced, not just perceived; and that It is “событие события,” an event, an always shared happening that becomes available to perception only when structured by time and space. When Bakhtin says he rejects Kantian transcendence, he is pointing to the difference between dialogic chronotope and kantian categories in precisely these terms: in dialogism, Time/space are not given, but achieved.

That Schelling is, they are constantly being forged anew in the sense that in seeking to negotiate differences between one moment and the next in our own consciousness or in the larger sweep of a historical moment that has whole societies in its grip we can make sense of things only by perceiving them through the double lens of time space arrangements that are appropriate to this particular event at this particular time and place.

Bakhtin thoroughly absorbed Kant’s lesson that there is a gap between mind and the world, but disagreed with Kant about what characterized that gap. Kant’s sense of this epistemological space was that it was created by wired in mechanisms that were universally supplied to humans. But insofar as they had to be universal, they could never be particularized in experience, and so they were by definition transcendental, always outside the bounds of any possible sensibility. Bakhtin, while agreeing a gap between mind and world exists, thought of the distance as being transgredient, a recondite term, deriving from ‘transgress,’ going beyond the bounds.

Bakhtin’s favorite illustration of transgredience, repeated throughout his works, is based on what he called the surplus of seeing; when you and I face each other, I can see things behind your head you do not see, and you can see things behind my head that I cannot see. In other words, the things I cannot see are not outside experience as such, they are merely outside—they transgress—the boundaries of what is available to my sight in a particular moment. If we switch places, that which was invisible to me in my former position comes into sight, and the same happens for you when you do the same thing. Transgredience, then, is the name of a boundary that through interaction (our changing places) can be overcome—transgressed—in experience.

Bakhtin comes back to this illustration again and again because it demonstrates the self’s need of the other—not only other people, but other signals from the environment. The event also shows the virtues of—relative—outsideness (*vnenaxodimost’*). I can never encompass everything, thus I am condemned to being outside much—indeed most—of the things and people—and ideas—in the world. But in this condition of needing constantly to negotiate various degrees of outsideness and insideness (what Bakhtin calls appropriation, *usvoenie*) lies the guarantee of my freedom. As in Kant, the world is not given to me, in the sense that so much of it is outside me and thus in need of being creatively organized into my life.

Thinking—experience—is a task for Kant, a series of never ending judgments. The tools for accomplished the task are a priori categories and a postiori intuitions. For Bakhtin, the event of being is also a task, but the tools for accomplishing it the subtleties of time/space. Dialog is not just a relation. Like all relations, it requires boundaries, and the tools for establishing these are for Bakhtin time and space conceived as chronotope:

Bakhtin's neologism introduces a new degree of specification into the general understanding of time/space. First of all, as characterized by transgression rather than transcendence, time and space in the chronotope are never divorced from a particular time or a specific space. Dostoevsky has the UM use the formula  $2 \times 2 = 5$  to insist on the importance of singularity, the ineffable unrepeatability of unique events in existence (as opposed to the normative repeatability of  $2 \times 2 = 4$  in theory. Bakhtin introduces chronotope to name the existential immediacy of fleeting moments and places.

Thus the chronotope is, like Kant's categories and intuitions, an instrument for calibrating existence. I use the word calibrate in its technical sense, whose meaning is "to adjust experimental results, to take external factors into account or to allow comparison with other data." But, it will be asked, what would the technology look like in which chronotope is an instrument of such exquisite sensitivity? What is the *means* which permit time and space in general to take on the degree of temporal and spatial specificity demanded by the uses to which Bakhtin wishes to put chronotope?

Another huge difference between Kant and Bakhtin will help us answer this question. For all of his obsessive attention to the workings of the mind in its interaction with the world, Kant famously never raises the question of language's role in negotiating appearance. As I do not have to tell this audience, for Bakhtin just the opposite is the case: he is as focused on language as Kant was dismissive of it.

How is that relevant to our topic? Because it is precisely the systematicity of signs in human language that enables the effectiveness of chronotopes in human cultures. The Kantian categories of time and space are so transcendental that their application—even in the most abstruse logical or mathematical formulae—already compromises their status as pure categories. Nevertheless, if time and space have their 'natural' home in logic and science, Chronotopes have their natural—their only—home in language. In our daily use of chronotopes the abstractness of time/space is domesticated when we deploy them in speech. The formal mens for expressing subjectivity occupy a unique place in all languages. As Beneveniste has pointed out, 'I' is a word that has no referent in the way 'tree', for instance, nominates a class of flora. If 'I' is to perform its task as pronoun, it must itself not be a noun, i.e. it must not refer to anything as other words do. For its task is to indicate the person uttering the present instance of the discourse containing 'I', a person who is always changing and different. 'I' must not refer to anything in particular, or it will not be, able to mean everybody in general.

In Jakobson's suggestive phrase, 'I' is a shifter because it moves the center of discourse from one speaking subject to another. Its emptiness is the no man's land in which subjects can exchange the lease they all hold on meaning in language by virtue of merely saying "I". When a particular person utters that word, he or she fills 'I' with meaning by providing the central point needed to calibrate all further time and space discriminations: 'I' is the invisible ground of all other indices in language, the benchmark to which all its spatial operations are referred, and the Greenwich mean time by which all its temporal distinctions are calibrated. 'I' marks the point between 'now' and 'then' as well as between 'here' and 'there'. The difference between all these markers is manifested by the relation each of them bears either to the proximity of the speaker's horizon (here and now), or to the distance of the other's environment (there and then).

This the way that language makes possible my dialog with the world from my unique place in it: the first person pronoun, coupled with indicatives such as 'then', 'now' and 'here', 'there' serve to calibrate positions in abstract space and time that are always condi-

tioned (“thickened”) in the event by the specific values that society attached to them in any particular time and place.

This, then, is the condition that Bakhtin has in mind when he writes in his famous footnote that he differs from Kant in taking time and space “not as ‘transcendental’ but as forms of the most immediate reality.”

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# With Respect to Bakhtin: Some trends in contemporary dialogical theories

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## Introduction

In spite of the context where it appears, this chapter is not primarily about Mikhail Bakhtin's work. Rather it deals with present-day dialogical theories of language, communication and thinking, but also with the persistent importance of Bakhtinian ideas for these theories.

Mikhail Bakhtin was a literary scholar who mainly analysed written, and mostly literary, texts. But he also had fruitful and partly quite innovative ideas about language, interaction, thinking and communication in general. Todorov (1984: ix), in his introduction to some of Bakhtin's ideas, said:

"Primarily a theoretician of texts (in the broad sense of the term, extending beyond "literature"), he saw himself forced by the need to shore up his theories to make extensive forays into psychology and sociology; he returned from them with a unitary view of the entire area of the human sciences, based on the identity of their materials: texts, and of their method: interpretation, or as he would rather put it, *responsive understanding*." (italics original)

The kinds of psychology and sociology that Todorov hints at in this quotation were hardly the mainstays of American psychology and sociology. Rather, Bakhtin's work has been instrumental in promoting something quite different, a *dialogical alternative*.

## Dialogical theories: Interaction, contexts, other-orientation

As Ragnar Rommetveit has pointed out, dialogism has brought meanings and social minds back into the human sciences. Dialogical theories deal primarily with the human mind, and the mind is seen as a sense-making system (in the widest sense of this term). In bringing meaning back into psychology and language sciences, it stresses the role of the other, as well as interactions and contexts (Linell, 2009). It challenges the image of the solitary individual, so much cherished in Western philosophy (e.g. Descartes) and sometimes more widely in society (modern individualism). This is the icon portrayed in Auguste Rodin's *Le Penseur*.

*Interactionism*: In the analysis of sense-making as it occurs in communication and interventions into the world, as well as in solo thinking or the reading of texts, etc., we must start out from the encounters, interactions, events etc. as the basic phenomena; they are primary, not secondary or derived. This idea makes dialogism different from mainstream psychology, which is based on the assumption – self-evident for its adherents – that individuals are there first, then they sometimes interact with other individuals. Interaction for them is, in Marková's (2003) terms, "external", that is, of a secondary nature. Dialogists, by contrast, assume that individuals have become what they are in and through interaction.



Figure 1. *Le Penseur* by Auguste Rodin.

*Contextualism:* All sense-making practices are situated and contexted; contexts are *always* relevant, not just under certain circumstances. Moreover, contexts are *dynamic*; they *become* relevant and emerge in and through interaction. This is not to deny that many contextual resources are, and of course have to be, situation-transcending; they have been gradually appropriated over time, and are made relevant in new situations, by being recontextualised and accommodated in new communicative projects.

In other words, interactions and contexts are absolutely basic phenomena for sense-making in cognition and communication, not just peripheral or secondary. And this is possible because we are “thrown” into and live in a world populated by others.

Dialogism has gained quite extensive attention in recent decades, undoubtedly very much due to the reception of Bakhtin’s work. Yet, dialogical theories are more than the dialogism of Bakhtin’s circle. In Linell (2009), I advocate an ecumenical approach to

dialogism, arguing that it comprises much more than a philosophy of the human sciences. Lots of empirical research, particularly in the last thirty years, have confirmed its fruitfulness: Conversation Analysis and ethnomethodology, discursive psychology, context-based discourse analysis, ethnography of speaking and interactional sociolinguistics, gesture studies, interactional linguistics, gesture studies, cognitive dynamics, socio-cultural semiotics and cultural psychology, interdisciplinary dialogue analysis, to mention a few. For some purposes, it may not be very obvious why all this should be called “dialogism” (and be opposed to “monologism”). One could therefore propose that the term “dialogical theories” is to be understood as a kind of shorthand for “interactional and contextual theories of human sense-making”. At the same time, though, these theories all assume that sense-making is not a monologue, an activity involving autonomous individuals.

Having said this, as a kind of very brief introduction, I would now allot space to a discussion of some examples of how dialogical theories have taken us beyond Bakhtin in some respects.<sup>1</sup> These involve respecifying language from linguistic systems and linguistic products to activities of situated languaging, and expanding the notions of cognition and communication from being “just” linguistic practices to being multi-modal activities in the world of embodied people (self and others), objects and artefacts.

## From texts to situated interactions

The 1970s came with a so-called linguistic or discursive turn in the social sciences. One outcome of this was, in some circles (postmodern Discourse Theory), a tendency to isolate a linguistic or discursive world, in which sense-making is supposed to take place. After that, we may now witness a dialogical turn in the human sciences and perhaps to some extent in society at large; languaging and dialogue are then treated as interdependent with the body and the world (e.g. A. Clark, 1997).

Empirical research into language and interaction, first and foremost spoken language, has been greatly inspired, directly or indirectly, by Bakhtin. In this domain, the single most important work by Bakhtin is undoubtedly that of *The Problem of Speech Genres* (cf. Bakhtin, 1986<sup>2</sup>; henceforward *SpG*). Here, Bakhtin argued for the importance not only of “speech genres” but also, among other things, for a clear distinction between “sentence” and “utterance”. Let me begin by a concise summary of his theory of the differences between sentences and utterances.

Sentences are, for Bakhtin, “units of language”, and utterances are “units of communication”, that is, basically turns as well as larger discourse units. *SpG* discusses a number of points at which utterances and sentences are different from one another:

1. Utterances, but not sentences, are demarcated on either side by a change of speaking subjects (cf. *SpG*: 76: “finalization of the utterance;”inner side of the change of speech subjects”, as if the speaker ends by saying *dixi*). There are three aspects of finalization: a) the semantic exhaustiveness of the theme, b) the speaker’s plan or speech will, c) the typical compositional or generic forms of finalisation (*SpG*: 77–78).

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<sup>1</sup> I would never pretend, of course, that there is any agreement on exactly what various dialogical theories have or should have in common. In fact, I would argue that there are many divergences and controversies around (Linell, 2009). But that is only natural; cultures are full of competing “social representations” (Marková, 2003) characterised by mutual tensions and partial contradictions, heteroglossia and cognitive dissonances (“cognitive polyphasia” in the terms of Jovchelovitch, 2007).

<sup>2</sup> This text was originally published in Russian in Bakhtin (1979), and then appeared in English as a chapter in *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays* (Bakhtin, 1986), pp. 60–102. Here I refer to this English translation.

Furthermore, unlike utterances, sentences:

2. “lack any direct contact with reality”; they have no specific reference to any extraverbal situation,
3. have no semantic fullness of value, and are “devoid of expressive intonation” (*SpG*: 85),
4. like words (in the linguistic sense), do not belong to anybody; they have no authors (*SpG*: 84) or addressees (*SpG*: 95) (whereas addressivity is a constitutive feature of utterances (*SpG*: 99),
5. since they have no relations to others’ utterances, they cannot evoke responses,
6. can be repeated (whereas situated utterances are unique and cannot be repeated; *SpG*: 134).

Clearly, sentences and utterances are quite different creatures, and Bakhtin provides us with a useful sketch. Sentences (system sentences, sentence types) are abstract units of language, “conventional” units in Bakhtin’s terms, whereas utterances are “real” units (*SpG*: 71). But it seems that Bakhtin is not sufficiently dialogical in his theories of sentences and utterances. Here are four such points:

- (a) Bakhtin puts too much emphasis on the speaker, as distinct from the listener or the participant in general: a) turns (utterances) are seen as necessarily finalised by the speaker, b) defined by (clear?) speaker intentions (the speaker’s “plan” or “will”): as a matter of fact, participants co-construct concrete utterances much more than Bakhtin seems to think
- (b) (ad #5 above: sentences have no relations to units used by others): while sentences (sentence types) are abstract forms or methods, many of them are designed to be used in specific (types of) positions of sequences (of utterances)
- (c) Bakhtin seems to be influenced by the idea of “complete thought” (*SpG*: 73), or *Gesamtvorstellung* (the proposition-like idea behind a *whole* sentence, advocated by Wilhelm Wundt, and many others<sup>3</sup>)
- (d) Bakhtin gives us no theory of where sentences come from; but for us, if they are patterns or methods of utterance construction, they must have something to do with language use.

In addition, one may suspect that Bakhtin entertains the somewhat naïve, and conventional, theory that utterances are simply sentences in actual use. Yet, sentences, as alleged “units of language”, are to some extent academic, or language-standardising, constructions (see, e.g., Linell, 2005).

I cannot deal with these points at any length here. Some attention will be paid to (a) and (b).<sup>4</sup> Let us then first recall that, according to Bakhtin and dialogical theories in general, utterances display responsivity and addressivity: they have *both* responsive, retroactive, backward-pointing relations to adjacent prior utterances, *and* anticipatory, projective, proactive, forward-pointing relations to possible next utterances or conversational contributions. This basic point will here be illustrated by an example from an American-English telephone conversation, borrowed from Emanuel Schegloff:

- (1) STOLEN (Schegloff, 2007, p. 232: MDE-MTRAC 60-1/2) Tony and Marsha are the parents of Joey, but they do not live together. Here Tony has called up Marsha to find out when

<sup>3</sup> See Blumenthal (1970:17, et passim). Wundt is not mentioned by Bakhtin, but cf. *SpG*:81, 86n; cf. also the critique of Karcevskij’s “phrase” (*SpG*: 82).

<sup>4</sup> Point (d) will be implicitly brought up in a later section.



Joey, who has just visited Marsha, can be expected to arrive at Tony's place. It turns out that his travelling plans have been changed, since his car has been partly demolished.<sup>5</sup>

1. Marsha: did Joey get home yet?
2. Tony: well I w's wondering when 'e left.
3. (0.2)
4. Marsha: .hhh uh:(d) did OH: .h y're not in on what
5. ha:ppen'. (hh) (d)
6. Tony: no(h)o=
7. Marsha: =he's flying
8. (0.2)
9. Marsha: an Ilene is going to meet 'im:. becuz
10. the to:p w's ripped off'v his car which is
11. to say somebody helped themselves.
12. Tony: stolen.
13. (0.4)
14. Marsha: stolen.=right out in front of my house.

Any situated utterance has responsive and projective, i.e. backward- and forward-pointing properties to prior and possible next utterances, although the proportions of responsiveness and projection may vary. For example, an interrogative (line 1) projects an answer. Here Tony is not able to deliver a clear answer; instead, he prefaces his reply with "well", which expresses exactly that, and then he issues what is in effect a counter-question ("I was wondering"), another soliciting (i.e. strongly projecting) utterance. Again, we do not get a proper answer; instead, Marsha responds (lines 4–5), not to the implicit question itself, but to the fact that she got a counter-question rather than an answer to her initial question (in line 1). Tony's rather minimal response in line 6 is of course only interpretable in relation to the prior question; response particles are amongst those linguistic resources that are most parasitic on the preceding context. And so on. The situated meaning of each utterance is dependent on its sequential position. For example, consider line 12; a single word like "stolen" is, as an utterance, of course completely dependent for its interpretation on the context (what is stolen, and what precisely does "stolen" mean here?). It is in the prior context that we get to know what has been stolen. At the same time what Tony does in line 12 is, as Schegloff (1996) has pointed out, to confirm an allusion in Marsha's prior message ("somebody helped themselves"). Confirmation in interaction is of course always a responsive action.

But, as I alluded to a while ago, grammarians do not deal with situated utterances, and their responsive and projective relations to adjacent utterances. They tend to deal with abstract, system sentences (sentence types). Let us therefore shift our focus from interaction (utterances) *per se* to the semiotic resources provided by language, or rather the resources assembled through language users' cumulative, and arguably structured, experiences of linguistic practices that can be applied in new situations of use.

Dialogical theories will look upon grammatical constructions as being designed to be used in interaction. Such constructions are not responsive and projective utterances in themselves, but many of them have kinds of responsive and projective potentials at the system level. For example, the so-called *it*-cleft is a responsive construction. Its situated occurrence normally presupposes a prior utterance in which the content of the relative clause was first introduced. Here is a Swedish example:

- (2) (A. Lindström) (MOL1:A:4: BVC: 647ff; excerpt from a telephone conversation between Gerda and Viveka: they talk about an apologetic letter that Gerda's family received from a

<sup>5</sup> Transcription conventions are the conventional Conversation Analysis ones. However, the transcription has been simplified here, and the orthography normalised. Square brackets, [ ], mark the beginning of overlapping talk. The equals sign, =, indicates that there is absolutely no pause between utterances.

primary health care centre, to which Gerda has directed a complaint. Annika, who is a nurse, and Krister, who is a doctor, work at this centre.)<sup>6</sup>

1. G: (...) ja träffa ju Annika förresten å hon hälsade så  
(...) *incidentally I met Annika an' she greeted me*
2. glatt på mej, du hörde de att **dom hade skrivit brev**  
*quite cheerfully, you heard that they had written a letter*
3. till oss [va:]  
*to us, didn't [you:]*
4. V: [ne:ä: de hörde ja'n]te:]  
[no: I didn't:]
5. G: hja: jo de gjo]rde dom sörrö, [.h  
*I see, well, they did, you see [.h*
6. V: [å ba om u:rsäkt ell[er?  
[an'apologised [or?
7. G: [ja:  
[yes
8. (0.2)
9. V: men de va ju bra:]  
*but that was good, wasn't it:]*
10. G: de va ju jät]ttebra,  
*that was mighty good.*
11. V: **va de eh Krister som hade skriv[i (de)?**  
**was it eh Chris who had writt[en (it)?**
12. G: [Krister hade skrivi re.  
[Chris had written it.
13. V: .hha förstog de(h), hehe.h  
*.yeah understood that, hehe.h*
14. G: ja Annika tyckte ju fo]rtfarande inte att de va nåt  
*yes Annika still didn't think there was anything*
15. som va märklit. så de: förstår ja men men:  
*odd about it. so I understand that but but*
16. **de va Krister som hade skrivi re,**  
**it was Chris who had written it.**
17. V: ja ju]st de.  
*yes exactly.*

The general point is that the *it*-cleft construction can occur when a specific contextual configuration has been built up in the prior discourse. This configuration involves what is to be taken as known and shared information at that point in time when the *it*-cleft can be applied. The construction is therefore responsive to co(n)text, rather than being part of a freely occurring initiative.<sup>7</sup> In the conversational episode between Gerda (G) and Viveka (V) the cleft construction occurs twice. The first instance (line 11: *va de Krister som hade skrivi de* “was it Chris who had written it”) occurs as a response to a situation in which there are two persons, two alternative referents, who could have been involved in the writing of the apologetic letter. Thus, a local communicative project is occasioned in the interaction in which the goal is to make it mutually known *who* did it. Viveka chooses one candidate person (“Krister”) in her question of line 11. (The other alternative is evidently “Annika”, who is mentioned in line 1.) Since Gerda seems to feel that her specification in line 12 calls for, or projects, an explanation or an account, perhaps because Viveka has received her information with laughter (line 13), such an account is

<sup>6</sup> A rough English translation is given in italics between the lines. Underlining of the vowel in a stressed syllable denotes a focally stressed word. (On transcription, see also note 5.) **Bold** is used for marking the constructions in focus, and not any property of style of pronunciation. I wish to thank Anna Lindström for letting me use this example from her corpus of Swedish telephone conversations.

<sup>7</sup> Of course, an *it*-cleft can occasionally occur without this kind of prior context, but then the speaker relies on the addressee’s ability to supply such a context.

given in lines 14–15, before Gerda once again states the identity of the author, now using the cleft another time (line 16).

Languages contain lots of responsive grammatical constructions. Just one more example will suffice here: the “stressed finite” used in (what Tanya Stivers, 2005, terms) modified repeats, as in (3a–b):

(3a) “partial modified repeat” (A and B are busy with cooking)

A: this’s smelling good.  
 (...)  
 B: it’s just all the spices.  
 A: **it is.**

(3b) “full modified repeat” (two teachers discuss who should do a particular task)

A: that was Alison’s job.  
 B: oh that’s right. **it is Alison’s job.**

The construction in (3a) is a “partial modified repeat” because it is elliptic in not repeating the predicate nominal (“just all the spices”), whereas the “full” repeat (3b) is a full clause with both subject and predicate. The defining formal feature of the construction exemplified here is the stress on the finite verb, which is often an auxiliary, and the function of the construction is to confirm the truth of the proposition expressed in the prior utterance. Repeats are not simply repetitions, that is, copies of earlier utterances (Bakhtin’s point #6).

“Elliptic sentences”, such as the construction in (3a), are legion in interactive language, especially in conversation. Instead of deriving an elliptic sentence from a full underlying sentence, as in a “monologist” theoretical grammar, an interactional, dialogical theory would show how it is dependent on its actual co-text, and what interactional job it can do there.

Responsive constructions are much more common than has been thought in traditional grammar theory. The same applies to projective constructions, a large class comprising, among other constructions, interrogatives, such as yes/no-questions and wh-questions, which, as we know, project different kinds of answers.

In addition to the responsive-projective network of links, there are many other properties that can make utterances less sentence-like than is conventionally thought. Many utterances are deviant from written-language sentences. For example, so-called apokoinou, or “pivot”, utterances, are a case in point. Here are some examples from German (Scheutz, 2005):

(4a) des is **was furchtbares** is des.  
*That is something terrible is that*

(4b) wie=s wegkommen sind war er (.) **zehn zwölf jahr sowas**  
 wird=er gwesen sein  
*When they left was he ten twelve years or so will he have been*  
*(i.e. he must have been)*

Example (4a) is a mirror-image variant of a pivot construction, in which the onset (pre-pivot) is similar to the end (post-pivot) (except, of course, for word order). The end seems just to repeat the beginning, in a completely redundant way. However, in actual situated interaction, such a construction would have a function, for example, one of confirming what has been predicated in the pivot (the central element: that something was terrible), or of stressing the importance of this. In (4b) there is more of a perspective shift; the speaker first asserts that “he was (something not specified)” without any hedge, then – after the pivot which mentions an approximate period of time – changes this into a statement with a lower degree of epistemic certainty (“he must have been”).

German pivot constructions often break the mold of the famous Rahmenkonstruktion, thus resulting in “ungrammatical” structures, if judged from written-language standards (Scheutz, 2005):

- (4c) er hat **in Salzburg** hat=er ja einmal (.) i glaub **zwei semester lang** hat=er eine gastprofessur ghabt.  
*He has in Salzburg has he once I think two semesters has he had a guest professorship.*

The insertion of *hat er*, which is mirroring the pre-pivot *er hat*, breaks up the frame construction. The utterance is reconstructed, and retroconstructed, during the course of production. There is both a perspective shift in the conceptualisation of content, and a syntactic “structure shift”. Such pivot phenomena are quite frequent in many languages, such as German and Swedish (just to mention two languages that have been thoroughly researched on this point).<sup>8</sup>

“On-line syntax” (Auer, 2000, 2007) in real situated, conversational language involves structure shifts, incomplete integrations, retroconstructions etc. as the emergent results of various dynamic interactive (intra- or interpersonal) processes. It is not that spoken language lacks linguistic structure, but this structure deviates from received written-language-biased grammar (Linell, 2005). Accordingly, “dialogical” (interactional-contextual) grammar departs from the mainstream tradition in grammar which sees grammatical structures in terms of autonomous sentences. At the theoretical level, we move from viewing sentences as expressions of complete thoughts to seeing them as constructions designed to be used as links in chains of cognitive and communicative actions (in dialogue with self and others). Utterances are not necessarily “possibly complete”, let alone expressing “complete thoughts”. The responsive-projective relations of utterances to their adjacent utterances are based on their “interactional construction” (Goodwin, 1979). This has repercussions on the nature of grammatical resources too.

We could conclude that Bakhtin’s own assumptions about (sometimes relatively conventional) units of language (as laid out in *SpG*) focused on static structure, rather than on processes in time. Similarly, we could argue that the notion of “speech genres”, which he defined as “relatively stable” “forms of combinations of forms” (*SpG*: 60, 81, et passim; Holquist, 1986: xvi) is a rather text-based notion. Today, we may argue that this has to be complemented by notions of “communicative activity types”, which are notions more connected to concepts like “situation”, “encounter” and of course “activity” (Linell, 2009). This is not to deny that Bakhtin was a very important forerunner of modern dialogical language studies (as evidenced in *SpG*), and so was of course his close colleague Voloshinov (1979). And it would be completely anachronistic to require Bakhtin to present an observationally and adequate theory of situated interaction long before the advent of the necessary technology for recording and analysing talk. Similarly, there was hardly an empirically based dialogical theory of sense-making available in his time.

## From language to multi-modal interactions in the world

At this point, I would like to shift topic rather drastically, and address the issue of communication involving persons with disabilities. For a start, I would like to point out that nowhere it seems easier to demonstrate the relevance of dialogical theory (other-orientation, interactions, contexts) than in communication with persons with disabilities. You can immediately see the interdependencies with others, or, for that matter, dependencies on the other.

<sup>8</sup> For German, see Scheutz (2005). For a thorough analysis of apokoinou in Swedish, see Norén (2007).

Consider this example with an aided speaker using a Bliss board with abstract symbols in his communication with a speaking interlocutor:

(5) GOING HOME WITH THE HOSPITAL VAN (Kraat, 1985: 81): A = aided speaker using the Bliss board, P = speaking partner, CAPITALS designate (pointings to) Bliss board symbols, *italics* are body movements):

1. A: HOME
2. P: home? what about home? something about your sister?
3. A: *no*. DAY OF THE WEEK
4. P: Sunday? Monday? Tuesday? ... Saturday?
5. A: *yes*
6. P: something about home and Saturday. are you going home going home on Saturday?
7. A: MAN
8. P: a man? someone special is coming?
9. A: *no*
10. P: I should find out who this man is?
11. A: *yes*
12. P: a relative? a friend? someone in the hospital?
13. A: *yes*
14. P: someone in the hospital. let me see, a doctor? a therapist? a friend? (.) can you give me another hint?
15. A: ((eye points to top of partner's head))
16. P: head. part of the head. brains? he works with the head?
17. A. COLOR

Here, the aided speaker A has something to say, and the speaking partner P formulates it in spoken language, with A's help. P uses a guessing strategy (lines 4, 14), which allows A to respond with head-shakes ("no"; lines 3, 9) or noddings ("yes"; lines 5, 11, 13). With the help of these resources and the Bliss board, which is an external cognitive artefact, P can successively come to understand what A wants to communicate. Excerpt (5) only shows the beginning of the interaction, which so far has enabled P to conclude that A's message involves a "man working in the hospital" (lines 7–8, 12–13) and that they are concerned with something about "going home" on the upcoming "Saturday" (line 6). There follows a sequence of about 100 turns (not shown here), which are used by the two to jointly formulate A's request "Can Carl, the security guard, possibly take me home on Saturday with the hospital van?". It takes time, but they succeed in the end. But in order to make sense, and develop mutual and shared understandings, the two participants are absolutely dependent on one another. They do not behave like *Le Penseur*. The general point is that many *other* kinds of communication, also between non-disabled participants, presuppose dialogical interdependencies too, although we may not be as accustomed to pay attention to them. Ultimately, virtually all sense-making depends on prior or present, actual or imagined contexts and interactions.

Karin Junefelt made pioneering dialogical studies, drawing on Vygotsky, Piaget and Bakhtin, of blind children in interaction with sighted parents (cf. Junefelt, 2007). But let me turn here to another category of persons with multiple disabilities, those who are born deafblind. Souriau Rødbroe & Janssen (2008), and their collaborators, have published a thoroughly dialogical account, with plenty of video illustrations, of the communicative development and behaviours of the congenitally deafblind.<sup>9</sup> They demonstrate the importance of non-verbal and pre-linguistic, and even pre-semiotic and pre-conceptual, communication and cognition between these persons and their carers. Although these interactions must be seen on video, which I cannot use here, I will still reproduce a partial

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<sup>9</sup> I am indebted to Inger Rødbroe, Marleen Janssen, Jacques Souriau, Anne Nafstad, Marlene Daelman and Flemming Ask Larsen for introducing me to this material and this world.



Figure 2. Ingrid, Gunnar and the crab. (© Andebu Døvblindecenter. See Souriau et al., 2008:97. Reproduced with due permission.)

transcription of a sequence from Souriau et al. (op.cit.: III: 97). Of course, it cannot do justice to the details of the parties' embodied interactions. (See also Fig. 2).

(6) INGRID AND THE CRAB: Ingrid, who is a young woman (24 years of age), with practically no sight or hearing. She and her assistant Gunnar have been on a fishing expedition. They have caught some small crabs, which are now kept in a bucket. The two are now sitting on the pier. Gunnar takes up a crab and puts it on his naked arm, and then on hers, letting the crab crawl up time after time. The real and the re-enacted actions occur in several rounds, each consisting of several moments. Here we see two such rounds in the sequence. All the time, he shares the experience with her:<sup>10</sup>

1. G: ja GUNNAR kende, shows on his sleeve °Gunnar på armen°  
yes felt Gunnar on his arm
2. G pulls up his sleeve, imitates the crab running up the arm
3. G lets (the real) crab run up his arm, ja (.) ja (.) ja
4. G reenacts the event by iconic movements; I seems fairly focused, with her hand in a reciprocity position
5. GUNNAR FEEL Gunnar kendte, å hå hå↑  
Gunnar felt
6. G: du °ska Gunnar ta° opp, en sån opp!om igen ONCE-AGAIN,  
hey [you] should Gunnar pick up such one up once again
7. G: leads I to help him to pick up a crab from the bucket
8. G: åv åv åv åh↑
9. GUNNAR TAKE-UP picks up a bigger crab

<sup>10</sup> Some transcription conventions:

Courier = words spoken in Norwegian

*Italics* = English translations between lines

CAPITALS = tactile signs (whether conventional or idiosyncratic)

Normal text = descriptions of bodily behaviours

10. G: ska vi kende, ja, ska vi kende  
*let us feel yes let us feel*
11. G prepares I's arm by pulling up her sleeve
12. G: å så så; G lets the crab run up I's lower arm; I looks focused  
*an' so so*  
 but fairly tense
13. G: å hå hå hå hå! va?! kendte du den?, krrrabba  
*an' ho ho ho ho! what? did you feel it? crrrab*
14. G shows its (imitated) movement on I's arm ja ha ha ha
15. G: om igen, imitates crab's movement, ja ja ja  
*once again yes yes yes*
16. G lets the real crab run sjhhh
17. FEEL shows the movements on I's arm hån!!
18. va va de? va va de?  
*what was that? what was that?*
19. FEEL (signed on I)
20. ja!! de de de... den krabba! ja ha ha så... (with enthusiasm)  
*yes!! it it it that crab yes ha ha so*
21. ska vi ta'n G throws the crab into the bucket  
*Shall we take it*

This much simplified transcript shows two rounds of action-and-event sequences, lines 1–5 and 6–21. Each round comprises three components: preparing for action, performing action (sometimes several times), and retrospectively summing up the actions-with-experiences. For example, in the second round, the preparation involves two moments, proposing the new round (line 6) and preparing Ingrid's arm for the event (lines 7–11), and the following performance comprises two runs by the real crab and one interstitial faked run (lines 12–17). Finally, the round ends up with Gunnar enthusiastically commenting upon and, as it were, celebrating the experience (lines 18–20), and then dropping the crab (line 21).

The transcript in (6) makes Ingrid almost invisible. But the video shows that she takes part in the interaction, although not with any salient initiatives. But she changes between a “feeling-and-thinking face” when she is feeling the movements of the crab or Gunnar's simulated crab, and her facial behaviours seems to reflect some sort of recognition during the phases of retrospective actions (lines 13–14, 18–20). Gunnar's contributions are accommodated to these responses.

This communicative episode involves several semiotic resources. Basically, we witness how parties share experiences and produce emotionally charged bodily reactions, using the concrete situation itself. Gunnar is also accompanying and supplementing the crab's movements with tactile signs and talk. Ingrid cannot hear his spoken words but she can feel the vibrations of the emotional excitement in Gunnar's body. At home, on the day after (not shown here), they re-enact their prior shared experiences, with Gunnar now iconically playing out the crab's movements, and filling in with more tactile signs and bodily expressions of emotions (and speech). Ingrid shows that she understands and enjoys it. She is completely dependent on her partner and his bodily actions, signs, his other movements and his bodily expressions of emotions, but they make and experience meaning together. They can build upon their common communicative biography, in this case from the day before.

I do not think that dialogists can teach specialists on deafblindness very much. But I am convinced that *they* can teach *us* a lot: about the nature of communication, interdependencies, the importance of contexts and situations, the emergence of meaning, the development from shared situations (partly experienced together) – via pre-conceptual and pre-semiotic mechanisms to concepts associated with linguistic resources – to using these resources with their meaning potentials to create new situated meanings in new situations.

A deafblind person and her partner communicate with the means available to them, which include real-world enactments, feeling real-world objects, iconic tactile gestures, tactile signs, direct bodily contact, vibrations (and some speech, if the deafblind person has some hearing ability). They exploit a whole configuration of semiotic resources in their dynamic, embodied interaction. In fact, sighted and hearing people normally do so too, when we meet face-to-face (Goodwin, 2000). However, we often pay little attention to this fact, because we have been indoctrinated to believe that dialogue basically equals verbal language.

Therefore, the study of sense-making activities in communication involving persons with disabilities is a corrective to the wide-spread individualism in psychology and other sciences, and in modernity at large.<sup>11</sup> It goes against the idea of the autonomous subject, illustrated here by the dependence of a "weak" participant on her scaffolding partner (her "other"). It also teaches us that language is not segregated from other modalities. Dialogue explains language, rather than the other way around.

Perhaps, there is in particular one other point about dialogue that these examples might elucidate. Actually, this point has two sides. One aspect concerns the very terms "dialogue" and "dialogical". It is not uncommon that outsiders assume that dialogical theories are about open, symmetrical, benevolent communication, with equal opportunities to participate, or about the norm to develop or sustain such communicative conduct. But dialogical theories are designed to account for all kinds of communicative and cognitive activities. As a matter of fact, communication almost always involves asymmetries of knowledge and participation. Obviously, our two last examples (5, 6) are strongly asymmetrical. But despite the asymmetrical division of communicative labour – the parties contribute in quite different ways – their contributions are largely complementary. For example, one party asks a question, the other provides an answer, and the two perhaps negotiate the adequacy of that answer etc. in what may be called a common "communicative project" (Linell, 2009). And dialogism should be capable of explaining also kinds of meaning-making that takes place under extreme (and often intolerable) asymmetrical conditions, e.g. in totalitarian regimes (Bråten, 2000, with references to the Holocaust and other historical examples) or in behaviourist conditioning.

It is said (Nafstad, pers. comm.) that in some cultures the congenitally deafblind are usually treated with (what can be seen as) methods of classical or operant conditioning. Even that could be described, using the tools of dialogical theories. But there is indeed another, "soft" side of dialogism, which concerns applied ethics and has engaged several dialogical thinkers, notably Buber, Bakhtin and Lévinas. This implies treating the other, perhaps an infant, a demented person or somebody with severe disabilities, as a significant other with a mind, that is, with some sense-making ability. What Gunnar seems to be doing constantly in the interaction with Ingrid is to be looking for signs of communicative agency, and trying to detect initiatives that could be exploited in developing her abilities. Treating the other as if she has a mind that goes beyond what she can actually achieve, or at least achieve by herself, is what Vygotsky, another outstanding dialogist, labels as expanding the "zone of proximal development". The other's will to understand the weaker partner, a listening attitude combined with guidance, provides the other with (a sense of having) mind, self and human dignity (Nafstad, forthc.).

## Interaction with minded bodies and cognitive artefacts.

Bakhtin opened up many avenues towards transcending texts and ordinary conversations in the exploration of human sense-making. The sense-making resources do not only re-

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<sup>11</sup> For another breath-taking example, see Goodwin's (2003) example of Chil, an aphasic person, who can produce only three verbal language items: "yes", "no" and "and". Yet, he is able to communicate in a relatively sophisticated manner with partners who share parts of his communicative biography and know about his life experiences.



side in language and other abstract semiotic systems; there are also “material bearers of meaning” (Holquist, 1986: xii), for example, a person’s bodily gestures, as well as objects in the world, and in particular artefacts designed to provide meaning. In modern, technologically saturated environments, these artefacts abound. Cognitive artefacts are tools for thinking, richly structured with diversified affordances for use, including both practical, non-communicative use and processes of meaning-making (texts, computers, computer systems, medical technology etc.). The anesthesia machine (Fig. 3) is an example:



Figure 3. The anesthesia machine (after Karsvall, 2010)

The anaesthesia machine, which is used during surgical operations, can show the patient’s heart rate, blood pressure, respiration, levels of oxygen and CO<sub>2</sub> retention, and levels of anaesthetics (computer controlled infusion pumps support the patient’s respiration and levels of intravenous analgesia and inhalation gases). The machine is used for checking many different values, and is designed to provide alarm signals, but it is also used as a shelf for instruction lists, pagers, books, etc. (see Fig. 3).

This machine is vital, but it provides meaning only when read off and used by human sense-makers. The meaning potential, or affordances, of the machine are socially created and sustained; professionals have learnt how they can use and make sense of the machine in context.

Written, printed or computer-borne texts are also artefacts, but they belong to another sphere than anesthesia machines. Text reading often focuses on the artefact itself, the text with its affordances of meaning, some of which are detached from situations (texts can be about anything). Therefore, written texts may promote a textual, literate bias and an “objective” conceptualisation of meaning; literacy supports objective conception of communicative content.

But Bakhtin advised us not to study texts merely as verbal texts with content, but as resources used by human beings in different contexts. The novel is an advanced written artefact replete with text-internal dialogicality (intertextuality, interaction within the text and with other texts). But there is also interaction between the text and its reader, driven by the reader’s efforts for understanding.

Only responsive understanding by humans provide texts with meaning. This points us away from texts as closed entities, but also from the individual as an information-processing mechanism. It points to the embodied mind interdependent with others and with contexts and interactions.

## Some conclusions

We have a kind of literate bias in our culture. Verbal language, particularly written, literate language are central. And indeed, they deserve this position, as they have profoundly changed human existence. But we have also acquired a written-language-biased conception of language itself, including spoken language (Linell, 2005). This has made us partly blind to the multi-modalities in dialogue in interaction, and to the fact that language evolves in the context of pre-linguistic interaction and even pre-semiotic sense-making. What we saw in (6) is just a more extreme case; "normal" children also learn in partly the same ways, but much more quickly and more easily, supported and scaffolded as they are by the surrounding linguistic culture.

Bakhtin was, first and foremost, a literary scholar. He was concerned with, for example, multi-voiced texts. Seen from today's perspective, one may contend that he was also subject to a literary bias. Indeed, I ventured to suggest earlier that he was not always sufficiently dialogical.

But that is of course not the whole truth. Bakhtin dealt successfully with the predicaments of oral utterances (*Speech Genres*), he emphasised the role of prosodies (accentuation and reaccentuation), and role of the body (Cresswell & Teucher, 2008), etc. Beyond that, in a whole range of areas that he actually did not deal with, and could not possibly have dealt with (for example, video-analysis), he still functions as a source of inspiration.

Dialogism is, by its very nature, interdisciplinary. Although interdisciplinarity is often resisted, defied and combated by academic establishments, the problems and issues of life, mind and society, and the physical world, are not disciplinarily organised. Language is a good example. It is not just an abstract system; it comprises languaging ("language use, linguistic practices"), actions and activities, "speech genres" and communicative activity types, and many other resources for sense-making, including living bodies and objects in the environment (Goodwin, 2000). Therefore, language sciences comprise more than linguistics: pragmatic theories of languaging, parts of philosophy, psychology, sociology, anthropology, biology, computer sciences, arts and literature. Bakhtin and later dialogists, many of them in their empirical studies, have shown us why.

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# Text and Dialogism in the Study of Collective Memory

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## Abstract

Bakhtinian ideas about text and dialogism provide important tools for bringing order to the otherwise chaotic and fragmented field of collective memory studies. While the definition of collective remembering may remain unsettled at this point, some appreciation of the range of options can be derived by situating discussions in terms of the contrast between strong and distributed versions of collective remembering. Building on the notion of semiotic mediation and associated claims about a distributed version of collective remembering, Bakhtin's notion of dialogically organized text is invoked. The fact that the "language system" envisioned by Bakhtin includes the dialogical orientations of generalized collective dialogue as well as standard grammatical elements means that it introduces an essential element of dynamism into collective remembering.

The study of collective memory has recently got a new lease on life as scholars from a range of disciplines bring their efforts to bear on it. It has been examined by sociologists (e.g., Schudson, 1992), anthropologists (e.g., Cole, 2001), psychologists (e.g., Pennebaker & Gonzalez, 2009; Schacter, Gutchess, & Kensinger, 2009), historians (e.g., Blight, 2009; Winter, 2009), and others, but the dearth of interdisciplinary collaboration remains striking. Publications by psychologists that purport to cover the general topic of human memory often include no mention of Halbwachs or any other figure outside psychology or neuroscience who has studied collective forms of remembering. Conversely, it is not hard to find treatments of collective memory by historians or sociologists that show little knowledge of the psychology of individual memory. In some cases, to be sure, authors have made an effort to draw on ideas and findings from a range of fields, but the constraints of disciplinary discourse remain striking.

The possibilities for interdisciplinary collaboration on collective memory will remain just that—possibilities—until some powerful means for intellectual synthesis is brought to bear, and this is one reason for invoking the ideas of Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin. As I shall outline below, his intellectual vision provides a powerful framework within which interdisciplinary cross fertilization can occur. A second reason for bringing him into the picture concerns an issue that plagues many discussions of collective memory, namely the tendency to consider it to be some sort of vague presence that is "just out there" in the cultural ether. This is what I have called a "strong" version of collective memory, an approach that stands in opposition to a more realistic and theoretically grounded "distributed" version. As the father of modern psychological studies of memory Frederic Bartlett (1932) pointed out, strong versions commit the error of focusing on memory *of* the group rather than restricting themselves to memory *in* the group. These versions assume that some sort of collective mind or consciousness exists above and beyond the minds of the individuals in a group.

As I have argued elsewhere (Wertsch, 1998, 2002), several variants of the distributed version of collective memory exist, but they are similar in that: a) the representation of the past is viewed as being shared by members of a group, while b) no commitment is made to a collective mind of the sort envisioned in a strong version of collective memory.

The key to avoiding the pitfalls of a strong version of collective memory is *mediation*, especially *semiotic mediation*, notions whose genealogy can be traced to several origins. In what follows, I shall rely primarily on the ideas of Lev Semënovich Vygotsky (1981, 1987) and Bakhtin (1986). From this perspective, humans are basically sign-using animals, and the forms of action in which we engage, especially speaking and thinking, involve an irreducible combination of an active agent and a cultural tool (Wertsch, 2002). In the parlance of contemporary cognitive science, human action, including speaking, thinking, and remembering, is “distributed” between agent and cultural tool and hence cannot be attributed to either one in isolation.

This is a line of reasoning that has been developed by figures such as Malcolm Donald (1991), who argues that the sort of semiotic mediation I have in mind emerged as part of the last of three major transitions in human cognitive evolution. This transition involved “the emergence of visual symbolism and external memory as major factors in cognitive architecture” (p.17). At this point in cognitive evolution the primary engine of change was not within the individual. Instead, it was the emergence and widespread use of “external symbolic storage” such as written texts, financial records, and so forth. At the same time, however, Donald emphasizes that the transition does not leave the psychological or neural processes in the individual unchanged: “the external symbolic system imposes more than an interface structure on the brain. It imposes search strategies, new storage strategies, new memory access routes, new options in both the control of and analysis of one’s own thinking” (p.19).

A major reason for introducing the notion of semiotic mediation, then, is that it allows us to speak of collective remembering without becoming committed to a strong version account. In this connection it is worth noting that although Halbwachs did not give textual mediation the degree of importance it would have in an analysis grounded in mediated action, he clearly did recognize it as a legitimate part of the story. In a striking parallel with Donald, he argued that “there is . . . no point in seeking where . . . [memories] are preserved in my brain or in some nook of my mind to which I alone have access: for they are recalled by me externally, and the groups of which I am a part at any given time give me the means to reconstruct them” (Halbwachs, 1992, p.38). In describing the collective memory of musicians Halbwachs fleshed this out in the following terms:

With sufficient practice, musicians can recall the elementary commands [of written notations that guide their performance]. But most cannot memorize the complex commands encompassing very extensive sequences of sounds. Hence they need to have before them sheets of paper on which all the signs in proper succession are materially fixed. A major portion of their remembrances are conserved in this form—that is, outside themselves in the society of those who, like themselves, are interested exclusively in music. (1980, p.183)

In analyzing such phenomena Halbwachs focused primarily on the role of social groups in organizing memory and memory cues and said relatively little about the semiotic means employed. In what follows, I place these semiotic means front and center. It is precisely this step that encourages us to talk about collective remembering without presupposing a strong version of it. Instead of positing the vague mnemonic agency that is a thread running through the members of a group, the claim is that collective memory is collective *because the members of a “mnemonic community” (Zerubavel, 2003) share the same basic set of semiotic resources.*

## Bakhtin’s account of text

This approach to collective remembering outlined begs the question of what forms of semiotic mediation might be involved. It is in this connection that I propose Bakhtin’s notion of “text.” In his article “The Problem of Text in Linguistics, Philology, and the

Human Sciences: An Experiment in Philosophical Analysis,” Bakhtin outlined “two poles” of text.

Each text presupposes a generally understood (that is, conventional within a given collective) system of signs, a language (if only the language of art) . . . And so behind each text stands a language system. Everything in the text that is repeated and reproduced, everything repeatable and reproducible, everything that can be given outside a given text (the given) conforms to this language system. But at the same time each text (as an utterance) is individual, unique, and unrepeatable, and herein lies its entire significance (its plan, the purpose for which it was created). . . With respect to this aspect, everything repeatable and reproducible proves to be material, a means to an end. The second aspect (pole) inheres in the text itself, but is revealed only in a particular situation and in a chain of texts (in the speech communication of a given area). (1986, p.105)

Bakhtin is well known for his theory of the utterance, a concern that is reflected in the assertion that the “entire significance [of a text] (its plan, the purpose for which it was created)” can be traced to its “individual, unique, and unrepeatable” pole. In what follows, however, I shall focus largely on the other pole of text, that concerned with “repeatable and reproducible” elements provided by a “language system” that is “conventional within a given collective.”

The first inclination of those influenced by ideas from contemporary linguistics would be to understand what Bakhtin called a “language system” in terms of morphology, syntax, and semantics. This, however, reflects a much more limited perspective than what Bakhtin had in mind. To be sure, his account of the repeatable and reproducible pole of text recognizes these elements, but it also includes a second level of organization in the “language system” and a corresponding second level of analysis. In this view the first level has to do with the structural analysis of decontextualized sentences and the second focuses on “social languages,” “speech genres,” and the “chain of texts” in which a text or utterance appears.

Formulating Bakhtin’s ideas in terms of a perspective more familiar to Western readers, Michael Holquist writes:

“Communication” as Bakhtin uses the term does indeed cover many of the aspects of Saussure’s *parole*, for it is concerned with what happens when real people in all the contingency of their myriad lives actually speak to each other. But Saussure conceived the individual language user to be an absolutely free agent with the ability to choose any words to implement a particular intention. Saussure concluded, not surprisingly that language as used by heterogeneous millions of such willful subjects was unstudyable, a chaotic jungle beyond the capacity of science to domesticate. (Holquist, 1986, p.xvi)

Accepting this stark Saussurean opposition means that learning a language is a process of mastering a set of rules of *langue*. Furthermore, it assumes that the appropriate use of language forms involves some combination of individual choice and cultural context. In short, issues of language use and of how utterances are shaped by their positioning in a “chain of texts” fall outside the framework of what is properly considered language.

Holquist (1986) emphasizes that one of Bakhtin’s insights was that the semiotic world need not be divided up so starkly as the *langue-parole* distinction suggests. In this regard Bakhtin wrote “the single utterance, with all its individuality and creativity, can in no way be regarded as a *completely free combination* of forms of language, as is supposed, for example by Saussure (and by many other linguists after him), who juxtaposed the utterance (*la parole*), as a purely individual act, to the system of language as a phenomenon that is purely social and mandatory for the individuum” (Bakhtin, 1986, p.81). Instead, as Holquist notes, “Bakhtin . . . begins by assuming that individual speakers do not have the kind of freedom *parole* assumes they have. The problem here is that the great Genevan linguist overlooks the fact that ‘in addition to the forms of languages there are also *forms of combinations* of these forms’” (1986, p.xvi)

What Bakhtin has to say about these forms of combinations of forms amounts to a call for a second level of analysis associated with the pole of text having to do with what is “repeated and reproduced.” It expands what needs to be taken into account when talking about a “language system” or “a generally understood (that is, conventional within a given collective) system of signs.” By taking these comments into account we are naturally led to ask a different set of questions about the semiotic mediation of collective remembering. In particular, we are led to recognize a form of dynamism in the forms of semiotic mediation involved, and hence in remembering itself.

The key to understanding the implications of Bakhtin’s insights is his concept of “dialogism” and the related notions of “voice” and “multivoicedness.” Throughout his writings Bakhtin emphasized that a defining property of utterances is that they exist only in dialogic contact with other utterances and hence are “filled with *dialogic overtones*” (1986, p.102). It is this dialogic contact that provides the key to understanding the second level of phenomena involved in Bakhtin’s second pole of text.

Key to understanding this issue is Bakhtin’s assumption that the word never belongs solely to the speaker; instead, is it always “half someone else’s” (1981, p.293), the result being the inherent multivoicedness of utterances.

[The word] becomes “one’s own” only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language (it is not after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his words!), but rather it exists in other people’s mouths, in other people’s concrete contexts, serving other people’s intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one’s own. (Bakhtin, 1981, pp.293–294)

When dealing with utterances from the perspective of Bakhtin’s first pole of text, contemporary sociolinguistic analyses have little trouble making sense of the phenomena involved. For example, his claims are consistent with analyses of how utterances can be co-constructed or how they can be abbreviated responses to a question (Speaker 1: “What time is it?” Speaker 2: “Two forty-five.”).

What is significant, however, is that Bakhtin saw the claim about how words being half someone else’s as applying to *language*—not text or utterance. And this raises the issue once again of a level of analysis that goes beyond the categories of *langue* and *parole*. Specifically, it involves a level of language phenomena that exist as collectively shared social facts about the organization of utterances, on the one hand, but are not reducible to standard accounts of grammatical categories, on the other.

In an attempt to get at what Bakhtin had in mind in this regard, it is useful to introduce a distinction between “local dialogue” and “generalized collective dialogue” (Wertsch, 2006). Local dialogue is what Bakhtin sometimes called the “primordial dialogism of discourse” (1981, p.275) and involves ways in which one speaker’s concrete utterances come into contact with, or “interanimate,” the utterances of another. This form of dialogic interanimation involves “direct, face-to-face vocalized verbal communication between persons” (Voloshinov, 1973, p.95) and is what usually comes to mind first when we encounter the term “dialogue.”

For Bakhtin, however, the voices of multiple speakers come into contact at the level of generalized collective dialogue as well, and this leads to additional ways in which words can be “filled with *dialogic overtones*” (1986, p.102). The notion of generalized collective dialogue has to do with ways that utterances may reflect the voice of others, including entire groups, who are not physically present in the immediate speech situation.

From his writings it is clear that Bakhtin had something like this distinction in mind. He viewed dialogue as ranging from the face-to-face primordial dialogue of discourse noted above, which falls under the heading of localized dialogue, to ongoing, potentially society-wide interchanges, which fall under the heading of generalized collective dia-

logue. An addressee can be “an immediate participant-interlocutor in an everyday dialogue, a differentiated collective of specialists in some particular area of cultural communication, a more or less differentiated public, ethnic group, contemporaries, like-minded people, opponents and enemies, a subordinate, a superior, someone who is lower, higher, familiar, foreign, and so forth. And it can also be an indefinite, unconcretized *other*” (Bakhtin, 1986, p.95).

## Dialogically organized textual resources and collective remembering

The approach to collective remembering outlined here gives central place to semiotic mediation. Specifically, it gives central place to dialogically organized textual resources as envisioned by Bakhtin. On the one hand, this means that memory cannot be equated, or reduced to semiotic mediation in isolation because the “individual, unique, and unrepeatable” pole of text ensures a role for an active agent in a concrete context. On the other hand, because the word always is “half someone else’s,” any account of the past reflects resources provided by a broader sociocultural setting, and as envisioned by Bakhtin these entail the tendency toward contestation, opposition, and other forms of dialogic encounter. Among the forms of dialogism suggested by his analysis, I shall focus on one in particular and its implications for collective remembering. This is what Bakhtin termed “hidden dialogicality.”

Imagine a dialogue of two persons in which the statements of the second speaker are omitted, but in such a way that the general sense is not at all violated. The second speaker is present invisibly, his words are not there, but deep traces left by these words have a determining influence on all the present and visible words of the first speaker. We sense that this is a conversation, although only one person is speaking, and it is a conversation of the most intense kind, for each present, uttered word responds and reacts with its every fiber to the invisible speaker, points to something outside itself, beyond its own limits, to the unspoken words of another person. (1984, p.197)

As an illustration of the implications of hidden dialogicality for collective remembering, consider the analysis that Tulviste and Wertsch (1994) have provided of official and unofficial history in Soviet Estonia. They argue that the emergence of unofficial history among ethnic Estonians derived from precisely the kind of dynamic outlined by Bakhtin. In this case the two voices involved were the Soviet authorities and the historical narrative they produced in public institutions such as schools, on the one hand, and the responses produced by ethnic Estonians in nonpublic spheres such as families and peer groups, on the other.

These responses were grounded largely in personally meaningful observations of individuals, but they were shaped by the textual resources provided by the culture of resistance in which they lived. Specifically, the textual resources they shared were largely organized around an effort to rebut the official Soviet account. This tendency that was so central that unofficial collective remembering consisted of little other than counter narratives whose driving force was the need to refute official accounts of the past.

This case illustrates several of the points made above about collective remembering. First, it reveals a kind of dynamism, something that is all the more striking given that it existed in a setting where state authorities tried to stamp out resistance and contestation. Second, this dynamism is not something that can be reduced to individual processes. Instead, there was consistency among members of the Estonian mnemonic community in their account of unofficial history, something that points to the shared textual resources that helped constitute this community of resistance. And third, the dynamism involved in the hidden dialogue between official and unofficial history was made possible, indeed, was almost built into, the semiotic resources employed. The Bakhtinian “language sys-



tem” that was involved included repeated and reproducible elements, but these went far beyond grammatical organization and introduced politically situated voices that invited resistance, rebuttal, and other forms of dialogic encounter.

A final feature of the forms of semiotic mediation involved in this episode of collective remembering is that they operated in a largely unconscious manner. In such instances, individuals often state that they are simply reporting “what really happened.” That is, they assume a form of semiotic mediation that recognizes the relationship between signs and a referential world of events and objects, but overlook the degree to which the textual resources employed are dialogically situated and shaped. The result is that we often fail to recognize the extent to which collective remembering is a fundamentally political process that is shaped by the dialogic textual resources employed. Hidden dialogism is indeed hidden and can lead to rigid and implacable confrontation when two parties both present what they honestly take to be accounts of “what really happened.”

## Conclusion

In sum, Bakhtinian ideas about text and dialogism provide important tools for bringing order to the otherwise chaotic and fragmented field of collective memory studies. While the definition of collective remembering may remain unsettled at this point, some appreciation of the range of options can be derived by situating discussions in terms of the contrast between strong and distributed versions of collective remembering.

I have argued that Bakhtin’s ideas provide a useful framework for integrating studies across disciplines and for avoiding some of the reductionist, strong versions of collective memory analysis that emerge all too easily, often in implicit form. Building on the notion of semiotic mediation and associated claims about a distributed version of collective remembering, Bakhtin’s notion of dialogically organized text was introduced. The fact that the “language system” envisioned by Bakhtin includes the dialogical orientations of generalized collective dialogue as well as standard grammatical elements means that it introduces an essential element of dynamism into collective remembering. It is this element that helps account for the dynamic political dimension of collective remembering and how it might change over time.

# *Language and Thought*



# Reclaiming the Mind: Dialogism, language learning and the importance of considering cognition

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## Introduction

In this paper, I will discuss one particular contribution of dialogical thinking to linguistic analysis, namely the mutually inclusive relationship between ‘social’ and ‘cognitive’. In my discussion, I will draw upon Bakhtin (1986) and his dialogical and ‘interpersonal’ interpretation of this relationship, but I will also bring in Voloshinov’s (1973) arguments that highlight the ways in which the ‘societal’ and ‘ideological’ aspects intertwine with aspects of the human ‘psyche’. I will approach the issue from the point of view of language learning and language education, and aim to show that the social approach is basically commensurable with the cognitive one and that they are, in fact, both needed in order to capture what ‘learning’). However, it is clear that the dichotomy (social vs. cognitive) itself needs rethinking.

Participating in the metatheoretical discussion of the language learning research, I will discuss and propose a dialogically oriented socio-cognitive perspective. First, dialogism argues that both social and cognitive aspects are co-present in language use. Duly, language learning can be seen as a socio-cognitive process (see also Dufva, 1998, 2004, forthcoming; Salo 1998; Atkinson, 2002). Second, to understand language learning we need to consider how the learners participate in the social languaging and appropriate the socially available semiotic resources. Hence, to arrive at a theory of language learning, both the ‘externally’ observable (ie. what we usually call social) and the ‘internally’ relevant (ie. what we usually call cognitive) aspects should be considered.

Within linguistics in general, but also in the field of language learning research in particular, the socially oriented and cognitively oriented positions have been alternating from one extreme position – from radical cognitivism to radical social constructionism – to another. While a strongly asocial approach – radical cognitivism – was deeply engraved in the arguments of the Chomskyan era, the socially oriented approaches now seem to have the strongest position. Bearing in mind that also dialogism suggests a socially oriented position, I will particularly address the question of why this does not exclude cognition and why it is important to re-consider cognitive issues<sup>1</sup>.

The dialogical arguments took a long time to be considered in linguistics, but today the work of Bakhtin – and also that of Voloshinov – is well known (see, e.g., Lähteenmäki 2001; Linell 1998; Dufva 2003). To understand the relationships between cognition, communication and language use, the oeuvre of Ragnar Rommetveit is most crucial (e.g. Rommetveit 1972, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1998, 2003). As to the issue of language learning in particular, Bakhtin’s (2004) paper on teaching stylistics is the only contribution directly concerned. Hence, in order to outline a metatheoretical framework of language learning,

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one needs to recontextualise the issues that Bakhtin and Voloshinov wrote about and also, to consider those they did not. In the area of language learning and teaching, Bakhtinian ideas have not been much discussed yet (see, however, Hall, Vitanova & Marchenkova eds. 2005; Ball & Freedman, eds. 2004). Often Bakhtinian arguments are combined – justly – with Vygotskian and socio-cultural views (see, e.g. Wertsch 1990; Wells 1999; Johnson 2004; Lantolf & Thorne 2006).

## The object of linguistic analysis: Cognitive or social – visible or invisible?

In linguistics, one can often distinguish between the social and the cognitive<sup>2</sup> camps. The underlying assumption of one camp is that language is a phenomenon residing in the individual mind (or, in the brain) while the other assumes that it is to be found in the characteristics and events of the social world (e.g. in the interaction or discursive practices). These two radically different approaches embed different understandings of the object of linguistic analysis. While the cognitive views have often regard language as a (basically) unobservable property of the linguistic component of the mind and/or partly observable by techniques accessing the human brain, the socially oriented views analyze aspects of language that are audible and/or visible, that is, either linguistic products such as ‘texts’ or recorded and transcribed events of ‘interaction’.

An analysis of manifest, observable features of language use is of course something that needs to be done. It is a great merit of the socially oriented research that it has succeeded – at least partly – in breaking the tradition of theoretical linguistics where the focus was almost entirely on the syntactic analysis of sentences invented by the linguists themselves (for criticism, see e.g. Dufva 1992). However, in focusing only on the external, manifest aspects of language use and their description, the socially oriented researchers sometimes have expressed a view that these aspects are more “real”. This view often seems to entail an assumption that the hidden aspects (ie. those events and processes that can be said to take place in a person’s mind) cannot be studied in a reliable fashion and that to study them is less relevant, or perhaps totally futile.

The approaches that aim at understanding the invisible and inaudible aspects of human languaging are, evidently enough, more hypothetical in nature. In spite of the recent endeavours of cognitive science and neuroscience, the workings of the mind are – in many important aspects – just intelligent guesses. Being less observable and less easily articulated by language users themselves, they make the linguistic analysis partly guesswork. However, this is not a reason to leave them unstudied.

In discussing cognition, a careful distinction must be made between the traditional, Cartesian/Chomskyan views of cognition (here: ‘cognitivism’) and the new, non-Cartesian formulations (here: ‘socio-cognitive view’). Thus ‘cognitivism’ drew on the Cartesian rationalist epistemology, cognitive psychology and Chomskyan mentalist linguistics. When Chomskyan paradigm was turned into empirical studies in second and foreign language studies (SLA, second language acquisition), the social and cultural aspects of learning were mostly ignored or given a secondary position. As the studies focused on analyzing the learner’s productions and/or results in psycholinguistic tasks, little or no attention was given to analyzing the social interaction by which the learner’s output was part of or how various social and institutional factors influenced the learning outcomes. The conceptualization of language learning (whether L1 or L2) was highly individualist and cognitivist in nature.

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<sup>2</sup> The scope of this paper does not allow a thorough discussion of the concept of ‘cognition’. My understanding of ‘cognition’ is close to those expressed within such frameworks as ‘distributed cognition’ (see, e.g., Linell 2009; Cowley 2009).

Between 1960s and 1990s there were few other voices only, those of the ‘dissidents’ seeking alternatives to Chomskyan notions and searching for a ‘non-cognitivist’ perspective. One important figure here was Ragnar Rommetveit (see Rommetveit 1972, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1998) who discussed dialogical arguments and spoke for a ‘hermeneutic psycholinguistics’ as an alternative to the Chomskyan one. Rommetveit urged the research community to recognize the importance of ‘meaning’ and ‘function’ in the linguistic analysis and pointed out that communication is ‘negotiation of meaning’, not ‘transfer of information’. During the high time of the Chomskyan era, he spoke for the recognition of ‘social and cultural context’. Rommetveit’s views that take into account both the social events of interaction and the psychological aspects of the participants therein are thus highly relevant in further developing the new socio-cognitive frameworks.

When we come to the contemporary scene of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it seems that the cognitivist approaches have been all but replaced by various socially oriented research paradigms: a ‘social turn’ has taken place (see, e.g., Block 2001). There are various means for the analysis of language use from a social point of view, such as ethnomethodology, conversation analysis, discursive approaches (e.g. critical discourse analysis, nexus analysis, multimodal discourse analysis) and so on. As a result, much data has been gathered on how authentic interaction is like, not only in everyday talk in general, but also in contexts involving learning and education (e.g. classroom interaction; native-non-native interaction; second language interaction). Some studies involve dialogical arguments (e.g. Linell, 1998). Further, we also have substantial data on what kinds of discourses may be used, e.g., in the context of learning and education.

Thus the current wealth of data we have on, e.g. social events, structures or discourses helps us to understand different social aspects of language learning and language education. The socially-driven directions justly give emphasis to the fact that it is all-important to analyse the social aspects of language use, whether these be the macro-level societal circumstances or the micro-level instances of actual interaction. However, more often than not, these directions leave the ‘invisible’ and ‘inaudible’ aspects out of their analysis so that individuals’ beliefs, intentions and goals are not considered.

Below, I will use the term ‘socio-cognitive’ for a view where the two are seen as reciprocal and mutually inclusive angles of human meaning-making and also, language learning. Here, I will draw upon the dialogical arguments of both Bakhtin and Voloshin and suggest that these imply a ‘socio-cognitive’ view that basically dissolves the distinction between what we have seen as ‘social’ and ‘cognitive’.

## Social and cognitive viewpoints: Commensurable or not?

As suggested above, the contemporary linguistic studies embed very different positions as to how they treat the issue of social vs. cognitive. Hence, social and cognitive may be seen as purely different research foci (e.g. ‘in the mind’ vs. ‘in the interaction’), different methodological commitments (e.g. the arguments constraining the collection and analysis of one’s data), or, ultimately, different epistemological and ontological commitments (e.g. how the concepts of ‘social’ and ‘cognitive’ and their relationship are considered). Below, I will argue that the extreme poles of this continuum (that is, individualist cognitivism and radical social constructivism) are not tenable in conceptualizing language learning.

First, the individualist cognitivism that was typical of Chomskyan thinking, psycholinguistics and early SLA research, saw language learners as autonomous rationalist agents (for a criticism of cognitivist views, see Dufva, 1998). Further, although the notion of *input* played a role (even if a secondary one) in the theorizing, the process of language learning was most commonly explained without any reference *to the actuality of the situations or the kind of language* that is used in these situations and the main role in

learning was fundamentally given to the innate faculties that were supposed to determine the first language acquisition and influenced in the acquisition of second and third languages. So the theory argued that language learners abstracted the structures present in the input and internalized this knowledge from *outside to inside*. However, there are reasons to challenge both the formalist and decontextual conceptualization of language (Makoni & Pennycook, eds. 2007; Dufva et al. forthcoming) and the theory of learning as a transfer of information from the ‘outside’ to the ‘inside’. Both claims will be shortly discussed also in this paper.

Second, it can be argued that also the other extreme – where language use is often described as ‘socially constructed’ or ‘produced’ – also fails in explaining language learning. If this extremist position is taken, language users will be seen as mere puppets on a string, at the mercy of social forces (for criticism, see e.g. Linell 1998). The ethnomethodologically oriented conversation analysts have often quoted Sacks (1992) saying that in analyzing interaction, it is important “just try to come to terms with how it is that the thing comes off”, at the same time regarding beliefs, intentions, and thoughts of the participants as less important or non-important. Further, the radical social constructionist views, such as expressed within discursive psychology, for example, often suggest that ‘mental’ phenomena (attitudes, memory, intentions) are essentially, perhaps exclusively, discursively constructed (e.g. Edwards & Potter 1992). Thus one finds arguments that it is possible to analyse the observable discourse “without assuming any particular version of cognition, or *even that cognition...is taking place at all*” (Potter 2006:138, italics the present author’s).

It is of course possible to read these comments as indicating just that a certain research focus is chosen or a certain methodology is more appropriate. However, if one is to take seriously the comments about the unimportant role of cognition, the radical social position seems equally misled. For conceptualizing learning this would seem to indicate another dead end. While cognitivists postulated the learning process in the black box in the learner’s mind, the radical constructivists regard the learners as puppets at the mercy of interaction and discourses constructed on the spot. If interaction is seen exclusively constructed – in the situation – radical social approaches do not seem to allow a possibility of the development in any true sense of the word. Thus we also need to consider those practices and elements that language users are able to transfer or repeat from one situation to another. In other words, the theory needs to be completed by adding the concept of development over time.

The question remains then whether a dialogue is possible between the social and cognitive approaches particularly in the context of language learning. It seems evident that both anti-social and anti-cognitive arguments, particularly in their extreme forms of Chomskyan mentalism and radical social constructivism need to be rejected. However, it needs to be noted that the dialogical alternative proposed here does not refer merely to a research design where *both* individual factors and the social factors are considered. The dialogical arguments of Bakhtin and Voloshinov refer to a deeper interpretation of socio-cognitivity that speaks for the mutual inclusion between the social, observable processes and the cognitive, unmanifest ones.

## Dialogism: A sociocognitive perspective of learning

It is clear that both Bakhtin and Voloshinov acknowledges the social origin of knowledge and awareness. The dialogical epistemology speaks of other-orientedness. Already the concept of ‘dialogue’ itself implies an emphasis on intersubjectivity. Neither human consciousness nor human knowledge are understood as individual, if the word is used in its Cartesian, rationalist sense. As Bakhtin (1984, p. 81; p. 88) argues, humans achieve consciousness by looking themselves ‘through the eyes of another person’ and remain connected with other people by sharing thoughts – which are thus not purely individual.

Thus also our beliefs about and positions to the task of language learning are partly individual, partly of social origin and shared (Aro 2009). The Bakhtinian perspective that puts emphasis on the interpersonal and social nature of knowing can serve as one starting point for a theory of language learning. In more concrete terms, this would mean that we start from analyses of social events, such as interaction.

However, as Suni (2008) has shown in her analysis of native – non-native speaker interaction, the focus needs not to be constrained to the external language use. It is possible to consider interaction as a cognitively shared scene where the native speaker shares her resources with the learner and provides the learner opportunities for learning. Thus the sociocognitive argument implies that it is important to aim at analyzing the events of language use holistically, and to try to understand not only how “the thing comes off”, but also, making hypotheses as to the processes that may underlie the observable events.

Thus one way of gaining a socio-cognitive understanding is to analyse social interaction. Another approach may be found in the analysis of the factors that have to do with the learners’ predispositions to learning. Thus it is relevant to study learners and their psychological worlds – with e.g. all kinds of knowledge, beliefs and attitudes. Language learners are not to be seen as anonymous learners of anonymous languages (L2, L3) as the cognitivist view would have it but neither are they anonymous participants in a conversation. The sociocognitive view implies that learners are social agents who live in particular circumstances and participate particular situations on one hand, but that they are also individual agents in the sense that they have their particular experiences and particular life span.

This socio-cognitive view language users seems to be in accordance with Bakhtin’s (1993) emphasis of seeing people as *persons*, a view that would seem to indicate that they are not nameless language users but particular people having particular points of view, predispositions, goals and intentions. Dialogism suggests that each person has a unique position in time and place and (Bakhtin, 1993). Hence, also as language users, we both draw upon the particular social resources available and explore the world from our unique perspective.

The socio-cognitive view thus embraces both the uniqueness of persons as language users and their on-going connectedness with their social world (see also Pietikäinen & Dufva 2006). The reciprocity of cognitive and social worlds (‘psyche’ and ‘ideology’) was also discussed by Voloshinov (1973). In stressing the importance of such ‘external’ factors as the cultural and historical development of the class society, he – similarly to Bakhtin – acknowledges that the self’s particular life and his personal and felt experiences are important (Voloshinov 1973:35). Voloshinov (1973:39) points out that ‘psyche’ and ‘ideology’ are involved in the continuous semiotic interplay that is mutually inclusive and mutually erasive. In a sense, what is socially available (in the language use at large) becomes individually accessible and what is individually ‘possessed’ can be made public and socially shared in talk and writing.

Thus the arguments of both Bakhtin and Voloshinov suggest a position that transcends the social vs. cognitive antinomy. The gap between socially and cognitively oriented research traditions needs to be bridged. One solution is to redefine the relationship between ‘social’ and ‘cognitive’, or, better, to redefine the words themselves. As I see it, the dialogical arguments say that human action is always ‘social’ and ‘cognitive’ at the same time. Thus the word ‘social’ does not exclude ‘cognition’, but rather, needs to be understood in the sense the Bakhtinian, never-ending dialogue, or in the sense of the constant in-between semiosis suggested by Voloshinov (1973).

Similar mutual embeddedness between observable activity and non-observable cognitive activity is suggested by Vygotskian, sociocultural arguments. That is, our world is also a fundamentally and inherently a social world of human culture with its symbolic and material tools and artefacts. One of these artefacts, of course, is language. In other



words, sociocultural approaches indicate that there is no escape from the fundamental sociality – the fact that even as newborns, people enter into a social world that is largely given to him. To recontextualise, one could perhaps consider language learners as mindful social beings, both unique and interconnected, engaging in the endless processes of human semiosis. In this framework, social is not ‘external’ nor cognitive as ‘internal’. The semiosis is eventing that occurs in-between, in a relation.

## Conclusion

In this paper, I have suggested that a feasible framework for language use and language learning needs to involve both social and cognitive aspects. We need to reject the views that regard language learning as occurring “in the head” but we also must reject the views where it is seen as occurring in the discursive or interactive practices. Language learning occurs in the socio-cognitive processes in which language users are involved in different events of the social world. To accomplish a viable theory of how, precisely, this happens, we need to draw not only on dialogism but also on other frameworks that share the holistic view of man and recognize his fundamental connectedness with others and the social and physical world at large (see, e.g. van Lier 2004; Järvillehto 1998, Dufva, forthcoming).

I particularly aimed at pointing out that it is necessary to reclaim the mind, that is, to rethink the role of invisible aspects – ‘cognition’ in the widest sense of the word – in the analysis of language. For this, it is important to seek ways in which our understanding of the social events that accompany learning could be related with those aspects that may not be directly observable.

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# Atypically Displayed Intersubjectivity: Reformulating cognitive-communicative development from a Bakhtinian perspective

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The role of intersubjectivity in communication and cognitive development is a well documented phenomenon. It is of particular importance to scholars and practitioners who work in the area of atypical development because lack of or limited intersubjectivity has been associated with cognitive and affective delays (Junefelt, 2007; Ochs, Kremer-Sadlik, Siota & Soloman, 2004; Trevarthen & Aitken, 2001). The goal of this paper is to examine the concept of normal development as a 'voice' that becomes dialogic with exhibited differences rather than a biological progression. This reformulation of development from a Bakhtinian (Bakhtin, 1986) perspective allows for recognition of individual differences that makes possible diverse understandings about how intersubjectivity can be displayed.

## Biology, Culture and the Individual

Theories in the scientific literature as well as everyday narratives and scripts have emerged about what can be expected from individuals who develop atypically. The normative approach to documenting change, which represents the voice of science, often routinely becomes the basis of instructional practices. As such, they reflect in the Bakhtinian sense, the voice of education. These scientific and educational voices are commonly thought of as monologic and beyond dialogic engagement. Yet, they are challenged by families and individuals with cognitive-communicative differences who insist on positioning the personal in the dialogue. While the lived experiences and reflections of such families and individuals have value, a theoretical lens through which to focus issues such as intersubjectivity, developmental change, and human potential is not in place. A Bakhtinian perspective provides such a theoretical lens.

### *Biology*

There is little doubt that the biology of individuals with disabilities is different and that it is the role of psychology to map those differences. The work of Piaget became the major conceptual model for child development in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This was the basis for scales and observations used by professionals to map what an individual could and could not do (Uzgiris & Hunt, 1975). Since socio-emotional connection and communication are key developmental domains, the issue of intersubjectivity is a necessary part of a child's psycho-educational profile. It is, however, important to recognize that intersubjectivity encapsulated in this way might be all about divergence from neurotypical behavioral expectations. For example, asking a child what another individual thinks by looking at a series of stylized pictures leads to professionals to conclusions about theory of mind even though the decontextualized material rather than awareness that other people think reflects a neuropsychological position on atypical development.

## *Culture*

The expected developmental courses of children (e.g., when and how children come to socially smile, play and learn in formal school situations) becomes distributed through cultural artifacts such as books, charts, movies, and materials to parents and teachers. Increased standardization of expectations has coalesced into broader cultural systems through the use of technology that provides quick and easy access to such materials. In these ways a bio-educational cultural voice of child development has emerged in the Western world.

## *The Individual*

The voice of established practices leaves little room for dialogue about the process and nuances of development. This is quite evident when social institutions apply the 'norm' to children who are developing in atypical ways without attempting to shift to the perspective of families as a vital part of the assessment. This shift is essential since personally *experienced* development for individuals who manifest atypical development from the first year of life onward may be incomprehensible for others but not themselves or their families (Hagstrom, 2001). Those in close contact with the child quickly come to see him/her as s/he is rather than what s/he 'should' be as they engage in the daily negotiation of reaching intersubjectivity. Therefore the narrative of the child and family becomes prioritized over the establishment's perspective on future developmental possibilities.

## Revoicing Development from Theoretical Perspectives

The key issue that must be addressed by medical and educational specialists is that of change since it is the fundamental element of any development. While Piagetian theory provides details that can be converted to metrics of change within age-stage modeling (Uzgiris & Hunt, 1975), it does not provide the kind of knowledge or understanding needed to facilitate dynamic, interactional development. It is only by understanding specific theories and their elaborations as voices (Bakhtin, 1986) that this perspective on development can be explained and functionalized. Therefore, using Bakhtin's notions of dialogue and dialogicality provides the means to bridge developmental theories and weave them into a working position for the assessment and education of children experiencing atypical development (Junefelt, 2007).

## *Vygotsky and Werner: The individual and the world*

Vygotskian theory and Wernerian theory provide two ways of understanding child development that bring perspective to the ideas introduced by Piaget. Vygotskian theory emphasizes the social situatedness of individual mental functioning by addressing changes in regulation that occur within cultural activities that lead development (Wertsch, 1985). Change within this theory depends on 1) social others, 2) cultural activities such as play and formal schooling, and 3) shifts in regulation during the process of task mastery and appropriation. Units of analysis for these aspects of development is not limited to the individual but rather must include the social others in particular situations. These form a matrix for understanding the assistance provided and the reuse of this by the individual who is completing a task (Hagstrom, 2000). Aspects of Vygotskian theory have been increasingly incorporated into educational practices in the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century giving rise to an alternative (to Piaget) voice on development.

Just as Vygotsky did not adhere to age-stage models of development, neither did Werner (Werner & Kaplan, 1963). However, these two perspectives differed in important ways. Namely, while Vygotsky focused on the social and cultural roots of development,

Werner was concerned with the actual process of change. He theorized developmental change as a two step process of increased differentiation and hierarchical integration that occurs throughout the lifespan regardless of activity or content. Werner described changes in developmental steps as the process of an individual differentiating an aspect of life, focusing on this until it becomes clear, and then integrating understanding of this back into the whole, which then transforms prior understanding.

Each of these theories on human development comes with a particular world view, a particular ‘voice’ in the Bakhtinian sense, that scholars, practitioners, institutions and, through their materials and procedures, families and individuals come to view development.

## Research and clinical applications of theory for atypical development

Autism, a neurodevelopmental disorder, brings together theory and practices that bridge social communication and intersubjectivity. As such, the developmental theories addressed thus far in this paper coalesce in the research and clinical practice that surrounds this disorder.

### *Research*

Ochs et al. (2004) used Vygotskian theory as a basis for their research program on autism. This research is relevant to the current discussion because it illustrates how one tenet of that theory was differentiated and then hierarchically integrated (Werner & Kaplan, 1957) in such a way that the understanding of social others was transformed. Ochs et al. (2004) disembedded the concomitant social issues associated with high functioning autism or Asperberger’s into two dimensions when conducting ethnographic research. They purposed that ‘social’ can be understood as 1) interpersonal socialness and 2) socio-cultural socialness. The first describes communication that depends on the everyday shared use and interpretation of language, which is often part of assessment and educational programs. The more interesting case made by Ochs et al. (2004) is the parsing out of a second dimensions of socialness. They blended Hymes’ (1962) conception of language as being context sensitive knowledge with Lave and Wenger’s (1991) work on situated learning and legitimate peripheral participation to arrive at the notion of socio-cultural socialness. They suggest that this form of socialness concerns expectations about knowing, perceiving and engaging in conduct appropriate to specific social practices.

Recognizing two kinds of socialness allowed Ochs et al. (2004) to describe the social interactiveness of children and families in ways that went beyond the skills and actions of the individual, and to characterize autism communication differently on the two dimensions. Their position is particularly interesting with regard to atypically displayed intersubjectivity because while developing a new category for observation, they maintain a established ‘voice’ on the topic by saying, “Human beings are socialized to recognize and implement social practices, including their own and others expected roles, stances, and comportsment, all of which require socio-cultural perspective” (p. xx).

### *Clinical Practice*

Clinical practice rests on constructs that guide decision making. Certainly the developmental scales and observation systems outlined earlier in this paper are frequently used as assessment tools. However, the problem of how to facilitate the understanding of change for educators and specialists from the perspective of the person with atypical development is not possible when on-going assessment is limited to formal assessment tools.

Hagstrom (2004) used Wertsch’s mediated action, a Vygotskian concept, as well as his discussion of cultural tools (Wertsch & Rupert, 1994) to organize a functional indi-

vidual system (FIS) framework to guide clinical work with individuals with atypical development. (See Figure 1.) Three interdependent systems, the physical, cultural and social, are understood as continuously influencing each other during the developmental process. Thus rather than focus simply on the physical differences associated with different patterns of atypical development, the framework provides a guide for teachers, social service workers and parents to think about what tools created and passed down by people to people (cultural) are used during interactions with others (social). The framework is designed to help practitioners recognize that action taking place during any particular interaction, regardless of biological/neurological determinates, remains social and cultural. In other words, it remains in Wertsch's (1998) words, mediated action.

The cultural component of FIS uses the tools, e.g. things created by people and passed on to others, as the means by which individuals move through everyday life. Understanding the tools used (i.e., tangible, symbolic, animate) by individuals with atypical development and those with whom they interact allows for the adjustment of communication. In addition, describing a person's use of the tools as interpersonal action and/or social as socio-cultural situated action reveals the network of meanings (i.e., cultural dimension) that are being deployed by participants in intersubjective space. And lastly, the selection, manipulation and social negotiation of communication via tools allow others to "see" the agency of a thinking self in action.

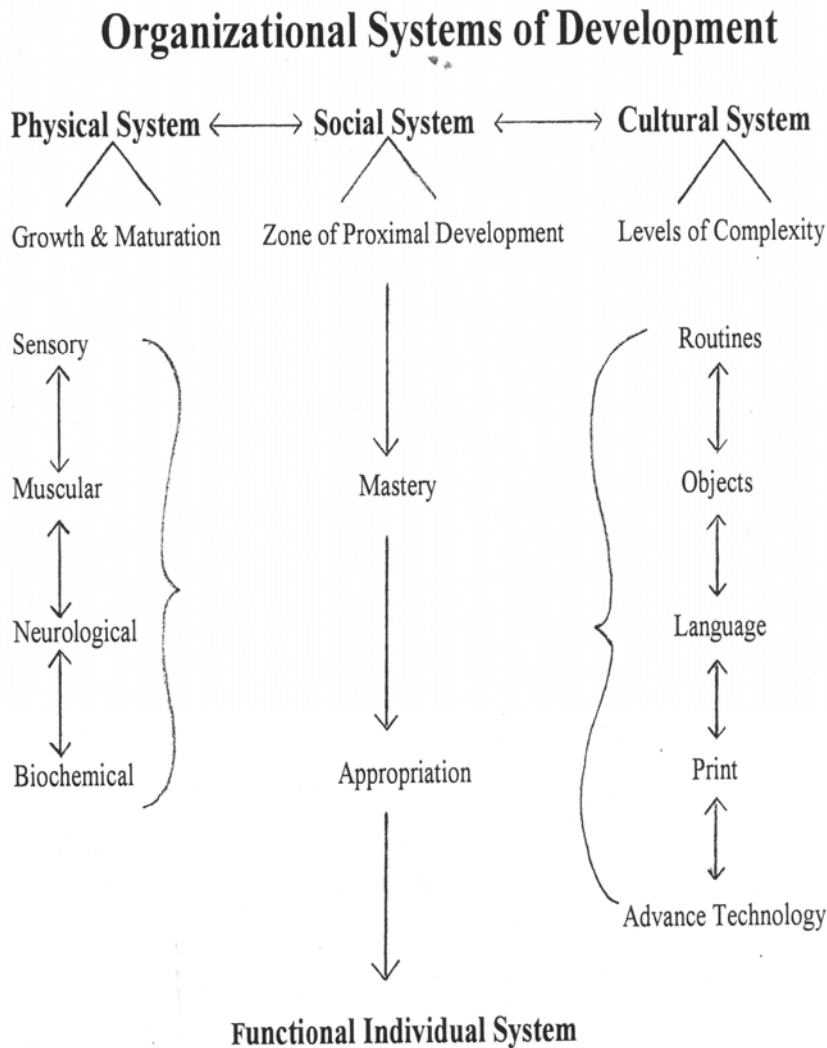
This notion of a thinking self is pivotal to the discussion of intersubjectivity and is fundamental to socialness (Hagstrom, 2001). The forms (or tools) used by individuals during social interpersonal action permit others to sense the self behind the act even when this socialness in the course of a socio-cultural situation violates conventions and developmental expectations of comportment. FIS brings another 'voice' to the use of developmental theory, in this case for clinical application.

## Bakhtin's Gift to Developmental Theory and Its Application

Part of the claim in this paper is that intersubjectivity may be experienced differently by those involved in everyday situations and may be observable if old ways of looking at intersubjectivity are imposed on the novelty of living with cognitive-communicative disabilities. Focusing on socialness from Ochs et al's (2004) two dimensions, the mutuality of emotional and communication engagement between mothers and their children, and the use of cultural tools as mediated action (Hagstrom, 2004; Wertsch, 1998) can assist in examining intersubjectivity as an important life-long journey.

A Bakhtinian perspective has the potential to bring together world views on the individual who is developing in atypical ways. By recognizing that developmental theories and the cultural artifacts, procedures and interpretations linked to this over time create cultural narratives about disability, researchers and practitioners can work to find ways to blend voices past and present. A Bakhtinian envelope for understanding atypical development allows for a future that recognizes the complexity of a life well lived with disabilities because these do not stand alone but are rather part of the dialogue and at the table of dialogicality in our world societies.

Figure 1. Functional Individual System



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# Speech Genres Used During Lunchtime

## Conversations of young children<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

To begin my talk, I would like to present a particular case to you. In the following excerpt 1, a child we shall call IB began to talk about a “Deka ranger [a giant ranger in a children’s TV show]” to the other children, who were sitting at the same table. They listened to him with enthusiasm.

Excerpt 1: A small discussion about Deka-rangers between three-year-old children at the table, during lunchtime.

- 1 IB (aged 43 months): “Listen to me, KG. In my home, my mother did, my house, I now what, I know what, When I was held by a monster in Disneyland, I know it, I know it, I cried and cried.” He then continued, while he covered his left eye, “because I really wanted to be held by a Deka-ranger.”
- 2 KG (aged 48 months): “Did you say ‘I wanted to be held by a Deka-ranger? I wanted to be held by a Deka-ranger?, I wanted to be held by a Deka-ranger?’”
- 3 IB: “I know it, I was held by a Deka-pink”
- 4 KG: “Uhm”
- 5 KG: “What about a Deka-green?”
- 6 IB: “I was held by him.”
- 7 RB (45 m.): “How about a Deka-blue?”
- 8 IB: “I was held by him.” (To be continued.)  
(Excerpt from Ishiguro, 2007)

To begin his story, IB told the other children, “When I was held by a monster in Disneyland, I cried and cried.” As he said this he covered his left eye; he then continued, “[I cried] because I really wanted to be held by a Deka-ranger.” Then, another child, who we shall call KG, asked for confirmation on the story, saying, “Did you say ‘I wanted to be held by a Deka-ranger?’” IB did not reply to the question; instead he said, “I was held by a Deka-pink [a pink version of the Deka-ranger]<sup>3</sup>.” KG asked IB about the Deka-green ranger, to which IB replied “I was held by him.” Another child, RB, then asked about the Deka-blue ranger, to which IB replied “I was held by him.” RB then asked about Robo (a robot from the same TV show), who is a member of one of the Deka-ranger families. IB replied, to this query with the phrase, “I was held by it.” The above question–answer sequences were possible only because the children had a base of shared knowledge on Deka-rangers.

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<sup>3</sup> The Deka-rangers come in a variety of colors: Deka- pink, Deka-green, Deka-blue, and so on.

## Research questions

The purpose of this study is to clarify the process through which young children acquire various kinds of speech genres. This study will clarify this issue by posing three research questions. The first aims to identify which speech genres are being used by the children during lunchtime discussions. The second compares the speech genres that are used in teacher-centered discourse to those that are used in child-centered discourse. The third considers the role of speech genres in the development of discourse.

## Language acquisition

What does language acquisition refer to? Ochs (1984) proposed a theory known as “language socialization.” In this theory, she criticizes the traditional understanding, which holds that the processes of language acquisition and socialization are two separate domains (p. 276). She claims that the process of language acquisition in children is part of a wider process of socialization that children undergo to become part of a particular community of practice. Dore (1995) insists that the phrase “language acquires children” is true. It is important that humans participate in the discourse of the world. The acquisition of language allows new members of a society to participate as legitimate members within that society. According to Vygotsky (1934), thinking is tantamount to an internal dialogue or internal speech. Therefore, language frames the user’s thinking. Even if language users wanted to resist the imposed thinking structure, it would be impossible, as they would always be affected by the language.

## Speech genre as unite of analysis

I propose that genre is an integrated category that includes both the cognitive and social aspects of language. Bakhtin asserts that “[e]ach separate utterance is individual, of course, but each sphere in which language is used develops its own, relatively stable, types of these utterances. These we may call speech genres”(Bakhtin, 1986, p. 60).

He also proposed that “the wealth and diversity of speech genres are boundless because the various possibilities of human activity are inexhaustible, and because each sphere of activity contains an entire repertoire of speech genres that differentiate and grow as the particular sphere develops and becomes more complex. Special emphasis should be placed on the extreme heterogeneity of speech genres (oral and written)” (Bakhtin, 1994, p. 60).

## Speech genre as a “fund of knowledge”

Young children can acquire various kinds of speech genre as “funds of knowledge” (Moll, 1992). These funds of knowledge are cultural artifacts, through which young children can create their ethnic identity (Riojas-Cortez, 2001). This means that young children must acquire the given speech genres, in order to become a full member of the community.

The earlier excerpt shows an instance where children were talking about invisible objects. The children were linked with each other, because the TV characters about which they were speaking were part of their shared “fund of knowledge.” Indeed, discussions that have previously occurred, for instance among the children’s families, teachers, and peers at nursery school are also often referred to by children.

## Meal time conversations at nursery school

The small discussions that took place during lunchtime at a Japanese nursery school are used as a data resource. This is based on the proposition that “mealtimes [function] as cultural sites for the socialization of persons into competent and appropriate members of a society” (Ochs & Sheet, 2006). In these situations there are two tasks that children need to engage with. One is to eat food, and the other is to conduct pleasant discussions with their companions. In a Japanese nursery school, a teacher is required to be present at meals, in order to guide the children’s eating behavior to ensure they are eating a balanced diet. A teacher usually intervenes if the children spend all their time talking to each other, without eating.

## Data

The data that was analyzed came from a longitudinal study on an existing cohort in a Japanese nursery school, focusing, in particular, on one male child. The lunchtime discussions of children from classes ranging from the infants to the six-year-olds were recorded by a video camera at regular intervals. In this study, I focused on one lunchtime activity per school year.

## Judgment of the speech genre

The categorization of speech genres is very difficult. Dore (1995) insists that “a genre in Bakhtin’s sense is a functional format for organizing content, style, and structure simultaneously.” The content is the topic which is at the center of the utterance. The style is the manner in which the topic has been represented. The structure refers to the compositional aspect of utterances. For example, a classroom lesson displays special features that have been identified as the IRE sequence by Mehan (1979). Dore proposes that the three elements can be separated. However, they combine into one dynamic gestalt, which is appropriate for the situation.

## Findings

Allow me to outline the main findings.

### *Speech genres*

In order to address the first and the second questions, 23 specific discourses gleaned from the children’s lunchtime discussions were categorized in the primary analysis. They were integrated into six clusters of speech genres. The three speech genres that have been allocated a pink color were examples of teacher-centered discourses. For example, in an instance of “promotion” discourse, under the “stimulation” genre, the teacher who was present said, “it’s [the food is] very delicious.” She emphasized this with exaggerated hand gestures. She then looked at the child who was eating.

The clusters of genres that have been labeled as green, represent child-centered discourses. In the “frisk” category of the “play” genre, kids giggled at each other. The topic was dull and the composition of words is very simple. The naming of the genres seems to be just decided by the topic only. But they are the discourses which refer to “the social event actualized by a series of utterances (Volosinov, 1929).”

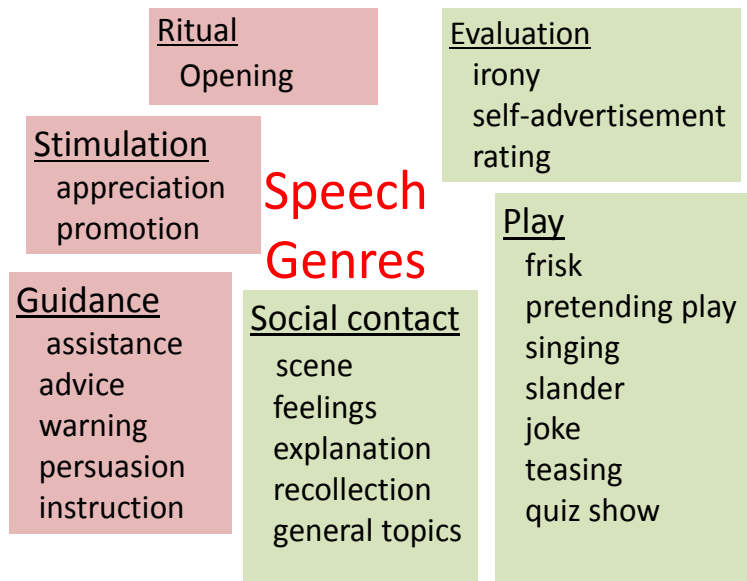


Figure 1: Speech Genres in the mealtime discourse

### *Speech genres in mealtime discourses*

The following figure represents the difference between the teacher-centered discourses and the child-centered discourses. The vertical line represents the class age. For example, 1 refers to the class of the one-year-olds. Most teacher-initiated discourses were strongly related to children's eating behavior, this means that they adopted the pedagogical genres of stimulation, guidance, and evaluation. In terms of the discourses that were conducted between peers, these rarely focused on an eating event. In the child-centered discourses, playful activity and social contact were popular foci for the children. In a sense, each teacher was engaged in the task of persuading the children to eat. On the other hand, the children were concerned with enjoying themselves during lunchtime. It is clear that different tasks lie behind the adult-centered discourses, than lie behind the child-centered ones.

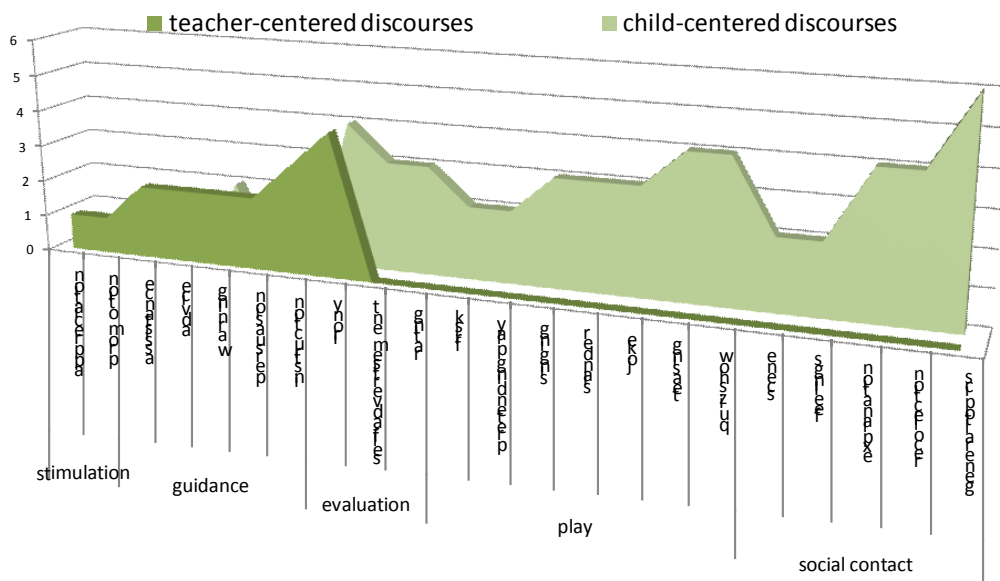


Figure 2: Teacher-centered and child-centered in mealtime discourse.

Note: The area in the figure does not indicate the amount of appearance of each discourse. The line graph refers only to the appearance of the discourse in the age.

I would like to take this opportunity to again emphasize that the genre is not judged by the function or form of the utterance. A teacher may use an ironical expression while using the speech genre of evaluation. For instance a nursery teacher will usually say, “Wouldn’t you like to play with your toys after lunch?” This implies “eat rapidly.” However, when children use these kinds of ironical expressions with their peers, the contextual meaning of the utterance is shifted into one of teasing. The same expression can fall under different speech genres. Any expression can be modified by the mimicking person, and thus will fall into a new speech genre.

## Discussion

The asymmetrical structure of the figure indicates that the children did not immediately appropriate the speech genres that were used by their nursery teachers.

The speech genres that the teacher-centered discourses fall into and those that the child-centered discourses fall into, vary according to the tasks that are undertaken by the speaker during lunchtime. This implies that speech genres are closely connected to activity. It is clear then, that preschool children have already acquired a rich repertoire of speech genres.

Recollected discourse is highly creative; this is because children do not talk only about remembered facts, but they also add a narrative frame around them. Their conversations can reveal the nature of their cognitive frames or models that they are using to represent the world.

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# The Dialogic Impact on Early Language Development and Thought

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## Introduction

The aim of the present study is to incorporate Bakhtinian and Voloshinovian theories into studies on child language. Even if neither Bakhtin nor Voloshinov were concerned with childrens' speech, their work on dialogism offers new insights into childrens' linguistic, cognitive, and identity development.

Already in the womb of the mother the child can listen to dialogues from the outside world. Immediately after birth the child is exposed to dialogues with others. These dialogues are means of expressing loving care, but also dialogues as means of making the child part of a specific sociocultural group, linguistically as well as cognitively.

In early socialization the creation of an intersubjective situation definition of a specific activity plays a major role in making the child share the the intersubjective situation definition as to world view, values and norms of a specific socioculture. This is typically done by dialogues between the caregiver and the child. In the early socialization process the child is implicitly or explicitly taught how to perform a certain activity – by technical tools or psychological tools. The child is also taught – implicitly or explicitly – the language of the socioculture, body language as well as verbal language, what to be said or not to be said in certain activities, and how an expression or an utterance should be uttered, and supposed to be understood in different activities. During these activities in the socialization process caregivers tend to praise their children when their children's behaviors are in accordance with the caregivers' sociocultural intersubjective situation definition of certain behaviours in specific activities, and regulate the children, when something, from the adults' perspectives, should be altered with regard to the socioculture's worldview, values and norms.

In the present study, empirical data of video recorded sessions of American, Estonian and Swedish mothers interacting with their two year old children during meal time and puzzle solving will serve as arguments for the importance of considering dialogues for childrens' linguistic, cognitive, and identity development, although only the mothers' contribution to the dialogue were considered.

## Theoretical background

The theoretical background of the present study is based on works by Vygotsky (1978, 1987) as to *language and thought*; Bakhtin (1981, 1984, 1986), Voloshinov (1973) as to *dialogue, dialogicality, genre, and thought*; Rommetveit (1979, 1985), Trevarthen (1977) and Hubley and Trevarthen (1979) as to *intersubjectivity*, and Bakhtin (1986) as to *alterity*.

### *Language and thought*

Vygotsky (1987) considered the child's linguistic and cognitive development from the perspective of three notions or stages: interpsychological function, egocentric speech and intrapsychological function. He started with an *interpsychological function*, which easiest can be described as communication with others. Then he continued with *egocentric speech*, which he regarded to be a sign of that the child's thought not yet had been internalized, and thus not had reached an *intrapsychological function*, or thought.

In this developmental process Vygotsky regarded the mediational means, *technical tools*, such as a spoon, and *psychological tools*, or semiotic signs, for instance, spoken language or written language, to be of outmost importance for the child's linguistic and cognitive development.

Vygotsky also differentiated between four stages in the child's development. The first stage he regarded as primitive and natural. The second stage was characterized by the child's experience of her/his body and objects in the environment. The third stage was characterized by egocentric speech, where the child used regulations by others to regulate her or himself when solving a problem. The fourth stage Vygotsky called the "ingrowth" stage. That stage was characterized by self-regulations.

Vygotsky (1978:39) stated that: "The central characteristic of elementary functions is that they are totally and directly determined by stimulation from the environment. For higher functions, the central feature is self-generated stimulation, that is, the creation and use of artificial stimuli which become the immediate causes of behavior." He considered communication with others to be the basis for the childrens' linguistic and cognitive development. However, he did not empirically demonstrate this claim by narrow analyses of adult-child interactions. Neither did he empirically demonstrate heterogeneity of thinking due to differences in semiotic signs used for semiotic mediation. What he pointed out was that other-regulations precede self-regulations, and that self-regulations did not occur until the children had reached the "ingrowth" stage in development.

From the perspective of the present empirical study Vygotsky's claims give rise to a number of questions. First, what importance does communication between adults and children have with regards to childrens cognitive and identity development? Second, what impact do semiotic means have with regards to heterogeneity of speaking and thinking? Third, do certain types of early other-regulation affect language use and thought throughout lifespan? From a sociocultural perspective mediated action "cannot be separated from the milieu in which it is carried out" (Wertsch, 1991:18), and mental function has its origin in interpersonal communication.

### *Dialogue, dialogicality, genre and thought*

Bakhtin (1984:183) stated that: "Language lives only in the dialogic interaction of those who make use of it. He (Bakhtin, 1986:78) also stated that: The forms of language and the typical forms of utterances, that is, speech genres, enter our experience and our consciousness together, and in close connection with one other. To learn to speak means to construct utterances (because we speak in utterances and not in individual sentences, and, of course not in individual words. Speech genres organize our speech in almost the same way as grammatical (syntactical) forms do." Further, Bakhtin (1986:80) stated that: "Speech genres are much more changeable, flexible, and plastic than language forms are, but they have a normative significance for the speaking individuum, and they are not created by him but are given to him".

Voloshinov (1973:96) stated that: "The outwardly actualized utterance is an island rising from the boundless sea of inner speech; the dimensions and forms of this island are



determined by the particular *situation* of the utterance and its *audience*.” Bakhtin, (1986: 91) also stated that: “Each utterance is filled with echoes and reverberations of other utterances to which it is related by the communality of the sphere of speech communication.” He also stated that: “...words can enter our speech from others’ individual utterances, thereby retaining to a greater or lesser degree the tones and echoes of individual utterances” (Bakhtin, 1986:88). “Thus, the expressiveness of individual words...is either typical generic expression or it is an echo of another's individual expression, which makes the word, as it were, representative of another's whole utterance from a particular evaluative position” (Bakhtin, 1986:89).

This view on dialogue is from Bakhtin’s and Voloshinov’s perspective intimately connected to dialogicality. What distinguishes dialogicality or stylization from imitation in their minds is that: “The original direct and unconditioned meaning now serves new purposes... Imitation does not render a form conditional, for it takes the imitated material seriously, makes it its own, directly appropriates to itself someone else's discourse” (Bakhtin, 1984:190). Voloshinov's (1973:102) statement is crucial in this respect. As he states: “To understand another person's utterance means to orient oneself with respect to it, to find the proper place for it in the corresponding context. For each word of the utterance that we are in the process of understanding, we, as it were, lay down a set of our own answering words. The greater their number and weight, the deeper and more substantial our understanding will be... *Any true understanding is dialogic in nature*”.

According to Voloshinov (1973:38), studies of dialogues will offer insights not only about inner speech but also thought since, the units of which inner speech is constituted are certain *whole entities*, somewhat resembling a passage of monologic speech or whole utterances. But most of all, they resemble the *alternating lines of dialogue*.” Bakhtin (1981:284–285) stated that: “internal dialogization can become such a crucial force for creating form only where individual differences and contradictions are enriched by social heteroglossia...where the dialogue of voices arises directly out of a social dialogue of “languages”, where an alien utterance begins to sound like a socially alien language, where the orientation of the word among alien utterances changes into an orientation of a word among socially alien languages within the boundaries of one and the same national language.”

Further, Bakhtin (1981:291) stated, that: “Each of these “languages” of heteroglossia requires a methodology very different from the others; each is grounded in a completely different principle for marking differences and for establishing units... Therefore languages do not *exclude* each others, but rather intersect with each other in many different ways.”

According to Bakhtin (1986:60): “All the diverse areas of human activity involve the use of language. Quite understandably, the nature and forms of this use are just as diverse as are the areas of human activity. This, of course, in no way disaffirms the national unity of language. Language is realized in the form of individual concrete utterances (oral or written) by participants in the various areas of human activity. These utterances reflect the specific conditions and goals of each such area not only through their content (thematic) and linguistic style, that is, the selection of the lexical, phraseological, and grammatical recourses of the language, but above all through their compositional structure...each sphere in which language is used develops its own *relatively stable types* of these utterances. These we may call *speech genres*.”

Bakhtin (1986:60) also stated that: “each sphere of activity contains an entire repertoire of speech genres that differentiate and grows as the particular sphere develops and becomes more complex. Special emphasis should be placed on the extreme *heterogeneity* of speech genres (oral or written). In fact, the category of speech genres should include short rejoinders of daily dialogue (and these are extremely varied depending on the subject matter, situation, and participants)”

Among the speech genres Bakhtin (1986:79–80) mentioned are “the various genres of greetings, fare-wells, congratulations, all kinds of wishes, informations about health, business and so forth...In addition to these standard genres, of course, freer and more creative genres of oral speech communication have existed and still exist: genres of salon conversations about everyday social, aesthetic, and other subjects, genres of table conversation, intimate conversations among friends, intimate conversations within the family, and so on.” Further, Bakhtin (1986:63) stated that: “language enters life through concrete utterances (which manifest language) and life enters language through concrete utterances as well.”

As to dialogue, dialogicality, and genre the relationships between the notions of “I-you, self-other” played an immense role in Bakhtinian works. According to Bakhtin (1984:293) “a person exists in the forms of *I* and *other*”. He also stated that “The I hides in the other and in others, it wants to be only another for others, to enter completely into the world of others as another, and to cast from itself the burden of being only I (I-for-myself) in the world” (Bakhtin, 1986:147). Holquist (1990:27–28), who has thoroughly interpreted and analyzed Bakhtin, argues that from a Bakhtinian perspective the “I” is unfilled: “the first person pronoun, that is that the word must be empty: ‘I’ is a word that can mean nothing in general, for the reference it names can never be visualized in its consummated wholeness”.

On the contrary, “The self, then, may be conceived as a multiple phenomenon of essentially three elements. That is (it is – at least – a triad, not a duality): a center, a not center, and the relation between them” (Holquist, 1990:29). From a Bakhtinian dialogic perspective “the self” and “the other” is a relation of simultaneity, where “the self” is dialogic. The capacity of consciousness is, thus, not only based on otherness, but *is* otherness.

The contributions of Bakhtin and Voloshinov have not been considered in hypothesis or theories about childrens linguistic, cognitive and identity development. This is, understandably, since they did not connect their works with child language development. Besides, child language research has primarily focussed on the different linguistic levels: phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics in isolation from the context in which the “linguistic levels” simultaneously occur in dialogues. Even giving this, it is inconceivable that Bakhtin’s works have not been incorporated into studies of child language, since Bakhtin in his early writings (1979, quoted in Todorov, 1984:96) stated that: “All that touches me comes to my consciousness – beginning with my name – from the outside world, passing through the mouths of others (from the mother, etc.), with their intonation, their affective tonality, and their values. At first I am conscious of my self only through others: they give me the words, the forms, and the tonality that constitute my first image of myself...Just as the body is initially formed in the womb of the mother (in her body), so human conscious awakens surrounded by the consciousness of others.” This statement was closer to a hypothesis about childrens linguistic, cognitive, and identity development than Bakhtin ever could have anticipated.

From the point of view of the present study Bakhtin’s and Voloshinov’s statements raise a number of questions. What does a dialogical approach to childrens’ linguistic, cognitive and identity development offer, in contrast to previous research, that in isolation of contexts has studied childrens’ phonological, morphological, semantic, and pragmatic development? What importance do different speech genres have for childrens’ linguistic, cognitive and identity development?

### *Intersubjectivity and alterity*

The notion of *intersubjectivity* may, simplified, be defined as an instance when two interlocutors are conscious of each other, share focus, and understand each others’ world view, values and norms (See Rommetveit, 1979, 1985.) It is regarded to be a prerequisite

for communication. In these respects the awareness of the “I” and the “you” play a fundamental role. Studies by Trevarthen (1977) and Hubley and Trevarthen (1979) have shown that babies from early on exhibit primary and secondary forms of intersubjectivity to sharing focus and objects with the adult.

According to Rommetveit (1985:189) “*Intersubjectivity must in some sense be taken for granted in order to be attained.*” Further Rommetveit (1985:191) states that: “Adult-child interaction at an early stage of language acquisition, however, is nevertheless necessarily asymmetric in the sense that the adult partner – not the child – is the one who is supposed to know both what talked-about states of affairs *are* and what words “*mean*”. This basic asymmetry – the adult’s overriding control of the emerging sustained shared social reality – is of central concern in Vygotsky’s explorations of the profound and subtle impact of adult “meaning upon the child’s preverbal world. Human higher order or “symbolic” self-regulation develops, according to Vygotsky and his followers, out of adult-child interactions with a clearly *asymmetric pattern of control*”.

The notion of *alterity* is a Bakhtinian concept that is based on the dynamics between the self and the other. It might be apprehended as the opposite of the notion of intersubjectivity, since, according to Bakhtin (1986), it stands for heterogeneity of different perspectives, of different voices. According to Todorov’s (1984:100) interpretations of Bakhtin, the notion is connected to the Russian word “(drugosti): beginning and end, birth and annihilation, being and becoming life”. According to Holquist (1990), though, intersubjectivity and alterity might be seen as two sides of the same coin, since one and an other is not hostile to each other, but want to be part of the other.

An intersubjective situation definition is of course desirable in many interactions, especially between adults, but, hard to attain, even if intersubjectivity is taken for granted in order to attain an intersubjective situation definition. This is even harder in adult-child interactions. First, because shared focus is hard to attain with small children, since they have a short attention span. Second, because small children have no knowledge about the worldview, values and norms of the sociocultures in which they will be raised. This means that alterity would characterize adult-child interactions.

From the point of view of the present study the notions of intersubjectivity and alterity raise a number of questions. Is there an intersubjective situation definition between adult and child? If so, how is that expressed and commented on? Is there alterity between adult and child? If so, how is that expressed and commented on?

## Method

The empirical data of the present study originates from transcribed video recordings of mealtime and puzzle solving in three sociocultural groups: Americans, from the Boston area, Estonians, from Tartu, and Swedes, from the Stockholm area. The subjects were 2-year-old children and their mothers. In the American sample two girls and three boys participated. In the Estonian sample four girls and four boys participated. And in the Swedish sample five girls and two boys participated. The mothers had middle and upper middle class backgrounds. The American mothers had different ethnical backgrounds: Italian, Jewish, English, and Americans for several generations, but they were generally by school fostered according to American values and norms. The Estonian mothers were all, at least at school, fostered into a Soviet value and norm system. The Swedish mothers were all fostered into a Swedish value and norm system.

The activities of *mealtime* and *puzzle solving* were chosen for analysis, since these activities and speech genres are prominent in the socialization of young children’s communicative and cognitive development in several sociocultures.

The video recordings of the mealtimes were intended to be as natural as possible for every day life. In the American families the video recordings of the meal time varied from 8 minutes 20 seconds to 33 minutes 29 seconds. In the Estonian families they varied

from 13 minutes to 32 minutes 23 seconds. In the Swedish families they varied from 7 minutes to 17 minutes 30 seconds. In the American sample all but two children were sitting at a dining table. The other ones were sitting in high chairs. In the Estonian sample all children were sitting at a dining table. So were the Swedish children.

The video recordings of the puzzle solving task lasted until the puzzle was solved or the children gave up on the task. In the America families this varied from 3 minutes 24 seconds to 30 minutes 47 seconds. In the Estonian families they varied from 4 minutes 29 seconds to 19 minutes 47 seconds. In the Swedish families they varied from 3 minutes 41 seconds to 10 minutes 41 seconds. A wooden picture puzzle of an animal farm was used for the puzzle solving task. (cf. Junefelt and Tulviste, 1997, 1998)

## Analysis

The analysis was both quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative analysis concerned the activity types: attention, physical activity, and verbal activity, and the sentence types: declarative, question, and imperative used for regulation of the childrens behaviors. All these variables were counted per minute. The qualitative analysis concerned what was verbally focussed upon by the mothers. Sex differences in the children were not taken into consideration.

## Units of analysis

The units of analysis were utterances made by the mothers to regulate or praise their children in the activity of mealtime and puzzle solving. The regulative utterances were connected to the activities of attention, physical activity and verbal activity. The speech forms of the regulations were limited to the declarative, imperative and question sentence types

*A regulative utterance* was defined as an utterance used to monitor the *attention* of the child, i.e., aiming at shared focus, and containing attention getters such as “look”, “see”, “listen”, or the name of the child. For example: “see where you can get it to go” (American sample: 3). It was also used to monitor the *physical, or non-physical activity* of the child, i.e., utterances containing an action verb. Example: “sitt i stolen och ät” (Eng.: “sit in your chair and eat” (Swedish sample: 5). Further, it was used to monitor the *verbal activity* of the child, i.e., utterances to elicit verbal activity. Example: “who is that” (American sample: 4).

The *utterance types* chosen for the present study were grammatically based in order to investigate the preferred utterance types in the mothers. Speech act types could have been chosen as an analytical tools but, “the cultural norms reflected in speech acts differ not only from one language to another, but also from one regional and social variety to another” (Wierzbica, 1991:26).

*A declarative utterance*, or sentence type, was in the present study analyzed as a statement of behaviour. Example: “I don’t want you to put any of the food on the floor” (American sample: 1)

*An imperative utterance* was analyzed as a request of a special behaviour. Example: “See if it fits” (Estonian sample: 1)

*A question* was analyzed as a request for information. Example: “where does the cow go” (Swedish example: 4).

An utterance of *praise* was defined as an utterance containing adjectives like “good”, “well done”, or other appreciating words or phrases. Example: “well done, good job” (American sample: 2).

## Results

The results of the study exhibited both quantitative and qualitative differences between the sociocultures as to regulation and praise of different activities during mealtime and puzzle solving.

### *Mealtime*

During mealtime all children from the different sociocultures were regulated, but differently, as to attention, physical activity, and verbal activity. They were also verbally praised differently in accordance with the different mothers' world views, values and norms.

### **Regulation**

The *American children*, overall were regulated more often than the Estonian and Swedish children. Specifically, they were regulated 5.04 times/min. Attention was regulated 0.24 times/min, physical activity, 2.40 times/min, and verbal activity, 2.40 times/min.

The *Estonian children* were regulated 4.11 times per minute: attention was regulated 0.37 times/min, physical activity: 2.29 times/min, and verbal activity, 1.45 times/min.

The *Swedish children* were regulated 3.83 times per minute: attention was regulated 0.33 times/min, physical activity, 1.90 times/min, and verbal activity, 1.60 times/min.

### **Sentence types used for regulation**

The *American children* were overall regulated more often by questions than the Estonian and Swedish children. Questions occurred 3.23 times/minute, and primarily in verbal activity (2.31 times/min.). Declaratives occurred 0.94 times/min, and primarily in physical activity (0.78 times/min.). Imperatives occurred 0.87 times/min, primarily in physical activity (0.75 times/min.). But they also occurred in attention (0.28 times/min).

The Estonian children were regulated foremost by imperatives: 2.26 times/min and primarily in the physical activity (1.96 times/min). But, they also occurred in attention (0.28 times/min). Questions occurred 1.53 times/minute, and primarily in verbal activity (1.43 times/min). Declaratives occurred 0.32 times/min and primarily in physical activity (0.23 times/min).

The *Swedish Children* were regulated foremost by questions: 2.02 times/min and primarily in the verbal activity (1.54 times/min). Declaratives occurred 0.92 times/min and primarily in physical activity (0.90 times/min). Imperatives occurred 0.89 times/min and primarily in physical activity (0.56 times/min). But they also occurred in attention (0.28 times/min). (For a more detailed quantitative analysis as to reliability and validity, see Junefelt and Tulviste, 1997, 1998)

### **Praise**

The American children were praised much more than the Estonian and the Swedish children during mealtime. The amount of praises was for the *American Children* 0.15 times/min. For the Estonian Children it was 0.07 times/ min, and for the Swedish children 0.02 times/ min.

### *Puzzle solving*

In the American families only one child fulfilled the puzzle solving task. In the Estonian samples all children fulfilled the puzzle solving task. In the Swedish families all but one child fulfilled the task.

## Regulation

The *Estonian children* were overall regulated more often than the American and Swedish children. They were regulated 13.14 times/min. Physical activity was regulated 7.71 times/min, attention was regulated 3.60 times/min, and verbal activity was regulated 1.83 times/min.

The *American children* were regulated 9.48 times/min. Physical activity was regulated 5.31 times/min, verbal activity 3.64 times/min, and attention 0.53 times/min.

The Swedish children were regulated 8.69 times/min. Physical activity was regulated 4.59 times/minute, verbal activity, 2.96 times/min, and attention 1.14 times/minute.

## Sentence types used for regulation

The *Estonian children* were overall regulated by *imperatives*, 7.92/min. These occurred foremost in regulation of physical activity, 4.84 times/ min and in regulation of attention, 3.08 times/min. Regulation of verbal activity scored 0.00. *Questions* occurred 2.81 times/min. They occurred foremost in the verbal activity, 1.83 times/min, and in physical activity, 0.96 times/ min. As to regulation of attention the scores were: 0.02 times/min. *Declaratives* occurred 2.41 times/min. These occurred to regulate physical activity, 1.91 times/min, and to regulate attention, 0.50 times/min, but as to regulation of verbal activity they scored 0.00 times/min.

The *American children* were overall regulated by *questions*, 5.89 times/min. They occurred foremost in verbal activity, 3.54 times/minute, but also in physical activity, 2.33 times/min. As to attention the scores were 0.02 times/min. *Imperatives* occurred 2.34 times/min. The sentence type occurred to regulate physical activity 1.85 times/min, and to regulate verbal activity 0.00 times/min. As to attention, the regulation by questions occurred 0.49 times/min. *Declaratives* as a means of regulation only occurred 1.25 times/min. They were used to regulate physical activity 1.3 times/min, to regulate verbal activity 0.10 times/min, and to regulate attention 0.02 times/min.

The Swedish children were overall regulated by *questions*, 4.61 times/min. They occurred foremost in verbal activity, 2.52 times/min, but also in physical activity, 1.58 times/min. As to attention the scores were 0.51 times/min. *Declaratives* occurred 2.55 times/min, and foremost in physical activity, 2.00 times/min. For verbal activity they were used 0.39 times/min, and for attention 0.16 times/min. *Imperatives* occurred 1.53 times/min, and foremost to regulate physical activity. They were used 0.47 times/min to regulate attention, and 0.05 times/min to regulate verbal activity.

## Praise

The American children were praised much more than the Estonian and the Swedish children during puzzle solving. The amount of praise for the *American Children* was 0.96 times/min. For the Estonian children it was 0.12 times/ min, and for the Swedish children 0.37 times/ min.

## *Discussion of regulations during mealtime*

The quantitative analysis showed differences between the sociocultural groups that pertained to what activity types were most regulated, and what sentence types were preferred for regulation of different activities. Meals were not regulated as much as puzzle solving, but, that might be explained by the fact that the children were not as familiar with puzzle solving as they were with the mealtime procedure.

### **American regulation**

During *mealtime* the American mothers were more regulative (5.04 regulations/min) than the Estonian mothers (4.11 regulations/min) and the Swedish mothers (3.83 regulations/min). But, what the mothers from the different sociocultural groups regulated differed.

Regulation of *attention* was primarily used by the *American mothers* to make the children eat: “look at this piece of broccoli down here” (A:3).

Regulation of *physical activity* was also used to make the child eat: “can you eat your blueberries” (A:1), “I wish you could eat a little more broccoli” (A:3), “you should eat some” (A:5), “now eat something” (A:6). Another prominent physical regulation concerned not leaving the table until the child had eaten as much as the mother wanted the child to do: “you are not done yet” (A:7).

Regulation of *verbal activity* was primarily used by the American mothers to elicit communication: “how is your dinner” (A:6), “had a busy day” (A:6), “did you go to the play ground today” (A:7).

The most preferred sentence type used by the American mothers during mealtime was *question*. These questions also concerned what the child wanted to eat or drink: “what would you like to drink orange juice, apple juice or cranberry juice” (A: 1).

The overall pattern of the interactions between American mothers and their children during mealtime was to make the children choose, eat, and talk. Table manners were not regulated. The children used their fingers when eating.

### **Estonian regulation**

Regulation of *attention* was primarily used by the *Estonian mothers* to make the children concentrate on the mealtime: “kuule söö” (Eng.: “listen eat”) (E:8), and to stop “bad” behaviour: “vaata kuidas sa lusikat hoiad” (Eng.: “look how you are holding your spoon”) (E:3).

Regulation of *physical activity* was used to make the child eat: “aga söö” (Eng.: “but eat”) (E:8), but also to eat in a “proper” way: “vota lusikaga” (Eng.: “use your spoon”) (E:3).

Regulation of *verbal activity* was used to talk about the food: “kas on hea porgand” (Eng.: “do you like the carrot”) (E:3), but not about anything else: “söögi aeg on ju sina siin räägid” (Eng.: “it’s mealtime now don’t talk”) (E:8).

The most preferred sentence type used by the Estonian mothers during mealtime was *imperative*. These imperatives concerned concentration on the mealtime, but also regulation of table manners.

The overall pattern of the interactions between Estonian mothers and their children during mealtime was to make the children eat, behave according to table manners, and be silent while eating.

### **Swedish regulation**

Regulation of *attention* was primarily used by the *Swedish mothers* to distract the children from what was regarded as bad behaviour during mealtime: “titta du har ju Musse där” (Eng.: “look there is Mickey Mouse”) (S:3).

Regulation of *physical activity* was used to correct table manners: “Lena när vi äter sitter vi still i stolen” (Eng.: “Lena when we eat we sit in the chair”) (S:5); “du får använda gaffeln också” (Eng.: “you may use your fork too”) (S:2); “sen kan du torka av händerna” (Eng.: “then you can wipe your hands”) (S:4).

Regulation of *verbal activity* was primarily used to elicit comments about the food: “va re gott” (Eng.: “was it tasty”) (S:5), “va re ett gott ägg idag” (Eng.: “was the egg tasty today”) (S:4), but also to correct table manners: “va brukar du säga efter maten då” (Eng.: “what do you say after dinner then”) (S:2), “tack tack säger man tack tack” (Eng.: “thanks thanks you say thanks thanks”) (S:5).

The most preferred sentence type used by the Swedish mothers during mealtime was question. These questions concerned primarily to elicit the children's opinions about the food and to elicit gratitude.

The overall pattern of the interactions between Swedish mothers and their children during mealtime was to elicit opinions from the children about the food, to make the children behave properly according to table manners, and to show gratitude.

### *Discussion of regulations during puzzle solving*

During puzzle solving the *American mothers* were more regulative (5.04 regulations/min) than the *Estonian mothers* (4.11 regulations/min), and the *Swedish mothers* (3.83 regulations/min). What the mothers from the different sociocultural groups regulated differed with regard to sentence types, and aspects of the puzzle solving that were focussed upon.

With the *American mothers*, *attention* was primarily regulated to attract the children's interest in the puzzle solving at all, and in the pieces of the puzzle: "look at this puzzle" (A:3), and to guide the child by instructions: "do you see a house" (A:6), "look at the shapes" (A:1), "keep looking keep looking" (A:7). Regulation of *physical* activity was primarily used to make the child do the puzzle at all: "could you come over here please" (A:2), and to assist the child in putting the pieces into the right place: "can you put the tractor back in there" (A:6), "other way turn it around" (A:7). Regulation of *verbal* activity was used for labelling purposes: "what is that" (A:3), "what does a roaster say" (A:4).

The overall pattern of the interactions between the *American mothers* and their children during puzzle solving was first of all to make their children do the puzzle, and then to label the pieces of the puzzle. Only one *American child* completed the puzzle solving task. The reason for this could be that several of the *American mothers* told their children: "you know you do not have to do this if you don't want" (A:1).

The *Estonian mothers* regulated *attention* foremost by the verbs "see" or "look": "vata aga kelle auk siin on" (Eng.: "look but who's whole is this") (E:4). *Physical regulations* were made step by step by first making the children look at the pieces of the puzzle, and then at the puzzle as a whole, and finally to put the piece of the puzzle in the right place: "pööra umber" (Eng.: "turn around") (E: 4). Regulation of *verbal* activity was used for labelling purposes, but it also concerned the products of the animals: "kes see on kes anab lapselepiimaa" (Eng.: "who gives the child milk" (E:7).

The overall pattern of the interactions between the *Estonian mothers* and their children during puzzle solving was that the children should solve the puzzle solving task and then label the pieces of the puzzle.

The *Swedish mothers* regulated *attention* foremost by directing the child's attention to details: "har du sett kon har en bjällra runt halsen" (Eng.: "have you seen the cow has a bell around the neck" (S:1). Regulation of *physical activity* was primarily used to assist the child in putting the pieces of the puzzle in the right place: "var ska grisen vara då" (Eng.: "where does the pig go" (S:2); "får vricka lite på den" (Eng.: "have to twist it a bit") (S:6). Regulation of *verbal activity* was mostly used for labelling purposes, but also to elicit the sounds of the animals: "va e de för nåt" (Eng.: "what is that") (S:1); "va säjer tuppen då" (Eng.: "what does the rooster say then") (S:4).

The overall pattern of the interactions between the *Swedish mothers* and their children during puzzle solving was that the children should fulfil the task of puzzle solving, label the pieces of the puzzle, and tell the sounds of the animals.

### *Discussion of regulations and sentence types*

A pattern emerges from the data about what aspects were the most prominent in the socialization of meal time behavior and puzzle solving. In the *American sample* the most



prominent feature of *regulation* was to perform the activity of eating and solve the puzzle solving task while at the same time encouraging verbal activity. By this regulation of verbal activity the American children were, from very early on, taught the importance of verbal activity. The most prominent feature in the Estonian sample was to concentrate on the activity, i.e. to perform the physical activity of eating, and solving the puzzle task. In other words, verbal activity was of less importance. The Swedish mothers fell between the American mothers and the Estonian mothers with regard to regulation. Regulation of attention and physical activity was similar to that used by the Estonian mothers, whereas regulation of verbal activity was used in a manner similar to the American mothers.

The involvement in social relationships is central to Americans. According to Bellah et al (1986:167): “The United States is a nation of joiners”, where people from different countries could share new values and norms by means of communication, and also make individual choices, which they had not had the opportunity to make in their previous countries. According to Bronfenbrenner (1970:12–13), who compared US and USSR with regards to early socialisation, a prominent feature in the socialization of young children from USSR was that they as early as possible should develop: “an active, positive relation to the demands of adults, the desire to act in accordance to these demands, to do what is necessary”... “Where there is no obedience, there is no self-discipline: nor can there be normal development of independence. Training in obedience is an essential condition for developing the ability of self-discipline.”

As to regulative utterances and sentence types there are both similarities and differences between the different socio-cultures of the present study. The material shows that imperatives were preferred by the Estonian mothers for regulation of physical activity and attention, and questions for regulation of verbal activity. Questions were preferred by the American mothers for regulation of both physical activity and verbal activity, and imperatives were preferred for regulation of attention. The Swedish mothers preferred declaratives to regulate physical activity, questions to regulate verbal activity, and imperatives to regulate attention.

The American mothers’ preference for questions might be related to the individualistic core of the culture: “Anything that violates our right to think for ourselves, judge for ourselves, make our own decisions, live our lives as we see fit, is not only morally wrong, it is sacrilegious” (Bella et al, 1986:142). The Swedish mothers’ distribution of sentence types in the different activities show something between the American and Estonian mothers’ use of sentence types. This might be explained by the observation made by Daun (1998) that the Swedish culture is a mixture of collectivism and individualism. The relationship between the linguistic form and cultural values and norms seems to be pretty strong in the present study.

### *Discussion of praise*

The American children were more often praised than Estonian children and Swedish children during both the activities of mealtime and puzzle solving.

During *meal time* the American children were praised (0.15 times/min), for eating well, but they were foremost praised for being good conversation partners, a replica of

an adult-adult table conversation, and for being polite, saying “excuse me” when they wanted to leave the table. The Estonian children were praised (0.07 times/min), for table manners, saying “thank you”, and for wiping their faces, but, their appearances as to their teeth, shoes, and bibs were also praised. The Swedish children were also praised (0.02 times/min), for table manners, for saying “thank you”, and for using the spoon, but also for eating with a good appetite.

During *puzzle solving* the American children received more praise than the children from the other groups (0.96 times/min), although only one American child fulfilled the puzzle solving task. Three children took out one piece of the puzzle and put it back again. Three other children started but gave up. However, the children were praised as soon as

they had placed the piece of the puzzle in the right place. The praises ranged from: “good job”, to “very good job”, to : “you did it wow”, and to “ta da”, accompanied with the intonation the intonation pattern like a fanfare, and applause.

All the Estonian children fulfilled the puzzle solving task. They were not praised (0.12 times/min) until they had completed the task. The most common praises were: “good boy”, “good girl”, and: “that was not bad”.

All but one Swedish child fulfilled the puzzle solving task. The Swedish children were praised (0.37 times/min). Most of them were not praised until they had fulfilled the whole puzzle solving task. The most common praise was: “Bra” (Eng.: “good”).

A comparison between the three sociocultures illustrates not only quantitative but also qualitative differences. Praise, however, is not a universal phenomenon. There are sociocultures where praise does not occur at all as a means of socialization. An example of that is the Gusii in East Africa (LeVine et al, 1983). The occurrence or non-occurrence of praise and its formal and functional realization seems to be related to different values and norms dating back in different sociocultures’ ideologies.

### *Concluding discussion*

The mothers, who participated in the present study regulated and praised their children differently in the activities of mealtime and puzzle solving. It was obvious, that what they regulated, or praised, was the most important values and norms associated with how the speech genres of mealtime and puzzle solving should be performed in their sociocultures.

In this respect the notion of *intersubjectivity* is highlighted. What was obvious from the present study was that an intersubjective situation definition did not concern only face-to-face interaction between the mothers and their children. It also concerned the mothers’ intersubjective situation definition about certain values and norms of their sociocultures, which from their perspectives had to be carried on to the next generation. In instances where an intersubjective situation definition was not defined between mother and child alterity was regulated according to the mothers’ view of values and norms as to attention, physical, and verbal activity from the point of view of the present study.

The American mothers seemed to be socializing, and regulating their children more for independence than did the Estonian and Swedish mothers. This could create problems as to creating and maintaining an intersubjective situation definition between the American mothers and their children, since the children from early on were fostered to make choices, which they not yet had the words for. The Estonian children were not at all fostered to make choices. If the Swedish children were, at all, allowed to make choices, they were only exposed to two alternatives: one, which the mother preferred, and the other, which the mother knew that the child disliked.

The Vygotskian notion of *regulation* is of great importance with regard to the present study. From a Vygotskian perspective “other-regulation” precedes “self-regulation. And, the children of the present study were so young that they only partly, and only in certain recurrent situations, had internalized “other-regulations”, and made them their own, i.e., “self-regulations”.

While the American children foremost were regulated to eat and to talk during mealtime, the Estonian children were regulated to have good table manners and to be quite during the mealtime. The Swedish children were regulated, as the Estonian children, to exhibit good table manners, but also to appreciate the food. During puzzle solving the American mothers foremost regulated their children to do the puzzle at all. The Estonian mothers foremost regulated their childrens’ attention to the pieces of the puzzle, while the Swedish mothers foremost regulated their childrens’ physical and verbal activities with regard to the puzzle solving task.

The sentence types used by the mothers for regulation of their childrens’ behavior play a more significant role than has been considered in previous studies on childrens linguistic, cognitive and identity development. The American mothers preferred to use ques-

tions. This sentence type is hard to respond to when you are two years old. This sentence type, especially if it is presented as an open question, might create problems as to creating and maintaining an intersubjective situation definition. The Estonian mothers' use of imperatives is easier to respond to as a means of creating an intersubjective situation definition of a certain activity, since it distinctly regulates the behaviour of the child. The same goes for the Swedish mothers' use of declaratives.

From a Bakhtinian point of view, and from the results of the present study, the notion of *dialogicality* opens up new interpretations. Even if Bakhtin only considered dialogicality from the point of view of verbal expressions, I would argue that dialogicality may also be expressed by means of bodily communication. Since the speech apparatus is not fully developed in two year old children, their communicative contributions may only be expressed by body language. Dialogicality might still be expressed, even if by different semiotic means. Furthermore, in children who are late in their verbal development or those who do not have access to verbal language, body language may be the only means by which they can communicate their dialogic understanding of the counterparts' regulations of their behavior.

Bakhtin and Voloshinov highlighted the importance of studying dialogue in different contexts, activities and genres in order to understand inner speech and thought. Even if their examples were taken from written texts they managed to show that heterogeneity of speaking could give insights into heterogeneity of thinking, which according to them took the form of inner speech. From their point of view: "inner speech is the locale in which another's utterance is received, comprehended, and evaluated; it is where the speaker's active orientation takes place" (Voloshinov, 1973:118). Further, Voloshinov (1973:18) stated that: "Everything vital in the reception of another's utterance, everything of an ideological value, is expressed in the material of inner speech".

From this perspective there are great similarities between Bakhtinian, Voloshonovian, and Vygotskian hypotheses about the connection between language use and thought, even if they expressed it differently. From a Vygotskian hypothesis intrapsychological functioning, or thought, was a sign of that the child in her/his mind had incorporated the interpsychological function, or communication.

Wertsch, (1998), who has developed Bakhtinian, Voloshinovian and Vygotskian issues, claims that there is a difference between mastery and appropriation with regards to the development of inner speech, or thought, issues that have been overlooked in Bakhtin's, Voloshinov's and Vygotsky's studies. Simply defined, mastery implies that a person has understood, while appropriation means that the behaviour has been automatized.

The children of the present study are from that perspective in the beginning of mastering what the mothers' regarded to be values and norms of their sociocultures. The more communicatively and cognitively developmentally the children will be the more will they appropriate the mothers' regulations. As adults they will automatically act according to the values and norms that they were taught as young children.

In intercultural communication, when a lingua franca is used, this might create problems, since pragmatics, the situational use of language in different activities differs between sociocultures and languages. Holquist (1986:xiii) points out, by quoting Bakhtin: "a certain entry as a living being into a foreign culture, the possibilities of seeing the world through its eyes, is a necessary part of understanding it".

Since we are living today in a global world, studies of early adult-child dialogues in different sociocultures might open our eyes for differences between them and as a result create an understanding of the differences that, at least momentarily shapes an intersubjective situation definition. Such studies may also open up our eyes for peculiarities in our own socioculture that we have taken for granted, since we from early on were raised in them. No one could have expressed this better than Bakhtin (1986:7): It is only in the eyes of *another* culture that foreign culture reveals itself fully and profoundly".

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# Novelizing Simultaneous Interpretation

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## Timespace Positioning and Real Life Chronotopic Calibration

Time, as reflected in the literary analyses of Mikhael Bakhtin, is a malleable substance. Bakhtin illustrates time as a dimension constituted by human intelligence through language use, evidenced especially in creative artistic forms such as the novel. Bakhtin does not, however, limit the manipulability of time to fiction. On several occasions he mentions real life chronotopes, as well as describing a natural correspondence between the phenomena he identifies in novelistic writing and lived experiences of time. Nonetheless, Bakhtin restricts his applied analyses to representations of timespace (what he calls chronotopes) in novels. In his essay, *Forms of Time and Chronotope in the Novel*, Bakhtin details ways that language structures timespace. The basic premise is that time-is-a-space-to-be-filled: that there is no such thing as ‘space’ without time, nor ‘time’ without space. This essential backdrop for lived experience is artificially separated into ‘time’ and ‘space’ as two discrete concepts, which are also often conflated and confused by ways of using language. In short, Bakhtin explains how language fundamentally shapes cultural and psychological orientations to timespace.

Specifically, novelistic writing draws upon details observed and experienced in real life by an author, who combines this source material with their own creative imagination concerning a range of meanings and meaningfulness latent and explicit in social interaction. By representing and projecting chronotopes, novelists present both the means for connecting with audiences (individual readers and a reading public) and an historical window onto cultural constructions common or apparent enough to serve as a communicative bridge. By showing how language shapes and reveals conceptions of time, Bakhtin demonstrates the essential inseparability of time-and-space while simultaneously pointing to the possibility of differential effects in the material world if language is used with conscious attention to the relationship between communication and the constitutionality of timespace.

More precisely, as Michael Holquist explains in his 2009 keynote address to the International Bakhtin conference on *Limits and Possibilities of Dialogism* (Stockholm), Bakhtin has provided us an essential tool: a means to recognize and distinguish the essential (even a priori) **calibration to timespace** that grounds all communicative action and every possibility of making meaning. This function of language use is much more than, say, the effects of persuasive rhetoric or effective marketing. The communicative calibration of language use to a timespace – a particular chronotope – justifies and rationalizes (for instance) consumerism and emotional responses to passionate speech. Orienting to a chronotope has the constituting effect of embroiling everyone (adherents and resisters alike) into logics such as capitalism, conspicuous consumption, and the collective repression of knowledge and action concerning climate change. Communicative calibrations to timespace are thus prior to ideology: the chronotope is the very substance with which a worldview is composed.

Contemporarily situated at the beginning of the 21st century, institutionalized chronotopes now dominate the public sphere in both its formal (e.g., business practices, governance, journalism, education, religions) and informal (popular culture) contexts. Alternative chronotopes can be found in novels of various genres, while others are emanent in surviving indigenous cultures. I will use the latter to build familiarity with the power of real-life chronotopes, and then shift to analysis of orientations to timespace evident in representations of simultaneous interpretation in contemporary fiction. The interactive, intercultural communication event of simultaneous interpretation is a worthwhile site of timespace analysis because the necessity of interpretation directly highlights issues of time and space due to considerations of, for instance, interpreter processing of meaning in two languages (in two modes called “simultaneous” and “consecutive”), interlocutor turn-taking (especially among speakers using a shared language and between speakers using different languages), and uses of technology to mediate presence and distance (e.g., use of headphones, microphones, and channel switching among languages).

Heuristically, let us assume a simplistic model, involving two or more languages and at least three participants (two or more interlocutors, who for the sake of clarity we will assume are monolingual in different languages, and the interpreter, who, assumedly, is fluent in each language spoken by the interlocutors). Obviously, the pacing and rhythm of interaction is drastically altered by the use of an interpreter. Complaints about this temporal fact are predicated upon a (usually unstated) implicit comparison with the flow of communication in monolingual interactions. Monolingual communication (interaction using one language) is generally presumed to be interpersonally direct, therefore faster, and thus more efficient. (All three of these premises are cultural constructions that I only partially unpack in this article.) Turn-taking becomes an issue because of a) the temporal adjustments required by interlocutors (usually described in terms of waiting for the interpretation) and b) differences in sociocultural norms inherent in each respective language’s signals for taking turns at speaking. Finally, the use of telecommunication technologies to enable immediate communication across small and large distances provides a comparison for evaluating various values and attitudes about the perceived directness of communication. First, though, how do real-life chronotopes work?

## Chronotopes in Cultural Ethnography

Three examples are given to illustrate some of the features that characterize chronotopes and enable efforts at distinguishing among types. Language-constituted orientations to filling timespace are documented (without necessarily being named as chronotopic) in contemporary cultural ethnographies of language use. Two proactive examples of timespace-constituting language use are provided from still-extant cultures of Xavante in Brazil and Western Apache in the American southwest. These surviving indigenous groups utilize culturally-specific communication practices for filling timespace by using language as a deliberate tool for orienting to identity, place, and meaning. These positive examples of chronotopic calibration are contrasted by a negative example of an institutionalized chronotope with deadly results against the Warao of Venezuela. In Bakhtinian terms, the positively effective chronotopes involve features that are more characteristic of a normalized, cyclical, everyday calibration to timespace on a human scale than the negatively effective depersonalized, institutional chronotope that doomed several hundred Warao. A folkloric emphasis in language use thus may be desirable if diversity and democracy are ideological goals.

For instance, Laura Graham (2003) writes that in formal (one could say political or decision-making) meetings of Xavante elders – which are conducted in what she calls a strikingly Bakhtinian polyvocal mode – “the truth of the narrative is not at issue; ‘the

committee is not presenting an account of its own but is contributing to its composition.<sup>34</sup> This officially constructed version will set the baseline against which all future discussions are measured” (p. 145).<sup>1</sup> By orienting to timespace in a creative and co-constituting way, Xavante maintain language uses and cultural practices that enable collective decision-making that balances the maintenance of internal cultural tradition with adaptation to new intercultural contingencies. Graham’s specific study of dream interpretation and performance among the Xavante details a comprehensive process of reality construction. Rather than positioning Warodi (the dreamer) as possessor, defender, and sole interpreter of his dreams, Warodi shares his dream-songs only as a first step in producing community knowledge. While listening to his account, the elders add their own voices and contributions to the telling, thereby rehearsing the upcoming collective performance. At each step in the process all participants enact the collaborative construction of meaning and cultural identification that the ultimate performance is intended to model for the community as a whole.

Even though Xavante conceptualize a dream to be the experience of an individual self – Warodi was the one who initially “experienced” the dream – its telling nevertheless [becomes] a cooperative endeavor. The dream narrative evolved through a polyvocal process of discursive production. The acoustic arrangement of speaking voices downplayed Warodi’s prominence as the initiator, the original dreamer. Simultaneously, the polyvocal discursive production highlighted the narrative as a representation of shared experience. (P. 168–169.)

Considered as a communication technology, the cultural practice of sharing dreams is a powerful discursive tool for maintaining the integrity of specific cultural identity. Specifically, performing dreams places the Xavante at the center of timespace by calibrating the telling of dreams to position themselves as agents who successfully resolve environmental changes and overcome external political threats.

More directly, Keith Basso, in his compelling study of the Western Apache practice of “speaking in names” (1996), draws explicitly upon Bakhtin’s notion of chronotope (p. 62). Basso quotes a definition from *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981) that highlights the linguistic fusion of time and space with particular points of geography. He explains the fundamental relationship with the land that forms the logical basis for Western Apache conceptions of self and culture: a relationship that they understand as mutual and co-constituting. The land actively communicates with and to Apaches (individually and collectively), especially through the voice of ancestors who gave names to places (particular and specific geographical spaces) that literally describe their appearance at that time. While environmental changes are evident at some places that no longer appear as they once did (for instance, the absence of water where, at the time of naming, there was

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<sup>1</sup> The Xavante persist as a cultural group in central Brazil, retaining and re-enlivening their unique cultural identity through, as a particularly prominent event, the ritualized performance of dreams. The embedded quote/endnote is based on similarity to Fijian co-constructions of negotiated authorship with its attendant sharing of accountability: p. 242 in Brenneis, Donald. (1987). *Straight Talk and Sweet Talk: Political Discourse in an Occasionally Egalitarian Community*. In *Dangerous Words: Language and Politics in the Pacific*, D.L. Brenneis and F.R. Myers, eds., pp. 69–84. New York: New York University Press. **Polyvocality** is a Bakhtinian concept, rendered by Graham as: “Discourse [being] literally constituted by a diversity of voices” (p. 139) or a “narrative...collaboratively constructed through the contributions of multiple voices” (p. 251). She opposes this view to the western (supposedly democratic) version articulated by Habermas, in which “discourse that circulates in the liberal public sphere is constructed of individually produced statements; it is based on rational notions of universal truth and universal validity claims” (p. 141). Chronotopically, Habermas’s “accumulation of individual voices” (Graham, p. 141) and Bakhtin’s polyvocality, in which “discourse and meaning ... are [seen]... as the product of cooperative, dialogic interactions between individuals” (Graham, p. 141) generate different possibilities for occupying and filling both present and future timespace.

a spring), most places retain the same geographical character. The place-names thus evoke the original stage for the telling of historical events that happened there while enabling recognition of changes wrought by circumstance.

Within specific social situations, especially those in which possibilities for public criticism and embarrassment are rife, very particular cultural considerations for speaking are invoked by Western Apaches.<sup>2</sup> Under these delicate interpersonal conditions, a place-name (or several) may be uttered “to substitute for the narrative it anchors, ‘standing up alone’ (‘o’áá) as Apaches say, to symbolize the narrative as well as the knowledge it contains” (p. 89). Place-names are understood by Apaches as direct quotations of their ancestors, and are coded with associated stories of historical events that occurred at the named place which embody lessons about what it means to be Apache. Basso explains:

In addition, place-names implicitly identify positions for viewing these locations: optimal vantage points, so to speak, from which the sites can be observed, clearly and unmistakably, just as their names depict them. To picture a site from its name, then, requires that one imagine it as if standing or sitting at a particular spot, and it is to these privileged positions, Apaches say, that the images evoked by the place-names cause them to travel in their minds.

Wherever the optimal vantage point for a named site may be located – east of the site or west, above it or below, near it or at some distance away – the vantage point is described as being ‘in front of’ (bádnjú) the site; and it is there, centuries ago, that ancestors of the Western Apache are believed to have stood when they gave the site its name. Accordingly... in positioning people’s minds to look ‘forward’ (bidááh) into space, a place-name also positions their minds to look ‘backward’ (t’aazhi)<sup>3</sup> into time. (*italics in original*, p. 89)

This juxtaposition of past/present, of ‘looking’ from the ideal angle at a physical place, also positions Apache listeners to imagine their own situation ‘at the correct angle’ in terms of the values and beliefs of long-standing cultural identity. This simultaneous looking forward and looking back that is generated by such “travel in your mind” (p. 91) is a calibration to timespace that enables the evocation of past practice as guide for future action. It is precisely this kind of positioning that is at stake in the chronotope, and it is the juncture of chronotopic positionality in interpersonal communication as well as in cultural and institutional discourses where understanding or misunderstanding occurs.

A “cholera chronotope” attached to place and timespace is analyzed in comprehensive detail by Charles Briggs and Clara Mantini-Briggs (2003, p. 277). Cholera – and attendant narratives – cycled twice through the indigenous Warao community during the 1990s in Venezuela, leading to more than five hundred easily preventable deaths, particularly in Mariusa – which is nestled a fair distance into the Orinoco Delta. The interactive talk of government officials and health care workers, journalists and clergy at every level of national and international organization shows an individual and collective calibration to an institutionalized, racializing discourse positioning the indigenous population as unclean (i.e. as unsanitary citizens) and, premised upon blame-the-victim logic, deserving (or at least at fault) for inviting the epidemic. The seventh cholera pandemic, previously historicized by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Pan American Health Organization, is deemed to have originated in Peru by way of Europe and Asia before arriving at the eastern coast of Venezuela. As a modern-day outbreak of a well-known and easily treatable disease, the pandemic “is situated within a master narrative

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<sup>2</sup> Some of the factors that determine the choice of “speaking in names” rather than overt confrontation include whether or not Apaches involved in the communication have (among other things) appropriate kinship authorization, the desire to imprint a permanent lesson rather than an incidental scolding, seek to signal their acceptance of an acknowledgment of incorrect behavior, and/or wish to demonstrate respect due an adult rather than “to inform...openly of what he [or she] already knew [which] would be to treat him [or her] like a child” (Basso, 1996, p. 118).

<sup>3</sup> Need to get the right font for the “a” in this Apache word.



that purports to track the ‘spread’ of cholera through vast stretches of time and space” (p. 277). It is the disease, not human beings, that is centered by this chronotope.

Chronotopes in WHO publications cast geographic regions and nation-states as natural units of disease transmission, surveillance, and containment. Texts, tables, and maps compare regions and countries in ways that create hierarchies of success and failure in combating cholera” (p. 283).

Many of the avoidable deaths occurred among the people of Mariusa, the endpoint, according to the Briggs’, of all river journeys leading into the Orinoco Delta, the heart of the Warao’s ancestral lands, still remote albeit colonized. Mariusa, if understood analytically as a calibrating place-name, thus “serves as a limiting case of remoteness, primitivism, and cultural conservatism” (217). Warao resistance could not penetrate the pervasive chronotopic calibrating of official medicalizing, racializing, and blaming discourses: “Through the delta, ‘the Mariusans’ were branded as the human manifestation of cholera’s imagined ability to spring up at any point and spread across space” (p. 218). While activists and advocates do act, the chronotope imposed from without is overwhelming. Time and space are identified in the institutional discourses and cultural communication practices recognized, studied, described, and critiqued in each of these settings. Graham, Basso, and Briggs & Mantini-Briggs are alert to Bakhtinian notions and deploy them where they make sense. Imagined as a continuum, Bakhtin poses two extremes – adventure time and folkloric time – as examples of the means by which language fills time, thus achieving the structuring of timespace.

## Chronotopes and the Fullness of Time

Michael Holquist argues that for Bakhtin, timespace is “at the heart of knowing” (2009, p. 8 draft). This positions the subject (you, me) as “the ground zero of perception, the experimental laboratory where understanding is produced” (p. 8). In Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism, Holquist explains that reality is not only perceived but experienced, and this experiencing is “an always shared happening” from which meaning can be made only when structured by timespace” (p. 17). From this view, there is no transcendent (ideal, perfect, permanently unchanging) meaning, rather – meaning comes about through relationships (in Bakhtin’s frame, all relationships are dialogic). Likewise, the chronotope – while potentially a unique mix of individual, cultural, and institutional calibrations – is “never divorced from a particular time or a specific space” (p. 20).

Relationships are necessarily characterized by boundaries, and it is the quality and extent (or lack thereof) of boundary-crossing<sup>4</sup> that conditions the possible range of meanings and understandings available in a communication process. For instance, adventure time generates a mode of living in which many things happen to individual protagonists but the overall structure of society remains unchanged. “The adventure chronotope,” writes Bakhtin, referring specifically to its form in the Greek romance novel, is “characterized by a technical, abstract connection between space and time, by the reversibility of moments in a temporal sequence, and by their interchangeability in space” (emphasis in original, p. 100). “Bakhtin introduces chronotope,” Holquist reaffirms, “to name the existential immediacy of fleeting moments and places” (p. 20). In adventure time, these moments occur along a path pre-determined by existing momentum punctuated – but not ultimately effected – by random chance.

Holquist continues, “the chronotope is...an instrument for calibrating existence” (p. 20). Opposed to adventure time is folkloric time, in which the unchanging is used as a resource for adapting to new circumstances and altered or disrupted structures. Bakhtin

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<sup>4</sup> Holquist specifies that such boundary-crossing as a kind of walking in the other’s shoes: “our changing places,” he says, to illustrate Bakhtin’s concept of transgression (2009, p. 19 draft).

identifies novels by French writer Francois Rabelais as achieving a “special connection between a man and all his actions, between every event of his life and the spatial-temporal world” (p. 167). The folkloric orientation unifies timespace as a real life series of days and minutes in a human life,<sup>5</sup> and is built from folkloric concerns with highly localized and concrete human activities, such as those of the body (e.g., eating, defecating, dying) and the community (such as storytelling and decision-making). Bakhtin calls the metric by which he contrasts folkloric time to adventure time “the fullness of time:

...Where there is no passage of time there is also no moment of time, in the full and most essential meaning of the word. If taken outside its relationship to past and future, the present loses its integrity, breaks down into isolated phenomena and objects, making of them a mere abstract conglomeration. (Emphasis in original, p. 146.)

Writing in Russian after the turn of the 20th century, Bakhtin perceives a constructivist relationship among language as a medium, different ideals about time (chronotopes), and “an actual future. For even in these [novelistic] forms,” he writes,

after all, everything must lead into a real future, into precisely that which does not yet exist but which at some point must exist. In essence, these forms [of mythological and literary folklore] strive to make actual that which is presumed obligatory and true, to infuse it with being, to join it to time, to counterpose it – as something that actually exists and is at the same time true – to the available reality, which also exists, but which in contrast is bad, not true. (P. 149.)

Bakhtin does not automatically elevate the folkloric as preferable to adventure time, because much folklore participates in “historical inversion...a peculiar ‘trans-positioning’” in which the future is “emptied” due to a disproportionate privileging of the past and present (p. 147). Instead, the fullness of time is best expressed, according to Bakhtin, by “forms related to the uncovering of social contradictions. Every such uncovering inevitably pushes time into the future” (147). This is the unique power of the novel, that through engagement with social heterogeneity and the deployment of varied chronotopes, authors infuse reality into their fiction such that time is made full. (Hence the pleasure of reading a good book.)

Each of these essentially opposed categories (adventure-time, folkloric-time) encompasses variations, and as novelists become more sophisticated the intermixing of varieties increases in complexity. Bakhtin identifies precise characteristics that distinguish overt and subtle calibrations to timespace displayed by authors in different novelistic genres and historical eras. These characteristics will be deployed in the analysis, below, of representations of simultaneous interpretation in contemporary fiction. Ways that interpreters and the profession of interpreting are represented in popular culture both reflects and contributes to the status and implementation of professional practices of simultaneous interpretation, providing evidence of values and attitudes as well as opening – at least potentially – a dialogic window for skills development in the use of interpretation and, perhaps, more desirable synchronicities in calibrating the timespaces among intercultural communicators.

## Representations of Interpreting in Contemporary Fiction

The chronotope that seems most applicable to this analysis is the adventure time Bakhtin explicates as characteristic of the Greek romance novel. This kind of timespace “is composed of a series of short segments that correspond to separate adventures; within each such adventure, time is organized from without, technically” (1981, p. 91). Further-

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<sup>5</sup> Rephrased from Bakhtin’s negative description of what adventure time does not do (1981, p. 94).

more, “Greek adventure time leaves no traces – neither in the world nor in human beings. No changes of any consequence occur, internal or external, as a result of the events recounted in the novel” (p. 106). Bakhtin illuminates the construction of this chronotope through an analysis of indices in the Greek romance novel that measure time, space, and relationships among timespace, characters’ actions, and events in the depicted world. These indices provide the metrics of timespace by which Holquist names Bakhtin’s philosophical achievement: the elemental process of chronotopic calibration. By identifying timespace indices in novelistic representations of simultaneous interpretation,<sup>6</sup> I aim to show how present discourse about the intercultural communication practice of interpreted interaction calibrates to the static chronotope of adventure time. To rephrase Bakhtin: No changes of any consequence are supposed to occur, internal or external, as a result of communicative interaction interpreted by the interpreter.

Let us begin with a long excerpt from a novel by the internationally-renowned Spanish author, Javier Marías. He presents a realistic description of the ‘contents’ one may encounter over the course of a professional interpreting career. His tone (the “key” in Hymesian terms<sup>7</sup>) is characteristic of contemporary intellectual discourse, combining cynicism and self-mockery. Marías also conflates – as is common – the two distinct practices of (written) translation and (oral, i.e. spoken or signed) interpretation.

...the task of the translator or interpreter of speeches and reports is boring in the extreme, both because of the identical and fundamentally incomprehensible jargon universally used by all parliamentarians, delegates, ministers, politicians, deputies, ambassadors, experts and representatives of all kinds from every nation in the world, and because of the unvaryingly turgid nature of all their speeches, appeals, protests, harangues and reports. People who have never done this kind of work might think it must be fun or, at the very least, interesting and varied, or more than that, they might even think that in a sense one is at the heart of world decisions with firsthand access to highly detailed and important information about every aspect of the lives of different races, political information, urban and agricultural information, information about armaments, cattle-raising, ecclesiastical matters, physical, linguistic, military and Olympic information, information about police matters and tourism, chemistry and propaganda, sex and television and viruses, sports and banking and cars, hydraulics and war studies and ecology and local customs. It’s true that, during my working life, I’ve translated speeches and texts by all kinds of people on the most unexpected subjects (at the start of my career I was chosen to utter the posthumous words of Archbishop Makarios, just to name one unusual example), and I’ve proved myself capable of repeating in my own language, or in any of the other languages I understand and speak, long diatribes on such absorbing subjects as the different types of irrigation in Sumatra or minorities in Swaziland and Burkina (formerly Burkino-Faso, capital city: Ouagadougou), who, like everyone else, are having a bad time of it; I’ve reproduced complicated justifications for providing children with sex education in the Venetian dialect, or the embarrassment of so doing; on the feasibility of continuing to finance the lethal and expensive weapons made by the South African factory Armscor, since, in theory, they can’t be exported; on the possibilities of building a replica of the Kremlin in Burundi or Malawi, I think it was (capital cities; Bujumbura and Zomba); on the need to split off from the Spanish peninsula the whole of the east coast (including Murcia) thus making it an island and avoiding the annual torrential rains and floods that are such a burden on the national budget; on a disease attacking marble in Parma, the spread of AIDS in the islands of Tristan da Cunha, the infrastructure of soccer in the Arab Emirates, low morale in the Bulgarian

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<sup>6</sup> Ebru Diriker (2004) includes a chapter of literary critique on the representation of simultaneous interpretation in a Turkish novel as a complement to her analysis of interpreter agency during simultaneous interpretation at an academic conference. *De-/Re-Contextualizing Conference Interpreting: Interpreters in the Ivory Tower?* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

<sup>7</sup> Although specified to acts of oral communication, the “key” refers to cues that establish the “tone, manner, or spirit” of a message’s salience within a given cultural context or bounded discursive event. Dell Hymes 1974. **Foundations of Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach.** Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania. (P. 57.)

navy and, as happened a few years ago in Londonderry by order of a mayor who ended up being sacked, a strange ban on burying the dead, who instead were piled up in a stinking heap on a bit of waste ground. All this and more have I religiously translated and transmitted and repeated, exactly as spoken by others, by experts and scientists and luminaries and wise men from every discipline and from the most distant countries, unusual people, exotic people, erudite and eminent people, Nobel prizewinners and professors from Oxford and Harvard who would submit reports on the most surprising topics at the request of their governments or by representatives of their governments or by delegates or even by the deputies of those representatives. (1995/1992, p. 47–49.)

Mariás' breathless writing style continues throughout this novel, *A Heart So White*, originally written in Spanish and translated into English by Margaret Jull Costa. This first-person diatribe on interpreting actually composes an entire chapter. The section excerpted above is notable for its emphasis on the content: "information," "subjects," and "topics" – which are delivered in "jargon" that, however "turgid," and no matter how "unexpected" or "surprising" (even "incomprehensible!") – is able to be "repeated," "reproduced," i.e., to be "religiously translated and transmitted and repeated, exactly as spoken" into an interpreter's "own language, or in any of the other languages [the interpreter can] understand and speak." All spaces (of cultural difference, of mental/emotional/intellectual orientations to physically-distanced places) are transversible without alteration, and no change is produced – only duplication. Mariás' delivers the ridicule in the first-person voice of his interpreter-protagonist, denouncing a "veritable translatorial fever" (p. 49) gripping international organizations in which, the protagonist "wonder[s] with some alarm if anyone understands anything of what anyone says" (p. 53). The ills of interpretation are evidenced by the confidence participants in interpreted interaction instill in the interpretations, a confession of ignorance of knowledge by interpreters about anything they interpret, and an image of infinite regress in attempts to control meaning through a never-ending series of verification. After such a resounding parody, the conclusion that there is no option but to trust interpreters and the interpretations they provide is incongruous, to say the least.

Interpreted interaction is thus presented as inherently strange – foreign at best, with the implicit implication that avoidance may be wise. The world of the Greek romance is also, according to Bakhtin, alien. Its events and features are presented in isolation, singled out, bounded as if they are unique rather than examples of any particular category or related to structured activity. No description ties together the whole; the unfamiliar and random is not even particularly emphasized. This chronotope establishes a timespace of "isolated curiosities and rarities that bear no connection to each other" (p. 102). The kind of human being that inhabits this timespace (or is produced through interaction with it, depending upon one's angle of approach) is, by Bakhtin's analysis, essentially passive – things happen to them, they are not initiators or actors despite undergoing various trials. The main personality characteristic is one of endurance: "to such an individual," writes Bakhtin of the hero in Greek romance, "things can merely happen" (emphasis in original, p. 105). By going through whatever tests arise by chance the heroes in Greek adventure time "establish their identity, their durability and continuity" (p. 106–107).

John le Carré (2006), in the voice of his interpreter-protagonist, Salvo, offers a compelling portrait of "your top interpreter", who maintains languages as arrows in a professional quiver (p. 1), "think[s] as fast as a numbers boy in a coloured jacket buying financial futures" (14), "is trained to function under all weather conditions" (p. 170), follows all the moves made by interlocutors (p. 173) – including poetry, academic lectures, and spontaneous bursts into song – "respond[ing] without premeditation...hears...leaps, the art follows...the talent comes in the instant response" (p. 86), resents being made to look silly and especially useless (p. 181), should never apologize (p. 193), maintains a sacrosanct code to one's employer that precludes indulging personal scruples (p. 2), is "always...prepared to act as diplomats when called upon" (p. 124), and "must never be a

kill-joy” (p. 223). The interpreter strives to blend seamlessly into a communication event despite personal qualms. Salvo winds up in a situation where decisions are being made that will have disturbing consequences:

I did my best for my employers. What was I supposed to do? Pretend I hadn't heard Haj say what he said? Keep it to myself? I'm here to do a job and be paid for it...I'm an interpreter. They talk, I render. I don't stop rendering people when they say wrong things. I don't censor, edit, revise or invent, not the way certain of my colleagues do. I give it straight. If I didn't, I wouldn't be Mr Anderson's favourite son. I wouldn't be a genius in my field. Legal or commercial, civil or military: I render everybody equally and impartially, regardless of colour, race and creed. I'm the bridge, Amen and out. (P. 183.)

The professional assertions of non-interference (i.e. no change) represented by Salvo in le Carré's espionage, *Mission Song*, are carried even further by the self-mockery of Mariás' protagonist in his contemporary romance. Not only is nothing changed during the delivery, nothing is retained and thus will never move to another space or place.

Despite the fact that I translated all the speeches and texts I spoke of before, I can barely remember a single word, not that I ever did and not because there's a limit to how much information the memory can retain, but because, even at the moment I was translating I could remember nothing, that is, even then I had no idea what the speaker was saying nor what I said subsequently or as one imagines happens, simultaneously. He or she said it and I said or repeated it, but in a mechanical way that has nothing whatsoever to do with intellection (more than that, the two activities are completely at odds), for you can only repeat more or less accurately what you hear if you neither understand nor assimilate any of it (especially if you're receiving and transmitting without pause) and the same thing happens with written texts of this type, which have no literary merit whatsoever and which you never get the chance to correct or ponder over or go back to. So all the valuable information to which people might imagine we translators and interpreters working in international organizations are privy, in fact, escapes us completely, from beginning to end, from top to bottom, we haven't a clue about what's brewing or being plotted and planned in the world, not the slightest glimmer. (P. 52–53.)

The protestations of ignorance are extreme. Not only do they reflect poorly on interpreter's actual intelligence, such lampooning subtly implies that interlocutors are mere dupes. First, interlocutors have allowed themselves to be forced by circumstances into a relation of trust that they do not want, and second, are expected to believe that there is no recourse beyond assuming that the interpreters are working in an inexplicable machine-like fashion that is essentially closed to intervention. Mariás in fact takes this scenario to the extreme by depicting his interlocutors, two high-ranking government officials, as oblivious to the manipulations of their words by his interpreter-protagonist, who uses the opportunity as a chance to flirt with the “security interpreter” who does not intervene (as, technically, she should) with his deliberate deviations from the politicians staid utterances in the service of creatively inventing an interesting dialogue.

The timespace represented by both le Carré and Mariás fits the precise metrics for Greek adventure time identified by Bakhtin. Every statement by each author, even in their differences, calibrates to a technical, abstract connection between the space of the interpreted interaction and the filling of time, by the reversibility of original utterances and interpreted utterances (it doesn't matter – or isn't supposed to matter – which comes first), and by the interchangeability in location – where, or even if, the interpretation occurs has no particular bearing on plot. These representations show that interpreters are supposed to be there and not there, a tension requiring a cooperative act of forgetting. The result is that nothing is given toward a comprehensive understanding of simultaneous interpretation as a kind of intercultural communication with particular, potentially even unique, potentials for calibrating to timespace.

## *Representations of Interpreting in Fiction by Members of the European Parliament*

While conducting fieldwork into the system of simultaneous interpretation at the European Parliament (EP),<sup>8</sup> I came across two works of fiction written by a current and a former elected Member. Bill Newton Dunn is serving his fourth term as a Liberal from the UK; he published *The Devil Knew Not* in 2000. Pers Gahrton is a Swedish Green who served one term and combined two works originally written in Swedish into *Life and Death in the European Parliament* (2004). The thrust of both books is pedagogical – the storyline is trapping for teaching the public about the mission and inner workings of the European Union’s overarching political institution, which is to represent the public in a democratic fashion and legislate on their behalf.

Both storylines trace historical European politics while situating them in a contemporary context to illustrate concerns, fears, ideals, and examples about how Members in the Parliament actually work.

Simultaneous interpretation is an integral part of the everyday texture of this multilingual institution, and appears in both books. Dunn wrote prior to the Eastern European Enlargement of 2004, Gahrton repackaged his work in anticipation of it. “At the end of November 2002 the European Parliament’s skyscraper in Strasbourg buzzed not only with the usual eleven official languages but also with another twelve languages from thirteen candidate countries, of which ten become full EU members by May 1st, 2004” (p. 3, his diary). The calibration to timespace indicated by the orientation of both writers’ characters to the heterogeneity of languages bears no distinctive differences from the representations of Mariás and le Carré. Vera, the Swedish journalist-protagonist in Gahrton’s book finds herself “forced to use documents that were not available in any language other than French” (p. 9) and “irritat[ed] that she couldn’t translate the usual journalist French herself” (p. 9). Although lacking fluency, there are still circumstances where, for instance, “She was answered in broken French, [which] she was able to translate with some difficulty” (p. 34) because of her limited knowledge of “restaurant orders and everyday phrases” (p. 9). The British Member of the European Parliament (MEP) protagonist in Dunn’s book, Owen, recounts anecdotes involving misinterpretation, explains the difficulties with interpreting humor and the etiquette of sharing the text of speeches with interpreters in advance “to allow them to check for difficult words” (p. 210).

Both writers make the effort to depict how the system of simultaneous interpretation actually functions. Their examples illustrate certain conceptions of meaning and concerns about understanding predicated upon small segments of communication: “difficult words,” “jokes” and “puns” that are deemed “untranslatable” or phrases ambiguous enough in sound to be readily misinterpreted such as “when an English mention of ‘shooting rapids’ was understood by the German interpreter as ‘shooting rabbits’ and led to a weird discussion about hunting” (Dunn, p. 44). There is a hint, here, of the interlocutor gullibility Mariás scoffs at in the face of a process of interpretation that apparently brooks no doubt. Dunn includes an interpreter as a supporting character who instructs, “Humour doesn’t translate easily into other languages” (p. 44). Dunn also illustrates how interpretation or language difference can be used as an evasion for dealing with substantive issues, as in, “But they use foreign languages in the European Parliament so there can be no cut and thrust” (p. 201), and “Käfer neatly avoided giving a direct answer by using the curiosity of the German language where verbs often come at the end of a sentence: ‘My Greek friend, you should know that it is discourteous to interrupt a German

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<sup>8</sup> Funded by a US Fulbright grant to the European Union, 2008-2009. Some fieldnotes are posted at <[www.reflexivity.us](http://www.reflexivity.us)>, organized in the Series: Simultaneous Interpretation in the European Parliament.

before he has reached his verb” (p. 216). Gahrton’s representations are similarly technical and abstract, indicating a desire to avoid interpreters when possible.

The mechanical nature of the process of simultaneous interpretation in the EP is embedded throughout both Dunn and Gahrton’s expositions. Dunn explains the procedure for newcomers, such as an observer who Owen the MEP escorts to a seat and proceeds to “[explain] how to listen to interpretation with the headset” (emphasis added, p. 170). Listening appears, in all of these accounts, to be a rather loose activity in relation to interpreted interaction. “Members,” writes Dunn in the guise of Owen, “did not speak to persuade other members : most already had their own opinions. Speeches were made for the written record and for the media outside” (p. 210). But there is still the visceral experience, as described in this instance: “Owen put on his headphones as a female interpreter did her best to convert the torrent of Greek into English” (p. 38). It is possible, as Vera experiences, to “[follow the debate] for a while through her earphones and interpreters and [understand]” (Gahrton, p. 32), even though visitors are also reputed to have “listened spellbound without understanding” (Dunn, p. 125).

Meanwhile, Members such as Owen use their time “twiddling the language dial” (p. 124) in order to begin learning other languages. Communication is described in the most depersonalized terms: “[coming] from the Speaker via the interpreter” (Gahrton, p. 37) via technological mediums, as in: “The TV screen showed a Portuguese member moving his lips to a submission that issued into the room in Swedish via an interpreter” (p. 93). Communication in the European Parliament always occurs under “an extremely strict time limit” (p. 168) in which, most often, “There is absolutely no chance of having time to confer” (p. 105), and “the small time delay caused by interpretation” (Dunn, p. 210) is generally framed as a problem: Everything, even the three options for voting,

has to be translated, which takes time. This means that the translation can become out of step with the original. When the Speaker says ‘against’ in Portuguese, for example, the interpreter has only got as far as ‘for’. It is even worse with a Greek Speaker who is interpreted into Swedish via English or French. He may have to get to ‘abstain’ while the Swedish interpreter has only got as far as ‘for’. In practice, you cannot vote with certainty unless you know the three strategic terms, ‘for’, ‘against’, and ‘abstain’, in all EU languages. (Gahrton, p. 105–106.)

As meetings come to the end of their scheduled time, rituals are played out: “As usual, the chairman was forced to appeal to the interpreters and, as usual, granted the necessary extension, as usual accompanied by tumultuous applause” (p. 164). Chairmen predictably enjoin their colleagues:

I must urge esteemed members to keep to the matter in hand and only speak when they have the word. We only have a very short time left before our hard-working interpreters...’

Here the chairman was interrupted by heavy applause. It was always the way, Vera observed. As soon as anyone mentioned the word interpreters, it was almost always in almost subservient well-mannered terms, which without exception were followed by a powerful salvo of applause, as though the interpreters were a kind of higher service. And perhaps they were, for without them nothing could work” (p. 163).

Despite the burlesque given by Mariás in his treatment of politicians and interpreters – or perhaps as an extension of it – he too asserts that “the translations are the only fully functioning element in these organizations...for every word pronounced (in session or assembly) and every scrap of paper sent, whatever the subject, whoever it is, in principle, addressed to or whatever its objective (even if it’s highly confidential), is immediately translated into several languages, just in case. When we’re working, we translators and interpreters do nothing but translate and interpret...” (p. 49).

Meanwhile, Dunn reminds us through the supporting-character voice of an interpreter, “But you must understand that we interpreters know nothing. The speeches made by the

members pass into our ears and out of our mouths without us remembering what they say” (p. 44). As with the adventure time chronotope in the representations by Mariás and le Carré, the calibrations to timespace of MEPs using simultaneous interpretation in the European Parliament also replicates the depersonalized, even mechanistic, interchangeable, and inconsequential orientation to timespace in the ancient Greek romantic novel. Neither interpreters nor interlocutors can act as initiators of change in this chronotope, because, “This most abstract of all chronotopes is also the most static. In such a chronotope the world and the individual are finished items, absolutely immobile” (Bakhtin, p. 110). No wonder listening is an optional and undervalued activity. Instead, it is counterposed with the activity of looking:

Owen ... rubbed his eyes, put the headphones over his ears again, and looked around at his colleagues.

Group meetings were not dull if you knew where to look. Entertainment sometimes came from watching bitter personal rivalries explode between members. (Dunn, p. 122)

## Goddag yxskaft<sup>9</sup>

What’s that got to with it? Successes of communication using simultaneous interpretation are completely absent from novelistic discourses about it. Everything in these fictional representations works to diminish or undermine the intercultural communication practice of simultaneous interpretation. The calibration to a uniform, dominant, and apparently unquestionable monolingual timespace is accomplished through rhetorical diminishment of participants (interlocutors as well as interpreters) and the activity itself. If interpreters assert their presence, if interlocutors remember and respond to the fact that interpreters are ‘there,’ are doing something with language to make it sensible across space and time, then the monolingual illusion – the notion of having singular control over one’s own meaning – is destroyed. The valorized experience of communicative flow generated by a unitary medium of the same language is imposed, chronotopically, to measure processes of simultaneous interpretation.

An effect of this calibration is to mask the inherent heteroglossia that is the essence of all language use, an element that is irrevocably highlighted during processes of simultaneous interpretation. The fundamentally uncertain status of meaning can only be denied during interpreted interaction by assuming an orientation that treats the interpreter as inconsequential, presumes cultural variation is interchangeable, and that society overall is immutable. This lack of change is the basic feature of the adventure time chronotope. “At the end [of the Greek romance, or an interpreted interaction]...initial equilibrium...is restored. Everything returns to its source, everything returns to its own place...people and things have gone through something, something that did not, indeed, change them but that did (in a manner of speaking) affirm what they, and precisely they, were as individuals, something that did verify and establish their identity, their durability and continuity. The hammer of events shatters nothing and forges nothing – it merely tries the durability of an already finished product. And the product passes the test. (Bakhtin, p. 106–107.)

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<sup>9</sup> “Goddag yxskaft” in Swedish is literally translated as “How do you do axe handle”, but it means “What’s that got to with it”. (Gahrton, p. 84.)



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# Polyphonic Portrayals: A Dostoevskian dream or a researcher's reality?

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Polyphony, as the means through which Bakhtin's notion of heteroglossia is operationalised, can be described as an artistic device which presents characters "so that they (heros) can appear as moral beings who can answer to us and to whom we must ourselves answer" (Hirschkop, 1999, p. 167). Dostoevsky's employment of polyphony in his narrative work is upheld by Bakhtin (1973) as the most effective means of interpreting (and presenting) voices at play. Polyphonic characters express themselves through careful structuring, as Krasnov explains:

Dostoevsky's principal achievement as an artist lies in the creation of a new type of novel called *polyphonic* in contradiction to *homophonic* novels of writers such as Lev Tolstoy, Turgenev, and Goncharov...Characters in such a novel are no longer objects manipulated by the author, as Bakhtin claims they are in a homophonic novel, but subjects coexisting as autonomous worlds with the world of the author and contending with him for the reader's attention. The author expresses himself, then, not so much through one character or another, but chiefly through the structure of the novel...(Krasnov, 1980, p. 5).

Polyphony, as a device, is derived from Menippeaic traditions<sup>1</sup> as "communication between two spaces: that of the scene and that of the hieroglyph, that of representation *by* language, and that of experience *in* language, system and phrase, metaphor and metonymy" (Moi, 1986, p. 55). Polyphonic narrative does not seek to execute a plot with beginning, middle and end as is typically the case in narrative forms of writing<sup>2</sup>. Rather the emphasis is placed on aspects of literary manipulation of events to portray ideology rather than events *per se*. Emphasis is placed on the authors ability to allow multiple voices (and voices-within-voices) to remain in play and characters to speak for themselves through the multiple genres employed. Dialogue becomes an ongoing activity that deepens and strengthens personality rather than being seen as an end in itself.

I took this notion seriously in an investigation of parents and a teacher as they sought to understand meanings that were conveyed by toddlers, based on assessment practices that required the teacher to author the toddler through written narrative<sup>3</sup>. Throughout this task I sought to engage with and present participant point-of-view without subsuming any of the participants, assuming their meaning or speaking on their behalf. This was no mean feat given the age of the toddler and their *modus operandi* of communication. I found few research precedents in this regard, although a small number of Bakhtinian scholars have endeavoured to exploit the concept of polyphony variously within pedagogical practice in

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<sup>1</sup> The Menippean era of ancient Greece stood in opposition to Aristotlean logic. Emphasis was placed on humour, hyperbole, oxymoron, polemic conventions, and multiple genres are employed. As such, Menippea bears close allegiance to Rabelaian carnivalesque (Branham, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Tolstoy (Carroll, 1974).

<sup>3</sup> In New Zealand early childhood education assessment the teacher is invited to create 'learning stories' as narratives of the toddler's learning experiences (Ministry of Education, 2004). In a report by Stuart, Aitken, Gould and Meade (2008) teachers described the difficulties they faced in constructing narratives with toddlers who they did not share a common language with.

classroom environments (Lensmire, 1997; Matusov & Smith, 2005; Torres, Reyes, & Gonzalez, 2008). I was keen to employ polyphony as a means of creating a conceptual and dialogic thirdspace within which participants could authentically listen to one another's voices-in-play, especially those that are conveyed through visual means using gesture. Using polyphony I was further challenged to draw on actual voices rather than translations of voice in my role as academic 'novelist' who was tasked with writing up the project as a thesis (White, 2009).

In essence, the tension for hermeneutic endeavours of this nature lies in what constitutes 'monologic' as opposed to 'dialogic' teaching practice or, as Matusov (2009) argues, whether or not all teaching represents dialogic pedagogy. Dialogic practices, therefore, do not require an absolute relinquishment of the authoritative voice of the teacher but neither should the teacher's voice (or the authoritative discourses that underpin teacher practice) subsume those of the students or, for that matter, the teachers own competing discourses. I extrapolate this to mean that as a dialogic teacher (or, for that matter, a dialogic researcher – as was my quest in this research project) the task is to explore this tension in and through dialogue as a series of polyphonic portrayals.

As a researcher I was keen to exploit this concept in an investigation of very young children under the age of two years – hereafter called 'toddlers' – in a formalised early childhood education assessment context. In this paper I focus specifically on the method I developed for generating data that would operationalise polyphony, as a Dostoevskian tenet, in an empirical study. I describe the use of split-screen video and re-probing interviews as a two-pronged way of focussing on my unit of analysis – utterance. Given the age of the children in my study, age 18-22 months, and the different language forms at my disposal, I argue that a visual means of capturing data was the most appropriate way of capturing language that would contribute to the unit of analysis in this study.

In using the term polyphonic video, I mean video footage that is captured from the visual field of each individual, as a visual means of accessing each participants authorial surplus and, in doing so, responding to Dostoevsky's's polyphonic imperative. In the study, this involved the use of three cameras, taken from the visual field of a toddler (top left screen), a teacher (top right screen) and myself as researcher (bottom right screen), as figure 1 suggests:



Figure 1: Split screen screen dumps of the same video scene

Dicks, Soyinka and Coffey (2006) promote a multi-modal approach within visual ethnographies, suggesting that recognition of the strengths and weaknesses of each mode enables the researcher to make complementary choices. Field notes can provide additional information such as sounds, smells, textures, and reactions of the researcher, but are limited to what is written at the time; whereas video images can provide movement, sound, shapes, and relationships but they are limited to what is captured on the lens. Dicks et al. (2006) advocate for an approach that draws upon the strengths of each mode.

The employment of multiple camera perspectives in the present study meant that what was captured on the lens was accessible from three separate vantage points, to create scope for multiple interpretations of the acts. These time-synchronised moving images of the same scene from three lenses (the toddler, the teacher, and the researcher) were converted to DVD through *Premier Pro*, a software package that provides a movie making, editing function and enables the formation of split-screen, synchronised footage. The DVD was provided to the teacher and parent prior to re-probing interview session. Coupled with the use of journals and interviews, I argue that the employment of polyphonic video addressed this dialogic research quest more keenly than any other means available in the technological era at the time.

Several visual ethnographers (Banks, 2001; Goldman, Pea, Barron, & Derry, 2007) argue for a greater consideration of perspectives in research dealing with visual images. Not only does video footage generate detailed data but, as Bain-King and Moss (2007, p. 63) suggest, multiple interpretations “can be uncovered through a more richly reflexive mining of the textural depth of visual data”. I contend that a visual means of capturing data was likely to be the most appropriate way of seeking the complexity of participant *point-of-view* without subsuming their contributions into a monologic set of claims (or in overlooking them if non-traditional genres were used, as was the case for the toddler). Further, such an approach is in keeping with Russian aesthetics (Efimova & Manovich, 1993) that informed Bakhtin’s theories.

Morgan (2007, p 224) highlights the difficulty in engaging young children in research, and the importance of beginning to “utilise the technology to allow us to listen to young children”. This difficulty is accentuated in research with toddlers when the nature of their communication is gestural, or as Lokken (2000) suggests, corporeal and collaborative. The ability of video to capture motion as well as sound was therefore particularly compelling. I saw that the inclusion of footage as a means of both data generation and presentation offered a way of ensuring toddlers were present at all phases of this investigation, and that the complexity of their voice(s) was more accessible.

Functions such as re-play, slow motion, and stop were accessible to the participants through the use of DVD featuring three separate views of the same event. Access to the DVD provided open-ended opportunities for repetition, reflection, and revision. As Roth (2001, p. 386) explains “researchers who move frame by frame through video material are more likely to notice the continuous variation that discourse and genres undergo at those moments when students have not yet obtained a semantic model (their talk resembles “muddle”).” Since each participant played an evaluative role in their own right, their access to footage was central to the study.

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scene from three lenses (the toddler, the teacher, and the researcher) were converted to DVD through *Premier Pro*<sup>4</sup> and provided to the teacher and parent prior to each re-probing interview session. Coupled with the use of journals and interviews, I argue that the employment of polyphonic video addressed this dialogic research quest more keenly than any other means available in this technological era.

My role as researcher-participant required constant ethical vigilance to ensure that I upheld the tenets of dialogism. In doing so, I was reminded to avoid a weighty emphasis on knowledge to the detriment of morality in my research quest (Carroll, 1974). I interpreted this to mean that I should try to allow participant's to speak for themselves, in their own way, rather than try to 'fit' my own research agenda. My theorizing, therefore, was less concerned with getting extracting answers as truth, than truthfully representing the dialogic struggles of those who try to make sense of it. As such, I played a stenographer-like role, as Dostoevsky portrays in the following fictitious court scene:

I will say beforehand, and say emphatically, that I am far from considering myself capable of recounting all that took place in court, not only with the proper fullness, but even in the proper order....I shall do what I can, and my readers will see for themselves that I have done all I could (Dostoevsky, 1990, p. 656).

Following Dostoevsky's example, I worked with participants to ensure that each point-of-view had a place within the text, or through visual means. I did this by interviewing participants. I considered the concept of re-probing to be the best description of a technique that sought to provide a richer visual field to the participants than originally experienced at the time of the activity, and which did not seek to stimulate memory so much as invite perspectival point-of-view. In taking this approach I concur with other visual ethnographers (Goldstein, 2007; Rose, 2007) who argue that *all* images are manipulated – by both the photographer and the interpreter – based on the pragmatic and aesthetic choices they consciously or unconsciously bring to the images. Moving visual images can never represent ultimate truth but, rather, offer researchers re-playable movement, gesture and sound from which to generate meaning (Dicks et al., 2006). By collaborating with participants, this process is greatly enhanced as a perspectival endeavour. I sought to do this through initially inviting them to analyse the footage outside of the interview, and then bringing their coding to our meetings.

At these interviews a copy of the DVD was available to play on a laptop, and Key Participants were invited to start or stop the footage at any time to provide their interpretations. As a co-participant I also discussed my perspectives during this time. All sessions were videotaped from behind the participants (using a tripod) so that all forms of language could be considered in the analysis and I was free to fully engage with the interview. Involving toddlers in these interviews proved to be a challenging, yet revealing, task. One which generated rich data that surpassed my prior understanding of toddlers and their intersubjective skill.

These methods generated data from which to interrogate my research questions. However, they also provided me with an opportunity to operationalise polyphony within a real-life context. Combined with reflexive journal notes and exploration of secondary genres (such as planning templates, student records et al) in the centre context, I argue that such an approach offers rich entry to the heteroglossic domain of inquiry. Not only was I able to consider the nature of language and its selected usage within the wider context, but I could also consider the discourses which impact on how it is interpreted and strategically employed from the point-of-view of participants. While I do not pretend to emulate Dostoevsky's writing genius, I do contend that voices had the opportunity to

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<sup>4</sup> Premier Pro is a software package which provides a movie making, editing function and enables the formation of split-screen, synchronised footage.

stay-in-play and, in doing so, provoke insights and surprises that facilitate deeper meaning-making in research activity.

In sum, the operationalisation of polyphony in this study involved the following:

1. Video from the different visual perspectives of participants
2. Opportunity for participants to view video
3. Shared viewing with re-probing interview

I was uncertain how the toddlers might be able to contribute to the research process beyond their generous willingness to wear a camera at various intervals throughout the day. Although older children in the centre were very keen to see themselves and others on the footage afterwards, the toddlers were not. However, to my surprise and delight the toddlers willingly contributed to the research process during the interviews they attended with their parent(s). I confess that I did not always appreciate the latter at the time. It was only through later transcribing the interviews, which were also videoed, and making links between the toddlers' contributions and what had already been seen on the footage that I came to recognise the authorial surplus toddlers offered and which enhanced my ability to interpret metaphoric acts.

A powerful example of 18 month old Zoe's contributions took place on the final day of videoing where, for pragmatic reasons, it was decided that the parent interview would take place early in the morning, followed by an hour of videoing before Zoe went for a late morning nap. Prompted by video footage from the previous week I asked Zoe's mother if she might be able to shed light on the significance of a puzzle box that featured:

Researcher: And it seems as if [teacher] is thinking that Zoe is asking to do the puzzle or maybe naming the puzzle so she returns to this throughout the whole scene and she just can't get [teacher] to understand what she wants to do. Finally she puts the doll in the box and puts the lid on and I thought "why would you put a doll in a box" does she have a new doll in a box at home perhaps?

Mother: Well she puts her doll along with her other toys in a box... Well she's got a very old, a nappy box [holds hands out in box shape], and she, we, were chucking it out one day and she got it out and then started putting the dolls in it and then she had like, a blanket over top of it [uses hands to show a blanket on top by flattening out palms].

Researcher: Ahhh...

Mother: Yeah, it was like her putting them to bed...

Researcher: Here she is really trying to put the lid on.

Mother: Yeah I don't know about the lid 'cos with what we have at home she puts a blanket over it, lays it out flat so she just uses it like that. [Parent 1 Interview: 137–146]

Throughout the interview Zoe lingered close by, investigating various pieces of equipment in the room where we were located, and periodically exiting to retrieve another resource. At the time I had not considered that she was attending to our discussion but on viewing the interview footage later, it was clear that she was close by 'eavesdropping' on our conversation. An hour later, when I started filming, Zoe immediately went to retrieve the doll, a basket and fortuitously was given a blanket by one of the teachers. She repeated the *exact same actions* her mother had described during the earlier interview, except this time with a sophisticated rendition of "rock-a'bye'baby". The following dialogue between myself and Zoe's mother conveys my amazement at this discovery:

Researcher: I agree with what you're saying. What fascinated me, I don't know if you thought about this, but the last interview we had which was only an hour before this footage, you'd been telling me about how she put a blanket over her doll in her box at home

- Mother: Yes  
Researcher: I started to think... was she doing, here ... what we had talked about? ...Like she heard us say those things?  
Mother: Yeah!  
Researcher: And when I started getting ready for the camera she went “yay” and ran round and round the room in circles and asked for her hat and as soon as the hat went on she went into this, almost role play, as if, it felt to me as if she was enacting what we had been discussing in the interview ... which is pretty amazing  
Mother: Well yeah [laughs]  
Researcher: ..I mean otherwise it’s a bit of a coincidence don’t you think? The exact same thing yet she was doing other things before we were filming but she initiated that  
Mother: Oh... OK.  
Researcher: And that determination to have the blanket over the top. I mean I’ve seen the teachers do that with babies in the buggies but I haven’t seen the teachers do it like that, and rocking, whereas you were saying that happens at home AND was discussed earlier/  
Mother: /Yeah at home she puts the blanket over the box at home but the rocking thing with the baby, um [demonstrates rocking] like she doesn’t rock the box at home but it seems like when we have our friends baby over in the ‘bucket’ we can rock her – in the car seat  
Researcher: ...Mmmm so is it like it all came together? ...It felt to me like she knew, that there was this performance element to this “I put the camera on - I am now doing what they want me to do”?  
Mother: Yeah  
Researcher: But why? I went back to the interview transcript to find out if she was there when we talked about all this, and she was. She was contributing so I thought “wow” – that was a wow moment for me and it kind of blew my mind  
Mother: Definitely. [Parent 1 Interview 5:9–58]

Similarly, during a subsequent interview between her teacher, mother, father, and I, Zoe, who had access to all the equipment in the centre since it took place outside of normal hours, allocated dolls to each of us (except her father). During our final interview her teacher (who is Maori) realised that Zoe selected the same dark-skinned doll, on screen and off, every time she was in her company:

- Researcher: OK, that’s that one [plays footage] ...she’s still got that doll  
Teacher: A brown baby [laughs] ...when I was little girl I had a little brown baby and I hated her.  
Researcher: Did you?  
Teacher: Yes [laughs] it’s quite funny and I remember “Playschool”<sup>5</sup>/  
Researcher: Oh yes ...I remember Jemima/  
Teacher: I hated Manu.  
Researcher: Really, how fascinating... Do you remember why?... I mean I find it interesting that she is particularly privileging this particular darker skinned doll/  
Teacher: And that’s why I’m thinking “are you making a connection between the doll and me?” I mean it’s got black hair like me, it’s got brown skin like me and I’m thinking...maybe...  
Researcher: Yeah it did cross my mind/  
Teacher: It crossed my mind too and then I thought “naaahhh.” [Teacher Interview 6: 818–833]

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<sup>5</sup> Playschool was a New Zealand children’s television programme during 1980’s. Jemima was a fair-skinned doll and Manu was a dark-skinned doll – both featured on the programme which was screened daily.

Zoe's father also indicated his awareness of Zoe's interpretive presence during interviews as he frequently turned from the table where we were sitting to observe what she was doing and whispered "she knows exactly what we're saying" [Focus group interview: 400]. In this way the interpretation of acts shifted from moments in time on screen, to moments across time, a process a Bakhtinian nature of utterance as a unit of analysis could explain within its chronotopic heritage (Holquist, 2009). It was insights such as these that led us to value the *effort* of understanding in "lively play with the "languages" of poets, scholars, monks, knights and others, where all "languages" were masks and where no language could claim to be an authentic, incontestable face" [Bakhtin, 1981, p. 273]. Hence the toddlers provided adults the opportunity to explore the differences in our authorship encounters as potentially enhancing to our understandings of both the toddlers and, ultimately, of ourselves.

Despite our best intentions, a large number of language forms employed by the toddlers were *not* noticed by adults even though they were clearly visible on the screen from the toddlers visual lens. Forms that were noticed were generally drawn from an adult symbolic plane of familiar words, sounds and associated actions (such as drawing on resources or pointing) rather than gestures and movements the toddlers so readily employed. Language forms that were less noticed included *clap, clenched fist, facial gesture, hands behind back, laughter, outreached hand, stroke* and *wave*. Noticed forms changed over time from more diverse forms to primarily verbal. I speculate that the reason for this is twofold: the toddlers' language altered as they grew older in response to the positive cues they received when using words that were familiar to adults but also the ability for adults to interpret sounds and gestures alongside oral language increased with repeated analysis of footage. Junefelt (2007a, p. 12) suggests that adults do not notice utterances beyond verbal words because they are different from adult speech yet, "Unconsciously, though, the adult is tuned in to the child's speech, and interprets the child's utterances. The child in turn de-contextualizes parts of the adult's utterances."

As the study progressed, it became increasingly apparent that the visual surplus each participant brought to their analysis was informed by the ideologies they brought to their gaze. In making this claim I concur with Bakhtin (1990, p. 24) who suggests that what can be seen is determined by the author *in relationship* with the hero and is correspondingly shaped by what the author brings to the authorship experience, that is, their authorial surplus (which is constrained and enhanced by the ideologic horizons at their disposal). Such surplus requires both inside and outside subjectivities. As the study progressed and each participant came to understand the other more through dialogue, I contend that a *polyphonic symphony* was created. One is which appreciation of the toddlers was generated. The following commentary by the teacher towards the end of the study, highlights this subjective appreciation and portrays the increased levels of reflexivity and aesthetic evaluation that are invoked as a result of polyphonic portrayals:

...it's a bit of everything. It's something beautiful and something sad, you treasure that person more, it brings you all together and sometimes it's hard and sometimes there's a bit of sorrow there, sometimes a bit of anger. It's just a lot of things – it's a lot of things all mixed into one. it's special and it's beautiful and.... it's lots of things. [Teacher interview 6: lines 488–492]

One might think that, after several hours of discussion and many more hours of viewing and re-viewing hours of split-screen footage, I and my research partners would have well and truly explored every possible aspect of these toddlers' language. This could not be further from reality. The toddlers, and indeed adults, continued to offer revised interpretations each time a new video was shot, and even when the same footage was watched a second, third, or fourth time. I was especially struck by the perseverance of the toddlers in strategically utilising genres that would draw the adult eye toward them so that they might be authored. I came to see that they *wanted* to be authored but that such authorship



had to take place in relationship with adults who the toddlers perceived were genuinely interested. This may explain why so much more was revealed in interview sessions and video episodes that took place later in the project. Perhaps only then did the toddlers perceive that their language acts be appreciated aesthetically. Having said that I also contend that the toddlers retained their right to alter any interpretation in light of the constantly shifting, shadow-like, distorted meaning of language which was ultimately beyond our collective grasp. As Clark and Holquist (1984) explain:

Dialogism is a metaphysics of the loophole. And although the loophole is the source of frustration, pain and danger we must confront in a world so dominated by the unknowable, it is also the necessary pre-condition for any freedom we may know. (p. 347)

The toddlers' contributions in re-probing interviews and on as well as off screen interactions, highlight the ways in which these under two year olds actively authored their own evaluation in order that they might circumvent any final analysis. In the following example, Zoe alters the dialogue by non-verbally correcting my interpretation of her meaning:

- Researcher: It's interesting though 'cos shoes are here [points to adult shoes in cupboard] dress up shoes but I've never once seen her wear those. So there's something about the person that belongs to the shoes.
- Mother: That's probably true actually – I hadn't thought of that.
- Researcher: She seems to be always picking – either --- or ---'s shoes.
- Zoe: [holds up dress up shoe]
- Mother: Oh look... [points to Zoe who is now trying on a shoe]
- Researcher: It's great to have the whole room to yourself isn't it Zoe?
- Zoe: [holds a shoe up from the dress-ups]
- Mother: Oh is that a shoe?
- Researcher: And I was noticing **Zoe's** new shoes.
- Zoe: [Sits down to take off her own shoes] [Parent 1 Interview 2:103–114]

The language acts, and their location within various genres, highlight the complexity of individual personality which surpassed the authorial gaze of every participant. Bakhtin (1973, p. 234) explains, "The loophole makes all the heroes' self-definitions unstable, the word in them has no hard and fast meaning, and at any moment, like chameleon, it is ready to change its tone and its ultimate meaning". The multiple, often contradictory, forms and associated content used by both Zoe and Jayden provided additional complexities in our interpretations. My understanding of form and content was broadened as I came to appreciate the sophisticated nature of toddler language, its intentional location within the social realm, and the futility of our attempts to ever fully comprehend it. However, I too, retain a loophole by contending that in earnestly *trying* (through detailed analysis and discussion), our recognition yielded a much deeper appreciation, generating a rich array of genres from which to break through constraining borders of meaning. Seen in this light, meaning making can be viewed as a potential means of 'border-crossing' where interpretation is radically different between adult and toddler worlds:

All understanding is constrained by borders: freedom consists in knowing insofar as possible – for our ability to know is controlled by contextual factors larger than mere individual intention – what those borders are, so that they may be substituted by, translated into different borders. Speech genres provide a good example of this *relative* degree of freedom: the better we know possible variants of the genres that are appropriate to a given situation, the more choice we have among them. (McGee, in Bakhtin, 1986, p. xix)

Holquist (2009, p.19) aligns border-crossing to Bakhtin's notion of transgression as "the name of a boundary that through interaction (our changing places) can be overcome – transgressed – in experience." I saw that this was an especially difficult task for adults

who are intimately associated with toddlers since any assessment is closely aligned to an evaluation of one's own practice or even identity and, as a result, can be highly confronting. When maintaining close allegiance to an official discourse, I came to understand that language acts became impossible to recognise since they had become idealised and could only be interpreted in a literal, objectifying sense. As Gillespie (2005) explains language and its meaning is limited by the conventional, everyday nature of its delivery and, as a result, limits its interpretation. Genres that generated less certainty and drew on forms less familiar to the adults facilitated more symbolic interpretations and a great deal of laughter. Bakhtin (1968, p. 141) suggests "laughter was precisely a liberation of the emotions that dim the knowledge of life". Seen in this light I argue that when we approached interpretation in a subjectifying manner which treated the toddlers as yet-to-be-discovered individual personalities and research subjects rather than known objects, we were more able to embrace the tenets of polyphony and begin to experience transgression.

I feel certain that as technology develops in the years ahead visual ethnographic methods will be executed with greater ease than this study (and budget) afforded. This will greatly increase the capacity for adults to notice and recognise aspects of others in new and innovative ways, while recognising that they can never see everything. Based on what I have learnt from this research, additional insights could be generated by using a wider, less obtrusive, lens to track retinal movement<sup>6</sup> rather than more clumsy head movements (as was the case in the present study). Specific investigation of the movement of participant eyes during *analysis* would also yield insights since it is my contention that the toddler-cam was often and unwittingly glossed over because the researcher cam, privileging a wider and more static view, was more appealing to the adults. I further suggest that what the eye can see is far more complex than literal visibility and that this is an area worthy of further exploration, particularly since digital imaging (in particular the use of photographs) is now a central aspect of assessment practice in education and research. As this paper has highlighted, the associated rhetoric is complex, partial and challenging. In its conception, polyphonic portrayals may be difficult to grasp and frustratingly elusive, but the results of this study suggest that it is in the *effort of trying* that the greatest insights will be found.

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<sup>6</sup> Provided that the technology was sufficiently advanced so that there was no imposition on subjects.

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# Consciousness as the Subject Matter and Task of Psychology

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The interplay and life of consciousness are like a sequence of words, a dialogue.

G.G. Shpet

## The ontological aspect of the problem of consciousness

After emerging from the realm of philosophy, the problem of consciousness became a subject of reflection and research for a large number of sciences. Hardly any of them, including psychology, is capable of setting apart its own subject matter of the study of consciousness in any pure form. This is the basis of the title of the article. I am not sure that I will be able to clearly define the subject matter of the psychological study of consciousness, but I will try to present it as a task and lay out at least several ways of accomplishing it. The difficulties of presenting consciousness as the subject matter of psychology are compounded by the fact that psychology itself as a science cannot boast a rigorous definition of its own subject matter. There are several possibilities here. The simplest one is the usual tautologies: psychology is the science of the psyche... And then comes a not overly long enumeration of psychic processes and functions that sometimes includes consciousness. One sometimes encounters an expansive outline of the scope of psychology, which incorporates parts of more or less remote sciences, which are called related sciences. With regard to this concept of psychology, Gogol's Nozdrev even comes to mind: everything up to the forest is mine, the forest is mine, and everything beyond the forest is mine, too. (One justification, weak as it may be, for this kind of expansion is that other sciences, above all physiology, treat psychology exactly the same way.) Finally, one sometimes also encounters an unjustified narrowing of the subject matter of psychology, e.g. when it is defined as the orienting function of various forms of activity, which is equated with the psyche. It is hard to find a place for consciousness in this definition. The historical (if you can call it that) roots of this narrowing of the subject matter of psychology lie in the forcible injection of I.P. Pavlov's theory of conditioned reflexes into psychology in the 1950s. To the credit of psychologists, it should be pointed out that they did not adopt just any reflexes as the subject matter of psychology, but rather the reflex, "What is that?" As a result, it turned out that the research done by P.Ia. Gal'perin, A.V. Zoporozhets, E.N. Sokolov, et al. in orienting and exploratory activity did in fact make up one of the glorious pages of Soviet psychology—but only one. Incidentally, P.Ia. Gal'perin, who insisted more than the others on this narrow definition of the subject matter of psychology, dreamed of a time when psychology would become an objective science of the subjective world of human beings (and animals). This definition naturally encompasses consciousness, self-awareness and even the soul.

The task of defining the subject matter of a science must be treated *cum grano salis*, following the counsel of G.G. Shpet: ““For a science, its subject matter is like a mask at a ball, an anonym, a biography without the hero’s given name, patronymic and grandfather’s name. Science can describe a little, a great deal or everything about its subject matter, but one thing it never knows and cannot know in essence—what its subject matter, its name, patronymic and family name are. They are in a sealed envelope that is kept under the shreds of Philosophy... Will we learn much when we obtain and unseal the envelope?... Will we catch the meaning? Will we understand the intellect of the arts? (we would add “of the sciences” as well—*V.Z.*). Is it not more correct that only now do we ponder them, their fate, and we go off into seclusion to think about the meaning?” (Shpet, 1996, pp. 346–347).

The experience of the history of Soviet science teaches that it is better not to have a rigorous definition of the subject matter of a science and to have freedom of scientific work than to have such a definition and not to have freedom. Freedom is needed to understand the intellect and meaning of a science and to design the subject matter of one’s own inquiry. In practice that is exactly what happens, and scientists willy-nilly, based on the logic of their work, attempt to present various sectors of psychology, e.g. activity, personality, thought and consciousness, as the subjects of monodisciplinary or interdisciplinary inquiry (cf. Velikhov, Zinchenko, Lektorskii). This kind of freedom is not devoid of artifice, but in my view it is of a fairly innocuous nature. This article is not devoid of it, either. Still, I will try not to go too far, at any rate, beyond the bounds of psychology.

The principal difficulties of both a mono- and an interdisciplinary inquiry into consciousness involve the need to overcome or even repudiate the opposition between consciousness and existence, as well as, for that matter, the opposition between matter and consciousness. Binary oppositions have lost their credibility, they have ceased to give rise to meanings. M.K. Mamardashvili spoke of the “quasisubject” and “phenomenological” nature of consciousness, calling the phenomena of consciousness “spiritual-corporeal formations” and “third items.” Before him, G.G. Shpet called consciousness a “social item.”

The category of consciousness, like the categories of activity, the subject, and personality, is a fundamental and at the same time an extreme abstraction. The task of any science that lays claim to studying consciousness is to fill it with concrete ontological substance and meaning. After all, consciousness is not only born in existence and not only reflects and therefore embodies it—to be sure, in a reflected or distorted light—but also creates it. Only after this process of embodiment, rather than in its dubious purity, does living consciousness act as a subject of experimental study and then, when the ontology of consciousness is defined and agreed on, as a subject of interdisciplinary inquiry as well.

The task of ontologizing consciousness is not a new one for psychology. To this day consciousness is being reduced and, accordingly, identified with such phenomena as a distinctly apperceived image, a field of clear attention, the content of short-term memory, the obvious result of an act of thought, apperception of one’s own self, etc. In all of these cases true acts of consciousness are replaced by its external and often scanty results, i.e. by various well-known empirical phenomena that are accessible to self-observation. The inclusion of such phenomena in the ontology of consciousness may raise doubts because of their obvious subjectivity. There is, however, a great deal of truth in the old assertion by A.A. Ukhtomskii that the subjective is no less objective than the so-called objective. Stereotypes (clichés) involving efforts to find and localize consciousness in the structural formations of material nature are reproduced in more and more new forms. For example, the localization of consciousness in the brain, in its neurophysiological mechanisms (including the ludicrous search for the neurons of consciousness) attracts many researchers with the opportunity to use experimental techniques that have traditionally developed for the study of natural (rather than social) objects. Scientists are not affected by the warnings

from outstanding physiologists and neurophysiologists (from C. Sherrington to A. R. Lurii) that it is hopeless to search for consciousness in the brain. G. G. Shpet persuasively argued a hundred years ago that the claims of physiological psychology to the whole realm of psychology were untenable (Shpet, 2006). But physiological reductionism is indestructible. It is fed by the no less absurd computer reductionism, which has taken aim not only at consciousness but also at the self. Both types of reductionism are premised on an extreme simplification of the functions and processes of consciousness. Or as D. Dennett, a talented popularizer of his own ideas, puts it, their replacement with their own phantasms such as a “pandemonium of homunculi” or a kind of fame—in the sense of momentary renown or fleeting glory (Iulina, 2003, p. 109). N.S. Iulina cites K. Popper’s reasonable conclusion: if physics cannot explain consciousness, so much the worse for physics. We should add that the same applies to physiology.

The ongoing search for the matter of consciousness in language is more successful and promising. Even though both the traditional and the recent attempts to identify consciousness with various psychic acts or physiological functions are controversial, the very fact that they are taking place demonstrates that there is a persistent effort in psychology to ontologize the phenomena of consciousness, to define its functions and to construct consciousness as a subject of psychological inquiry. At the same time, none of the numerous forms of reduction of consciousness, as useful as they are in terms of describing its phenomenology and possible material foundations, cannot be considered satisfactory. This is due to the fact that the items to which it is reduced cannot even partially perform the actual functions of consciousness. They include the reflectional [*otrazhatel'naya*], generative (creative), regulatory-evaluative, dialogic, and reflexive [*refleksivnaya*] functions. **<<to distinguish between *otrazhatel'nyi* and *refleksivnyi*, I have adopted “reflectional” and “reflexive.” The latter has been used in the literature specifically by Vladimir Lefebvre, so I decided not to use “contemplative” or some other synonym. If you prefer another solution, I’d be eager to hear it.>>** Consciousness is polyfunctional—according to M.M. Bakhtin—polyphonic and its functions are not confined to this list.

The reflexive function, of course, is the principal one: it is the one that appears to characterize the essence of consciousness. Thanks to reflexion, consciousness bustles about in quest of the meaning of existence, of life, of activity: it finds, it loses, it goes astray, it searches again, it creates new meanings, etc. It works intensively on the causes of its own mistakes, delusions and failures. The wise consciousness knows that the main reason for failures is its freedom with respect to existence, but giving up freedom is tantamount to giving up oneself. Therefore consciousness, in choosing freedom, is always risking, including risking itself. This is normal. The tragedy begins when consciousness imagines itself as being absolutely free of natural and cultural history, when it ceases to feel that it is a part of nature and society, rids itself of responsibility and conscience and lays claim to the role of a demiurge. The latter may result from a sharp decrease in an individual’s ability to sustain criticism and from a distorted self-assessment, to the point where he no longer perceives himself as a human being or thinks of himself as super-human, which is essentially the same thing.

Objects of reflexion may be both images of the world and thoughts about it; the underpinnings and modes of a person’s regulation of his own behavior, actions and deeds; the processes of reflexion themselves; and finally, his own, or personal, consciousness. The basic premise for designing consciousness as a subject of inquiry must be the concept of it not only as an extreme abstraction but also as a very well-defined cultural-historical formation and vital organ. A given type of culture engenders a concept of consciousness as an epiphenomenon or a concept of consciousness that is almost entirely reduced to the unconscious. Such concepts are not merely a fact of culture but a factor in its development. The influence of psychoanalysis on twentieth-century culture is unparalleled. Culture now needs, more than ever, the development of concepts of consciousness per se in

all the richness of its existential, reflexive and spiritual properties and qualities and of consciousness as a creative, effective and active entity. Culture appeals to the consciousness of society and cries out about itself (Zinchenko, 1989).

The question arises: is such an all-powerful and omnipotent consciousness accessible to scientific cognition? It is well known that in order to analyze a concrete situation, it is helpful to rise above it, even to detach oneself from it, and turn the “visual world” into a “visual field” (terminology of J. Gibson). The latter is more pliant for managing and manipulating its elements (images). But consciousness is not the visual world, and certainly not the material world. And there are two possible ways here of handling it. One can either detach oneself from it or attempt to concretize it. In the first instance there is a danger of losing consciousness as an object of observation and study; in the second, a danger of inappropriate concretization. The early 1960s saw the appearance of the first models of cognitive and executive processes and the birth of cognitive psychology, which, in order to vivify (animate) them, populated block models of the processes it studied with demons and homunculi making choices and decisions. The skepticism over incorporating demons and homunculi into the block models of cognitive processes is fully justified. But we must not forget that the inclusion of each block in the system of information-processing in short-term memory or of broader cognitive structures was preceded by a detailed experimental study of the reality of the subjective that lay behind it, a kind of physics of the reception, storage, conversion and choice of a given type of information. The demons performed a coordinating, semantic, and reflexive function in the broad sense of the word. V. A. Lefebvre, without resorting to otherworldly forces, first drew a soul on a blackboard, then postulated the presence of an “inner computer” in the human consciousness. More interesting is his hypothesis that living creatures possess a fundamental characteristic that he called the intention to make a choice (Lefebvre, 1990). But as important as it is to analyze the procedures of reflexive choice, one can hardly reduce the entire life of consciousness to it. The aim must be to find the place of reflexion in the life of the individual, his activity and his consciousness. In the process, we must not disregard the experience that has been amassed in studying perceptual, mnemonic, intellectual, and executive processes, i.e. the actual physics that exists in psychology, even if it is still not animated enough. Whatever the case, the current attempts to concretize and objectify consciousness and to treat it as a model should not surprise anyone.

## From the History of Research on Consciousness

It is useful to recall the achievements and setbacks of the science of consciousness in Russia over the past century. The history of the problem of consciousness in Russian psychology is still waiting for its researcher. In schematic form, it looks like this. After a fruitful postrevolutionary period associated with the names of S.N. Bulgakov, N.A. Berdiaev, V.S. Solov'ev, P.A. Florenskii, G.I. Chelpanov, and G.G. Shpet, all of whom made a substantial contribution not only to the philosophy but also to the psychology of consciousness, the problem of consciousness began to be pushed aside already in the early 1920s. Priority was given to reactology, with its disdain for problems of consciousness, and to psychoanalysis, with its emphasis on the study of the unconscious. Nevertheless, both schools claimed a monopolistic right to the development of a genuinely Marxist psychology. The beginning of the 1920s may be marked as the period when the activity-based approach to psychology was born. S.L. Rubinshtein also linked this approach to Marxism, which, incidentally, was more organic than psychoanalysis and reactology. P.A. Florenskii and G.G. Shpet continued, in part, to work on problems of consciousness; unfortunately, their works at that time (and later) did not have any noticeable effect on the development of psychology. In the mid-1920s two more figures appeared. They were M.M. Bakhtin and L.S. Vygotskii, whose objective was to understand consciousness, its nature, functions, connection to language and words, etc. For

both of them, especially for Bakhtin, Marxism was what it was in reality, i.e. merely one method, one means of understanding and explanation.

In the 1930s, to all intents and purposes, the country lost consciousness and the unconscious both literally and figuratively (L.S. Vygotskii died; M.M. Bakhtin was exiled, then began to engage in literary criticism; P.A. Florenskii and G.G. Shpet were executed; S. Freud was banned; and psychoanalytical offices were shut down). Consciousness was declared to be something secondary, second-class, and was then replaced by an ideology that was shaping not a “new man” according to M. Gor’kii, but a “dull man” according to M. Zoshchenko. The character of the people was also changing: general human values were being distorted. To be more precise, they were becoming polarized. On the one hand, “There are no obstacles in our way...”; on the other, a paralyzing fear that coexisted with a demand for self-sacrifice: “And we will die as one...” The abundant palette of the highest human emotions was being lost, while the basest ones were being cultivated: unlimited human cruelty, betrayal, spy mania, etc.

Culture and intellectuality were carefully covered up or disguised with a veneer of quotations, and disappeared into the subtext. Under these conditions it became dangerous to do work on consciousness, and its study was confined to such relatively neutral niches as the historical roots of the emergence of the consciousness and its ontogenesis in childhood. Followers of L.S. Vygotskii (A.N. Leont’ev [Leontiev], A.R. Luriiia, P.Ia. Gal’perin, A.V. Zaporozhets, P.I. Zinchenko, et al.) reoriented themselves toward problems of the psychological analysis of activity and the psychology of action. Like S.L. Rubinshtein, while they did not always do so organically, they did tie in these problems with Marxism in an interesting and productive way. Then they had to tie in the same problems with I.P. Pavlov’s theory of conditioned reflexes and even with Lysenko’s agrobiology. There were too many voluntary-compulsory links to list here, although fortunately they were temporary.

A return to the problems of consciousness took place, for the most part, in the second half of the 1950s, thanks primarily to the works of S.L. Rubinshtein, and then those of A.N. Leont’ev. We must point out that in order to set apart consciousness as a subject of psychological inquiry, it is equally necessary to develop the cultural-historical and activity-based approaches to consciousness and the psyche.

The fact that naturalistic interpretations of consciousness and its encapsulation in the individual were fallacious was understood by M.M. Bakhtin and L.S. Vygotskii. The former insisted on the polyphony of consciousness and its dialogic nature. The latter said that all psychic functions, including consciousness, appear (manifest themselves?) in joint activities among individuals. Vygotskii especially emphasized the importance of the emotional sphere in the development of consciousness, and highlighted the inner experience as a unit of its analysis. It is hard to overestimate the role of various forms of intercourse in the emergence and formation of consciousness. It is located not in the individual but between individuals, although it may be my consciousness, or someone else’s, or no one’s. Of course, consciousness is an attribute of the individual, but to no less of an extent, if not to a greater extent, it is an attribute and characteristic of the collective, of “a convocation with everyone,” of inter- and suprapersonal or transpersonal relations. The internalization of consciousness and its emergence in the individual are always accompanied by the appearance and development of oppositions: the self and the other; the self and the second self. This means that a specific individual’s consciousness retains its dialogic nature and, accordingly and fortunately, its less-than-total social determination. Its spontaneity can be hardly be denied, a point that V.V. Nalimov especially insisted on.

It is no less important to overcome the so-called brain metaphor when analyzing the mechanisms of consciousness. Consciousness, of course, is the product and result of the activity of organic systems, which include not only the nervous system but also the individual and society. One of the most important attributes of these systems, according



to K. Marx, is the ability to create functional organs they are missing—new growths of a kind, which in theory are impossible to reduce to components of the original system.

In our national tradition, A.A. Ukhtomskii, N.A. Bernshtein, A.N. Leont'ev, and A.V. Zaporozhets categorized living motion, concrete action, the inner whole, an integral image of the world, set, emotion, the dominance of the soul, etc., as functional rather than anatomical-morphological organs. In their totality they make up the spiritual organism. Appearing in the same series, or more precisely, superimposed onto the functional organs, are the personality and consciousness. The latter, like any functional organ, possesses attributes similar to those of the anatomical-morphological organs, it evolves, it degenerates, it is fluid, reactive, and sensitive. Naturally, it also acquires its own attributes and functions, which were discussed in part earlier. They are its dialogic and polyphonic qualities, its spontaneous development, and its reflexivity.

According to L.S. Vygotskii's idea, consciousness has a semantic structure. Meanings are rooted in existence (G.G. Shpet), the substantive aspects of which are human activity, intercourse, action and consciousness itself. M.K. Mamardashvili insisted that existence and consciousness represent a single continuum. Meanings are not only rooted in existence, but are embodied and concretized in actions, in language—in reflected and generated images, in metaphors, in symbols.

It is very difficult to proceed from enumerating the attributes and functions of consciousness to an outline of the subject domain that represents, so to speak, the whole consciousness in the proper sense of the world. References to numerous empirical phenomena are clearly insufficient; at the same time, it is undeniable that research in the processes of the formation of an image of the world, the origin and development of volitional movements and concrete actions, memorization and reproduction, mental activity, various forms of intercourse, the realm of personality and motivation, inner experiences, affects, and emotions provides knowledge about consciousness as a by-product. But this knowledge stubbornly resists conceptualization and does not add up to a living, holistic consciousness. In each specific instance it appears and disappears. All that remains of it, like the Cheshire cat, is a smile. But even if it does not remain, it is no calamity. After all, this is not D. Dennett's fame. The actual activity of consciousness, what it does, takes the place of its smile or grimaces. Since the subject domain that is called consciousness is by far not always given directly, it must be defined and constructed. Naturally, such an intricate formation that possesses the aforesaid (not to mention latent and unknown) attributes and functions should have an extremely intricate structure. A version of a fairly simple structure will be proposed below as a first approximation. But behind each of its components there is a very rich phenomenological and domain-specific content and an enormous amount of experience in experimental inquiry, including functional-structural, modeling concepts of this experience. All this has been accumulated in various areas and schools of psychology. What is important to us is not so much to sum up the results of this experience as to show that the actual life of consciousness can play out on this structure. The structure is not, of course, consciousness, but if it is verisimilar, then the most important functions and attributes of consciousness must not only be inferable from it, their coordination and the interaction between them must also be ascertainable. Then it will fulfill its main function—the function of “intelligible matter.”

## The Structure of Consciousness and its Elements

Some of the first concepts of the structure of consciousness came from S. Freud. Applying a topographic approach to psychic phenomena, he highlighted the conscious, the pre-conscious and the unconscious and defined them as dynamic systems with their own functions, processes, energy, and ideational content. This structure of consciousness (or classification of its forms?), accepted by twentieth-century culture, proved to be insufficiently heuristic for psychology. Despite the fact that in this structure the main function

in explaining holistic consciousness lies precisely with the unconscious, many generations of psychoanalysts and psychologists have failed to discover the mechanisms of the operation of the entire consciousness. It is important in this context to stress that this is not a matter of criticizing Freud and certainly not of denying the unconscious. The latter is a well-known empirical phenomenon that was described long before Freud as the anteroom (or cellar) of consciousness. Moreover, the existence of the category and phenomena of the unconscious and the subconscious constitutes an insurmountable obstacle for any forms of reduction of consciousness and the psyche (Zinchenko, Mamardashvili, 1991). It would be intriguing to visualize the neurons of the unconscious! It is especially tempting to find them to commemorate the sesquicentennial of Sigmund Freud's birth. True, this obligates seekers to accept the unconscious not in its hollow sense but in the sense that carries the enormous experience of psychoanalytic research.

To be serious, the aim must be to find new ways to analyze consciousness when the subconscious and the unconscious are not at all required as a means (let alone as the main goal) in the study of consciousness. In theoretical-cognitive terms, the unconscious has long since become something like a receptacle into which anything that is unclear, unknown, baffling or mysterious is dumped, e.g. intuition, hidden motives of behavior, undiscovered meanings, etc.

Far more productive is the old idea of L. Feuerbach that there is a consciousness for consciousness and a consciousness for existence, an idea that was developed by L.S. Vygotskii. Presumably these are not two consciousnesses but a single consciousness in which there are two main layers: an existential one and a reflexive one (the spiritual layer of consciousness will be discussed later). The question arises, what are the elements of these layers, what constitutes them? A.N. Leont'ev's line of thinking is very helpful here; he highlighted three principal elements of consciousness: the sensory fabric of image, meaning, and sense. It is surprising that one of the authors of the psychological theory of activity did not include among the elements the biodynamic fabric of motion and action. After all, it was A.N. Leont'ev, in developing the ideas of the emergence of consciousness in the history of mankind, who derived it from people's collective activities. In the mid-1930s A.V. Zaporozhets regarded perception and thought as sensory and mental actions. At the same time, P.I. Zinchenko was studying memorization as a mnemonic action. In 1940 S.L. Rubinshtein, apparently under the influence of this research, concluded that action is the basic cell in which one can find the rudiments of all the elements of human psychology. But what was probably most important was that N.A. Bernshtein had already introduced the concept of living motion and its biodynamic fabric, a development that was well known to A.N. Leont'ev. Upon adding biodynamic fabric to the elements of consciousness, we get a two-tier, or two-level, structure of consciousness. The existential layer consists of the biodynamic fabric of living motion and action and the sensory fabric of image. The reflexive layer consists of meaning and sense.

All of the components (elements) of the proposed structure have already been constructed as subjects of scientific inquiry. Numerous studies have already been devoted to each of them, debates regarding their nature and attributes are held, and more and more new ways of analyzing them are explored. Of course, each of these formations has been studied both on an autonomous basis and in a broader context, including the context of the problem of consciousness, but they have not figured as components of its holistic structure. Nevertheless, the experience that has been accumulated in their study is useful and, in fact, is indispensable for a preliminary description of that structure. Of course, this does not rule out but, on the contrary, presupposes that the inclusion of all of the components in the holistic context of the structure of consciousness will set new requirements for the future study of each of them individually and will result in the formulation of new tasks and problems related to ascertaining the relationships among them.

A description of each component of the structure requires a monographic exposition. We will confine ourselves here to pointing out those of their attributes that will make it

easier to understand the proposed structure of consciousness (Velikhov, Zinchenko, Lektorskii, 1988; Zinchenko, 1988; Zinchenko, Mamardashvili, 1977). We begin its description with the components of the reflexive layer of consciousness.

### *Meaning*

In psychological tradition this term is used in some cases as the practical meaning of a word, while in others, as meanings that represent the content of social consciousness as assimilated by the individual. The concept of meaning embodies the fact that human consciousness develops not in a Robinson Crusoe context but within a cultural entity in which the experience of activity, intercourse and world view has been historically crystallized. The individual must not only assimilate it but also construct his own experience. Meaning was regarded as a form of consciousness, i.e. man's apperception of his own—human—existence. It was also regarded both as an actual psychological “unit of consciousness” (Leont'ev, Pomerants) and as a fact of individual consciousness.

There are different classifications of types of meaning. One of them is especially important: operational, perceptual, concrete, verbal. This is not only a classification but also the approximate sequence of their emergence in ontogenesis. Operational relates meaning to the biodynamic fabric; perceptual, to the sensory fabric; concrete, to sense; and verbal, to social experience and culture. There are data on the formation of each type of meaning; true, the formation of mundane and scholarly concepts (meanings) has been studied in the most detail. The classification of meanings proposed by G.G. Shpet in connection with the analysis of the functions of words is interesting. He distinguishes between two types of meanings. He defines the meanings of the first order as the direct and concrete “practical” meaning; here “expression” (possibly not even necessarily a verbal one) performs its direct, properly *denotative* function. If we focus on the desires and intentions themselves of the individual who is “expressing” something, we will come to a new order of “meanings”—“second order” meanings. Here the narrow sense of “expression” applies, as the “disclosure” or “manifestation of *expression*”: “We are beginning to formulate conjectures about how the expresser himself *experiences* the content of his expressions. In a sense, a new series of meanings emerges here for us: what is involved is not only the expresser's mood at the moment, but everything that gives rise to this moment, his proclivities in general, his habits, tastes, what the Germans call *Gesinnung*, and in general, the overall makeup of his soul, which consists of a highly complex set of inner experiences” (Shpet, 2006, p. 490). The “set of inner experiences” as a whole that an individual carries within himself is defined by Shpet as his *spiritual makeup* and in it he looks for “second order” meanings. Clearly, these latter meanings, as well as the spiritual makeup, have the closest connection to consciousness. Shpet also uses the term “co-meaning,” which is close to “second order” meaning, can be heard behind the speaker's voice and makes it possible to conjecture about *his* thoughts, to be suspicious of *his* behavior, and to penetrate into a kind of special, *intimate* sense, which has its own intimate forms” (Shpet, 1989, p. 470).

### *Sense*

The concept of sense applies equally to the realm of consciousness and to the realm of existence. “Life is a demand for sense <<Normally, *smysl* should be translated as “meaning” here, as in “the meaning of life,” but the alignment of *znachenie*-meaning and *smysl*-sense requires that *smysl* be rendered as “sense” here>> and beauty from existence” is a maxim of A.A. Ukhtomskii. Existence can be justified only by sense. The concept of sense points to the fact that individual consciousness cannot be reduced to impersonal knowledge; that, because it belongs to a living individual and is actually part of the system of his activities, it is always passionate; in short, that consciousness is not only

knowledge but also a relationship. “Sense is not a thing but the relationship of a thing (named) and an object (implied)” (Shpet, 1989, p. 422). The concept of sense expresses the rootedness of individual consciousness in man’s existence, while the concept of meaning considered above expresses the connection of this consciousness to social consciousness, to culture. The ways of studying senses that are being explored are tied to an analysis of the processes of deriving (gleaning) senses from a situation or “reading them into” a situation, which also is frequently the case.

Researchers who propose different versions of functional models of perception, action, short-term memory, etc., have great difficulty in localizing the blocks of semantic processing of information, since they constantly encounter cases in which sense is derived from a situation not only before a painstaking analysis of meanings but even before any kind of coherent perception of it. The researchers direct more of their efforts at searching for rational methods of evaluating a situation. Far less is known about the methods of emotional evaluation of the sense of a situation, the sense of activity and action. It was stated earlier that sense is rooted in existence, in activity, in action. Research in how sense is born and realized in action is of great interest.

Senses, like meanings, are associated with all of the components of the structure of consciousness. Senses hover over physical, perceptual, and mental actions as the senses of the respective tasks. Most obvious is the relationship between the meanings and senses that exist in the reflexive layer of consciousness. This relationship may be characterized according to the degree of equivalence; for example, a clinic provides examples of total dissociation between senses and meanings. Great mnemonists are able to memorize enormous blocks of senseless information, but have difficulty in making sense of organized, reasonable information where the sense is obvious. Many comedy techniques are based on a mismatch between meanings and senses (a so-called semantic shift).

The processes of mutual transformation of meanings and senses deserve detailed study. These are opposite processes of meaning designation for senses and sense designation for meanings. They are notable for the fact that they constitute the very essence of dialogue and are the vehicle for assuring mutual understanding. Of course, mutual understanding cannot be absolute and complete. There is always an interstice, a delta of incomprehension, related to difficulties in interpreting meanings, or of inexplicitness, related to difficulties not only in giving a meaning to sense but also in finding and embodying it. Inexplicitness in art is, after all, both an artistic technique and a consequence of difficulties experienced by the craftsman in bringing them about. Incomprehension and inexplicitness are not only negative characteristics of intercourse. They also constitute necessary conditions for something new to be born, conditions of creativity and development of culture. One can assume that what is new is born at the site where the processes of meaning designation for senses and sense designation for meanings meet, in the interstice between them. Of course, such meetings do not occur automatically. A.N. Leont’ev liked to repeat that the meeting of need with object is an extraordinary act. The act of a meeting between meaning and sense deserves a similar description. In reality there is always a polysemy of meanings and a multiplicity of meanings for senses, there is an excessive field of meanings and an excessive field of senses. It is indeed a challenging task to overcome this excessiveness at the poles of an external or interior dialogue, especially a dialogue that is often emotionally colored.

Let us now address the components of the existential layer of consciousness.

### *Biodynamic fabric*

Motion and action have an external and internal form. Biodynamic fabric is the observable and recordable external form of living motion, which N.A. Bernshtein regarded as a functional organ of the individual. The use of the term “fabric” to characterize it emphasizes that it is the material from which purposive, volitional motions and actions are built.

As they are built and shaped, the internal form, the internal picture of these motions and actions becomes increasingly complex. It is filled with cognitive (an image of the situation and image of action), emotional-evaluative and semantic formations. An immobile being could not have constructed geometry, H. Poincar<sup>e</sup> wrote. But to this day the geometry constructed by science pales alongside the topological complexity of living motion. A.A. Ukhtomskii posited the existence of tactile geometry. Motions and actions may be truly purposive and volitional when words are a constituent part of the internal form or picture of the living motion. Pure biodynamic fabric that is devoid of internal form may be observed in motor perseverations, in quasi facial expressions, in an infant's chaotic motions, etc. Biodynamic fabric is excessive with respect to the scant, economical motions, actions, and gestures that have been learned, just as the degrees of freedom of the human body's kinematic chains.

### *Sensory fabric*

Like biodynamic fabric, it is a building material of an image. Its existence is proven with the aid of fairly complex experimental procedures. For example, as images stabilize with regard to the retina, ensuring that the stimulative effect remains unchanged, the observer may alternately see completely different visual pictures. The image may appear to him by turns flat, three-dimensional, immobile, moving, etc. (Zinchenko, Vergiles, 1969). In functional models of short-term visual memory, sensory fabric is localized in such blocks as the sensory register and the iconic memory. An excess amount of sensory fabric is contained in these blocks. Most likely, it is all essential for constructing an image, although it is used to construct it or only a small part of it is part of the image.

Both biodynamic and sensory fabric, which constitute the "matter" of motion and image, have attributes of reactivity, sensitivity, plasticity, and controllability. It is clear from their description that they are very closely related to meaning and sense. The relationship between the two types of fabric is no less complex and interesting than that between meaning and sense. They are reversible and transform themselves into each other. Biodynamic and sensory fabric take turns acting as the external and internal forms of action, image and words. Utterance of words is characterized by a sense of articulation. The M<sup>ö</sup>bius strip serves to illustrate their interaction. The interaction between biodynamic and sensory fabric leads to the formation of motor and perceptual configurations. A motion spread out in time that is performed in real space gradually transforms itself into a simultaneous image of space that, in a way, is devoid of time coordinates. The spatial image, in turn, like a compressed spring, may develop into a temporal drawing of motion. A significant attribute of the relationship between biodynamic and sensory fabric is the fact that their mutual transformation is a means of overcoming space and time, of exchanging time for space and vice versa.

Tasks of fantastic complexity are carried out at the existential level of consciousness. The individual possesses a space of formed images, most of which are polysemous, i.e. they contain more than one perceptual meaning. Similarly, the space of learned motions and concrete actions is multifunctional: each of them contains more than one operational meaning. Consequently, effective behavior in a given situation requires actualization of the image needed at that moment and of the needed motor configuration (program). Both must be appropriate to the situation, but this is merely a general condition. Even a properly chosen image has an excessive number of degrees of freedom with respect to the original, which must be overcome. Similarly, during realization of the motor program the excessive number of degrees of freedom of the human body's kinematic chains must be overcome. In other words, during sensomotor coordinations the two free systems, at the moment of their interaction, become rigid and unambiguous: only in this case will the behavior be appropriate to the situation, fit it, and accomplish the semantic task. But this requires that the image of the action fit the image of the world or the image of the part of

it that is needed to perform the behavior. We should emphasize that at the existential level the tasks that are being carried out virtually always make sense, while at the reflexive level they may also be senseless. Therefore it is important the activity of both levels of consciousness be coordinated and that the semantic perspective of each of them agree with the other.

### *Observability of the components of the structure*

Biodynamic fabric and meaning are accessible to a outside observer and to various forms of recording and analysis. Sensory fabric and sense are only partly accessible to self-observation. An outside observer may draw inferences about them on the basis of indirect data, such as behavior, the products of activity, deeds, reports on self-observation, sophisticated experimental procedures, psychotherapeutic and psychoanalytic practice, etc. Sensory fabric partly manifests itself in biodynamic fabric, and senses partly manifest themselves in meanings, including second-order meanings and co-meanings. It should be pointed out that both biodynamic fabric and meaning appear to the outside observer only in their external form. The internal form of motion, action, meaning and words has to be deciphered, reconstructed. The study of sense causes the most difficulty, even though it is present not only in all of the components of the structure but is also embodied in the products of the subject's activity.

Differences in the observability of components and difficulties in reconstructing what is not observable result in the fact that something, even what is given in self-observation, is passed off as holistic consciousness, while what is given to an outside observer does not seem substantive enough for the analysis of the subjective, in fact intimate, formation that consciousness represents, and is totally rejected, not included in the context of its study. In the process, it is not taken into account that an image of the world and sense in general cannot exist outside the biodynamic fabric of motions and actions, including perceptual and mental actions, or outside meanings and the matter of language. Sense by its nature is complementary: it is always the sense of something: an image, an action, an object, a meaning, and finally, life. It is either derived from them or embedded in them. Sometimes it even seems that it would be better if all the components were equally accessible or equally inaccessible to an external observer. In the first, unfortunately unrealistic case, it would make the task of direct inquiry easier; in the second, fortunately also unrealistic case, it would allow for much greater arbitrariness in manipulating consciousness, but as G. Miller once said, man (and, we should add, his consciousness) was not created for the convenience of experimenters (and, we should add, manipulators).

### *The relativity of the division of layers*

There are, of course, traces, vestiges, and reminders of the existential layer in the reflexive layer, in meanings and senses. These traces are based not only on the fact that meanings and senses are born in the existential layer. They continue to embody it in the present. The meaning expressed in a word embodies more than an image. It contains in its internal form operational and concrete meanings, concrete actions that have been imbued with sense. Therefore the word itself is viewed as an action. Similarly, sense is not hollow, either. Like the circulatory system (G.G. Shpet's metaphor), it irrigates and feeds the denser formations (image, action, words), which play the role of matter for it. The structure of consciousness, like consciousness itself, is holistic, although it consists of different elements. At the same time, differences in the elements are the basis for conflicts that arise in the consciousness, its diseases and deformations related to hypertrophy in the development of a certain element or in the weakening or even rupture of the connection either between layers or between their elements. In such cases we speak of a fragmented, diseased consciousness.

The existential layer bears not only the imprint of developed reflexion but also contains its sources and origin. A semantic evaluation is associated with the components of biodynamic and sensory fabric, and it is often done not only during but also before an image is formed or an action performed. In the terminology of M.M. Bakhtin, such states may be called the sensation of generative activity. Sometimes they are accessible to self-observation. The mechanism of this phenomenon is currently being clarified. As was discovered in the research of N.D. Gordeeva and V.P. Zinchenko (Gordeeva, Zinchenko, 2001), the biodynamic fabric of motion is not only associated with sensory fabric but also possesses its own sensitivity. Together they provide what A.V. Zaporozhets called the sensitivity of motion. The latter is nonhomogeneous: there is sensitivity to a situation and sensitivity to actual or potential motion. These two forms are observed, or rather recorded, out of phase. Their alternation during even a simple hand motion occurs three or four times a second. This alternation provides the basis for elementary reflexive acts whose content consists of a comparison of the situation with the interim results of the action and the potential for continuing it. The authors called such acts background reflexion. A search for such acts in the processes of formation of the image of a situation is now under way.

Therefore the existential layer is not only influenced by the reflexive layer but itself possesses the rudiments or basic forms of reflexion. Hence the existential layer of consciousness can quite rightfully be called co-reflexive. As was stated earlier, the reflexive layer is also not without an existential quality. It may be called co-existential. It could not be otherwise, since the two layers could not interact or even recognize each other unless each of them bore the imprint of the other.

It is important to note that we are talking about an imprint, not about equality. M.K. Mamardashvili singled out as the main feature in the Marxist concept of practical work “the emphasis on the states of human existence—social, economic, ideological, sensory-vital, etc.—that do not lend themselves to reproduction or objective, rational display at the level of the reflexive construct, compelling us to remove the identification between activity and its conscious, ideal form, something that was typical of classical philosophizing. In this case one must distinguish between two types of relations in conscious existence. First, relations that form independently of consciousness, and second, relations that form on the basis of the first type and are its ideological expression (so-called ‘converted forms of consciousness’)” (Mamardashvili, 1990). In our terminology the first type of relations occurs in the existential layer of consciousness; the second, in the reflexive. When ideology is involved, however, converted forms of consciousness often become distorted, reflexion loses its voting rights, and the potential result is that understanding is replaced by an automatic response, by reflex, when a person loses his own self. Words and speech are not even converted to the second, but rather to the first signal system (although the second signal system, as A.R. Lurii explained to students, is former speech).

### *Heterogeneity of the components of the structure of consciousness*

The primary cause of the kinship between the existential and reflexive layers is the fact that they have a common cultural-historical genetic code, which is embedded in social (collective) concrete action that is carried out in confluent intercourse and that possesses generative attributes (Zinchenko, Smirnov, 1983; El’konin, 1989). Of course, the images, senses, and meanings that are born in action acquire their own attributes, become independent of the action, and begin to develop according to their own laws. They may be derived from the action but cannot be reduced to it, which allows us to regard them as relatively independent and as participating in the formation of consciousness. But thanks to the fact that they have a common genetic source and thanks to the close interaction of

each component of the structure in the processes of its development and functioning with all the others, all of them are not homogeneous but heterogeneous formations. The commonality of the genetic code to all of the elements creates the potential, though one that is not always realized, for a holistic consciousness. This commonality also serves as the basis for mutual transformations of the components (elements) of consciousness not only within each layer but also between layers. An image is given a sense, the sense is embodied in words, in an image, in a deed, although it is hardly limited to that. The action and image are given a meaning, and so forth.

The presence of different, albeit heterogeneous, components (elements) means that the process itself of the formation (shaping, development) of consciousness constitutes *heterogenesis*, and the structure of consciousness taking shape is heterogeneous. As is well known, the diversity of components that constitute the whole structure ensures its stability—if you will, its viability.

I expect that the reader may be puzzled by the fact that there was no room in the proposed structure for affects. F.M. Dostoevskii was undoubtedly right when he said that suffering is the sole cause of consciousness. While agreeing with him, I will say that heterogeneity, whether it is a unit of analysis of the psyche (Zinchenko, Smirnov, 1983) or an element of consciousness, implies that they have affective components. Descartes once wrote that action and passion are the same thing. The images that are born by means of executive, perceptual, and mental actions are also not unbiased. Emotions are present in the perception and expression of meanings, especially second-order meanings, co-meanings. As for sense, it is by definition biased, whether it is derived from life or personality, and is created, like consciousness itself, in the activity of inner experience (F.E. Vasiliuk). The affective realm is represented even more clearly in the spiritual layer of consciousness, whose characteristics we will now address.

## On the Spiritual Layer of Consciousness

The concept of a two-tier structure of consciousness was developed above. This structure is inadequate. The spiritual layer of consciousness plays no less of a role in human life than the existential and reflexive layers. Quite a bit of conceptual work is needed, however, to “inscribe” the spiritual layer into the structure of consciousness without contradictions. There is still not enough experience in psychology of discussing problems on the basis of a three-tier model. It will probably be necessary to learn from the philosophers, such as Hegel, Frank, and Scheler, although if this were a simple matter, psychologists would have done it long ago. After all, Hegel’s theory of the subjective spirit consists of three sections—anthropology, phenomenology, and psychology—to which the three layers of consciousness can be made to correspond in the first approximation. This is a task for short-term development. I would also like to share some preliminary ideas here regarding the spiritual layer of consciousness, in which the human self must find its place.

The presence of a spiritual layer is obvious. Moreover, in the structure of the whole consciousness it should play the leading role, animating and inspiring the existential and reflexive layers. To be consistent, we must raise the question of the elements of the spiritual layer. As in the previous cases, “pure” subjectivities cannot be such elements. Let me remind the reader that the quasisubject, at the very least, in the existential layer was biodynamic fabric, which is capable in concert with sensory fabric of becoming an image, including in image of its own activity, or a phantom. In the reflexive layer the component representing object-orientation and objectivity is meaning, which is capable in concert with sense of becoming a co-meaning, personality-based and living knowledge or delusion, or a mental illusion. Accordingly, sensory fabric and sense represented human subjectivity.

Evidently, human subjectivity in the spiritual layer of consciousness is represented by the self in its various modifications and forms. It is this self, which is a feature of any



consciousness, that must be regarded as one of the elements of the spiritual layer of consciousness—its subjective or subject-based component. These propositions do not contradict the concept of personality in philosophic anthropology: “The personality is the center of spiritual acts, according to Max Scheler, and accordingly the center of all consciousness, which itself, however, cannot be apperceived” (Frankl, p. 100). The paradox is that “the center of spiritual acts” does not apperceive the structure of consciousness.

The objective element in the spiritual layer can be the Other, or more precisely, Thou. The perspective of I-Thou analysis, articulated by Hegel and developed by M. Buber, will be used here. Buber pitted this perspective of analysis against both individualism and collectivism, to which, in his view, man’s wholeness is closed off: “Individualism sees man only in relation to himself, but collectivism does not see *man* at all, it sees only ‘society.’ With the former man’s face is distorted, with the latter it is masked” (Buber, p. 228). The writer regards the choice between individualist anthropology and collectivist sociology as erroneous. For him, the basic factor of human existence is the relationship “between man and man.” Here “something” occurs between human beings the like of which can be found nowhere in nature. Language for this “something” [“]is only a sign and a means for it, all achievement of the spirit has been incited by it” (ibid., p. 230).

In the logic of D.B. El’konin, I-Thou initially appears as a collective I that is the agent, the actor, of a collective action, of “confluent intercourse” (G.G. Shpet’s term). For M. Buber, each of the two is a special OTHER that acts not as an object but as a partner in a life situation. Although Buber considers it a mistake to view interpersonal relations as psychological, I will venture to assume that his “something” is the beginning and a condition of penetration (peering) into oneself. This assumption also fits Buber’s reflections by which one cannot become aware of the wholeness of the person and its dynamic center through contemplation or observation. It is only possible when I step into an elemental relation with the other, that is, when he becomes present for me. For this reason, Buber describes awareness in this sense as making present the person of the other. **<preceding is actually a quote taken from the Internet>>** What forms in this I-Thou context is “the thin space of the personal I, which must be filled in with the other I. **<<unable to find this quote on the Internet>>**” We find the same idea in an old work by G.G. Shpet: “The I itself, as the unity of the multitude of other ‘unities of consciousness,’ is the collective and the assemblage” (Shpet, 2006, p. 306).

The space posited by man’s existence as Man and conceptually not yet understood is called the BETWEEN by M. Buber. He regards this sphere as the primal category of human activity. This reality is localized not in the internal life of a solitary person and not in the concrete universal world that encompasses the personality. It is actually found BETWEEN people. This BETWEEN “is not an auxiliary construction, but the real place and bearer of what happens between men; it has received no specific attention because, in distinction from the individual soul and its context, it does not exhibit a smooth continuity, but is ever and again reconstituted in accordance with men’s meetings with one another” (Buber, 1995, pp. 230–231). The scale of the dialogue may be such that “deep calls unto deep.” This is a difficult point in M. Buber’s reflections, but it is fully consistent with M.M. Bakhtin’s idea of the dialogic and polyphonic nature of consciousness. It is also consistent with the ideas of L.S. Vygotskii, who searched for the nature of INTRASubjectivity and INTERsubjectivity, and with the ideas of A.A. Ukhtomskii on “the dominant aimed at the person of the other.” If a human being lacks this, he cannot be spoken of as a person. Accordingly, the BETWEEN sphere cannot exist without language, without psychological mediator-tools. This sphere is filled with its own “force lines” and those borrowed from mediators. When dialogism or the “dialogue” disrupted, in M. Buber’s view, the language of this sphere is compressed down to a point, and the human being loses what is human.

Another facet of this process is clearly prominent in M. Buber. He sets the relationship between man and man against man’s relationship with the world: “Something happened

to me—this is a fact that can be distributed without a remainder between an ‘external’ event and an ‘internal’ impression. But when I and someone else, to use a clumsy expression but one that has no equivalent, ‘happen’ to each other, the calculation does not work: in the area where the soul ends but the world has not yet begun, there is a remainder, and that is what embodies the very essence” (ibid., p. 231). That essence is the stimulation of spiritual activity, which makes a human being human.

In L.S. Vygotskii and D.B. El’konin, like M. Buber, the I originally derives from Thou. But the latter’s reasoning also contains another purpose, since Thou for him is not only an anthropological and psychological problem but also a theological one (the “Eternal Thou”). But it is more important to me right now to look not so much for differences in the scholars’ views as common features. The commonality is based on the fact that the formation of human relations with the world, in accordance with their views, is preceded by development of a human relation with man, which evidently embodies the true spirituality, the true co-existentiality of life and the sources of consciousness.

In speaking of the customary oppositions (or relationships) of man and the world, man and society, man and man, one cannot help but recall the reflections on these topics of S.L. Rubinshtein, who was concerned about these problems from the very outset of his scholarly career. K.A. Abul’khanova-Slavskaia cites revealing excerpts from S.L. Rubinshtein from the 1920s:

1. “1. The activity of subjects and their existence. Existence does not lie in their independence of one another but in their collaboration. Each construction of the existence of others performs the work of a sculptor.
2. “2. Cognition in collaboration and formation (not simply through a relationship with an essential other for each individual, but through active influence)...” (cf. Abul’khanova-Slavskaia, p. 14).

In the twilight of his life S.L. Rubinshtein wrote that the social perspective, all the same, “never displaced the moral questions of man’s personal relations with man, which became completely ensconced in my heart” (Rubinshtein, 1989, p. 419).

In his unfinished book “Man and the World,” S.L. Rubinshtein gave fundamental priority to the man-world relationship: “man’s relationship with man and with other people cannot be understood without determining man’s original relationship with the world as a conscious and active being” (Rubinshtein, 1973, p. 343). In the question of the genesis of the phenomenological components of the I-Thou relationship he gives priority to the I quite clearly: “Each individual as an ‘I’ proceeds from ‘thou’ and ‘he’ (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> persons), when the ‘I’ has already been perceived as such. So one cannot say that ‘you’ as such anticipates ‘I,’ although it is true that other individuals anticipate my awareness of myself as ‘I’ (ibid., p. 334). Nevertheless, S.L. Rubinshtein “wavered” between “I” and “thou”: “For a human being another human is a yardstick, an expresser of his ‘humanness’,” and then further on: “In reality, empirically, and genetically the priority belongs to the other ‘I’ as a precondition for separating out my own ‘I’” (ibid., pp. 338, 339). Probably the priority, after all, belongs to the “between” space. Both sides are guilty of sin, as well as virtue.

By way of continuing this idea, V.A. Petrovskii proposed an interesting version of personality development as a result of a vision of the reflected I in the other (Petrovskii, 1993). There is a great deal in common between his approach and the concepts of S.L. Rubinshtein, as well as those of M. Buber on the I-Thou relationship. Petrovskii postulates that the process of development of the I as a result of interacting with the Thou of another may be supplemented by a process that unfolds as a result of the reflection of one’s own I in another. In this case, as one’s own I observes the reflected I in another as in a mirror, can develop by overcoming the differences between the self-perception of one’s own I and the perception of one’s own I in another (the I-theory and the Me-theory, respectively).

Right now it is not so important to me to determine the “true” priority, whether it be the I or the Other. It is more important to overcome the priority of the collective, the group, the class, the nation, the flock, the herd. It is important not to yield to the provocative and often frightening We. Let me cite G. Pomerants, who wrote about his undergraduate years: “‘We’...in my eyes gradually lost its human makeup, and became a mask behind which something vile and sticky was moving around. I could not identify that something at the time, I didn’t know its name. Now I think that the revolutionary ‘We’ died in 1937–1938, it became a decomposing corpse, and the corpse was swarming, as though with worms, with ‘they’. Those whose name was ‘Legion’.” (Pomerants, p. 149). Unfortunately, these words very accurately reveal the thrust of the central psychological-pedagogical principle of Soviet upbringing<<I’m tempted to use “indoctrination” here, but the problem is that it has a negative connotation that “vospitanie” doesn’t>>: “the personality is the product of the collective.” More accurately, the basis! Granted, it would be unfair to assign responsibility for the formation of the repellent forms “We” and “They” solely to the system of upbringing, although it undoubtedly made its “contribution” to this. There are deeper mechanisms here, which are still a fairly long way from being understood. E. Douste and E. Cassirer, experts on mythology, call mythical gods and demons (I would add degenerate dictators to them) “the collective desire personified” (Cassirer, p. 157).

We should also point out that the nameless “somethings” of M. Buber and G. Pomerants have opposite signs. But it would probably be an exaggeration to say that the “something” in the I-Thou interaction is always divine, while the “something” in the I-We and I-They interaction is always satanic. The rational and realistic-minded Shpet, in completing his reflections on the I, said that it (the I) cannot do without turning to “you” and without recognizing “we.”

As for the world and the other, the difference between them is highly, highly relative. After all, if the other is the whole world, then an encounter with him is a blessing if there is an ability to “discern and understand the essence of the other person” (Rubinshtein, 1973, p. 374). In any case “The I for another person and the other for me are a condition of our human existence” (ibid., p. 373). From this standpoint You plays two roles: both as a subject-partner and as an object-partner, that embodies his own world. In this sense I am not violating the logic of subjectivity-objectivity by introducing I-Thou into the elements of consciousness. A movement of opposite processes also occurs in the I-Thou relationship that generates the spiritual layer of consciousness, but this time they are—for now we will designate them this way—externalization and internalization, which are the basis not only of pedagogy, which is dear to the heart, and the psychology of socialization, but also of individualization. Without it a free I that remains itself through everything is impossible.

I have dwelled on S.L. Rubinshtein’s early and late views in such detail because he was the first (in 1958, when the idea for the book “Man and the World” came up) to continue the traditions of Russian moral philosophy and psychology, even though at the time he had very, very fuzzy prospects for publication in his lifetime. True, I suspect that these traditions were not interrupted within him, but were probably concealed, and not very skillfully at that. He remained himself. The idea for the book, which was to deal mainly with the problems of ethics, apparently came from his apprehensive attitude toward death. He viewed death as “The Conclusion—A Message to My People and Mankind” (i.e. he really was a cosmopolitan, not in the Stalinist-Zhdanovite sense, but in the true and exalted sense of the word): “My death for others—the life that remains after my death—is my not-existence. For myself, i.e. for every person, death for him is the last act that concludes life. He must answer for his life and in turn determine its final meaning. <<I’m using “meaning” for *smysl* here because “sense” would be nonsensical and because it is separate from the theoretical terminology used in the article>>. His attitude toward his death is like his attitude toward life” (Rubinshtein, 1989, pp. 415,

420). These reflections on death echo the reflections of M.K. Mamardashvili on his fate and his “lot.” “Our lot is artisan work, the dignity of arts and crafts, which is limited to itself, ‘the sweat of the thing’ that was conscientiously made. Having said that, I sense how similar it is to Mandel’shtam’s oath to the ‘fourth estate.’ Therefore what I said about philosophers can be said much more poetically in his, Mandel’shtam’s, words: ‘We will die like infantrymen, but we will not celebrate rapacity, or day labor, or lies’” (Mamardashvili, 1990, p. 199).

It is no accident that the reflections on life and death have been cited in the context of a discussion of the problem of the spiritual layer of consciousness. M.K. Mamardashvili once responded to A.N. Leont’ev’s question, “What did man begin with?”, this way: “With a dirge for a deceased person.” One can assume that the I-Thou relationship is as intimate in man’s life as his notions of life and death. Perhaps they are even equivalent. If that is indeed the case, then the elements of the spiritual layer of consciousness may be, in addition to the real I-Thou relationship, man’s actual or imaginary notions of life and death (the followers and admirers of V.S. Solov’ev).

The spiritual layer of consciousness constructed by the I-Thou relationship is formed before, or at least simultaneously with, the existential and reflexive layers. In other words, it is unlikely that consciousness forms in a step-by-step manner; then again, it is similar to the formation of the truly higher psychic functions rather than specific utilitarian mental and other actions. The formation of consciousness is a unified, synchronized act, in which all of its elements are involved from the very outset. It is another matter that this act may continue throughout one’s lifetime and, of course, it does not occur automatically.

The spiritual layer of consciousness is a special ontology that psychology has addressed only from time to time, unlike the existential and reflexive layers, since psychology has followed the traditional oppositions of “man and the world,” “man and society,” and “man and machine,” not to mention the primitive oppositions “matter and consciousness” or “the brain and consciousness.” This special ontology, in M. Buber’s words, reveals itself only between the two transcendent personalities: “On the far side of the objective and the subjective, <<the original Buber quote actually says, “on the far side of the subjective, on this side of the objective>> on the narrow ridge where I and Thou meet, there is the realm of BETWEEN” (Buber, 1989, p. 96). The image of a narrow ridge is very precise. If we attempted to depict a model of consciousness, it would not fit into a plane. The spiritual layer of consciousness is in reality its vertical dimension. And symbols are undoubtedly its peak. I understand, of course, that existence is not one-dimensional, either (unless it is an everyday routine), but the spiritual layer of consciousness is a breakthrough beyond the multidimensionality of existence. Such a breakthrough occasionally blows up existence and forces existence to stop in its tracks and freeze.

## The structure of consciousness as a whole

Let us turn to the proposed structure of consciousness as a whole and consider some of its general attributes through the prism of action while remembering the Hegelian tenet: man’s true existence is human action. The individuality in it is real. The proposed structure is activity-oriented, action-oriented, potentially co-existential—built into existence, as it were. It retains some autonomy with respect to existence while remaining the consciousness of existence. In this sense it is consistent with M.K. Mamardashvili’s thesis of the existence of a single continuum of existence—consciousness. The structure was built on the assumption that the life and interplay of consciousness are impossible without the opposite dialogic acts of subjectivation of the objective and the objectivation of the subjective. The very fact that such acts exist demonstrates the need for expanding the concept of the objective by also incorporating into its orbit a description of objects, whose natural manifestations contain deposits of manifestations of reality based on subjective activity (Zinchenko, Mamardashvili, 1977).

The life and interplay of consciousness proceed in different ways on each of its highlighted layers. Sensing of motion (subjectivation of the objective) and testing and realization of the sensory (objectivation of the subjective) take place in acts of interaction between the biodynamic and sensory fabric on the existential layer. As was mentioned earlier, the effects that arise during the interaction of biodynamic and sensory fabric, called background reflexion, provide the basis, as a result, for making a decision about the possibility of performing an action, a behavioral act. We should stress that for now it is only a possibility, which, however, is not that little. A.A. Ukhtomskii said that the fate of a reaction (in the broad sense, an action) is decided not at the station of departure but at the destination. Let us see what is done at the next “station,” i.e. in the reflexive layer of consciousness, whose work also has a bearing on the fate of the action. Understanding is achieved in the opposite acts of giving a sense to meanings (subjectivation of the objective) and giving a meaning to senses (objectivation of the subjective). Of course, understanding may be completely disinterested; after all, it carries its own reward and is by far not always attained in the interests of an action. But wherever this occurs, what is required is an understanding not only of the possibility but also of the purposiveness of an action. One hardly need mention that achieving such an understanding often involves agonizing vacillations. But even when an understanding has been achieved and an action has been deemed to be purposeful, this is not yet the final level. There must be participation by the spiritual layer of consciousness—the level that is capable of assuming responsibility for the consequences of an action.

With regard to the spiritual layer of consciousness, one can hardly point in the same unequivocal manner to acts of subjectivation of the objective and objectivation of the subjective. The latter consist of imitation, sympathy, compassion, spiritual quest, feeling overcome with emotion—in short, the internalization or introjection of experience. The second consist of concretization of the self, self-identification, self-realization (when there is something to realize), the construction of a self-concept—in short, various forms of transcendence of the self, which may be designated as externalization and extrajection. On the other hand, the results of these complex forms of activity may also be quite plentiful. The most significant include a personality that is aware of its place in the world and is capable of a free, responsible action-deed. Preferably, such an action will not be foolish and will take into account an understanding of its purposiveness and the possibilities of realization. This requires using the reflexive and existential layers of consciousness to organize and construct it. I am not going to fantasize as to whether the layers involved in a given act operate in sequence or on a parallel basis. More likely it is a kind of pool in which all the layers and components of the structure of consciousness take part.

If we visualize the proposed structure of consciousness as a whole, the reflexive layer occupies an intermediate place in it between the existential and spiritual layers. The reflexive layer, along with its own functions, performs control functions of a kind with respect to the other layers: it prevents the existential layer from becoming too grounded, from becoming submerged in everyday life (compare V. Maiakovskii: “The love boat has crashed into everyday life”), and the spiritual layer from soaring too high and losing touch altogether with reality and dissolving in myths. For example: “We ascend only to towers that we can build ourselves” (Orientation. Mandel’shtam). The reflexive layer seems to follow the Freudian principle of reality.

To be sure, the functions of consciousness go far beyond direct support for activity and action. Thank God, there is a current of consciousness that can take us far from them, including into the future, and transfer to it senses that in turn are capable of illuminating the present, etc. There is meditation, tranquillity, silence; in short, there is a place and time for a spontaneous life of consciousness, for freedom and creativity—but all this goes far beyond the scope of the article.

The time has come to return to the beginning of the article and above all to the question of consciousness as the subject matter of psychology. The answer to it actually is

contained in the epigraph, taken from G.G. Shpet's "Esthetic Fragments." The subject matter of the psychology of consciousness is the Interplay and Life of consciousness, the Sequence of Words, the Dialogue. But the word, interpreted as Logos, i.e. as word and deed, as reason and sense. The word in all of the richness of its external and internal forms that have been studied by W. Humboldt, A.A. Potebnia, G.G. Shpet, et al. Shpet even proclaimed words (rather than sensibility) as the main principle of cognition (which, it is true, does not repeal the golden rule: better to see once than to hear a hundred times).

The psychological study of consciousness cannot be confined to reflection, orientation or even seeking. I believe that Salvador Dali said: I do not seek, I find. A stronger image than seeking is needed. While I was working on the text, I was haunted and guided by the Platonic image of hunting, which, as is well known, is better when done as a matter of choice. According to Plato, sensibility hunts for ideas in order to become something specific, and ideas hunt for sensibility in order to be realized. For Spinoza, the memory is the intellect looking for itself. According to this logic, living motion is sense looking for itself. In fact, man is not only orienting himself in the world but is looking for himself with the aid of consciousness. Science (as long as it is alive), including psychology, is also hunting for its subject matter. The structure of consciousness proposed in the article is nothing more than a possible subject for the psychology of consciousness (but nothing less!). Or it is a psychological projection of a potential, developed consciousness. Regarding this point, so that I am not mistaken for an after-postmodernist <<sic>> dreaming of a nonexistential reality, it is apropos to recall that I owe a small debt. I cannot help sympathizing and assisting my psychophysicologist colleagues who concern are seeking the neurons of consciousness. The neuron even of the not overly rich consciousness described in this article is the entire human being, with his spirit, with his soul, with his body. With his present, past, and future. Three times that!

A few words in conclusion. The structure of consciousness that is conceptualized here is not only polyphonic but also polycentric. Each of the elements of the existential, reflexive, and spiritual layers of consciousness may become its center. The higher the spiritual vertical component in consciousness, the easier it is for such entrenched centers (sometimes painfully so) to alternate. But such alternation(s) is essential, since consciousness must be open, free and all-embracing, unless, of course, it has been poisoned or filled by ideology, by "lodestar deceptions," i.e. by a "false consciousness." Alternation is also essential for seeking a point of support, for understanding oneself. In other words, polycentrism is just as essential for consciousness as monocentrism is for the conscience. Polycentrism and pluralism of the conscience are equivalent to its absence. But that is already the philosophy (and ontology) not of psychology but of ethics, morals, and morality, which, however, should not be alien to psychology, either.

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# *Linguistics and Literature*





# Dialogic Enunciation in *Llámame Brooklyn* (Lago, 2006)

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This paper consists of a reading of the novel *Llámame Brooklyn* (*Call me Brooklyn*, not yet translated) published by the Spanish-American author Eduardo Lago in 2006. My reading will focus on the relation between the act of enunciation in the literary text and the individual subject's search for cultural identity, a theme that I have treated elsewhere from a semiotic point of view (Hansen 2005). This novel uses different forms of experimental enunciation in order to integrate heteroglossia and double voiced speech in the discourse, and it is my hypothesis that Bakhtin's concept of "dialogism" will contribute to the understanding of the way in which the novel's hybrid discourses challenge the reader and allow him or her to use the novel in the understanding of him or herself as a migrant "Other".

I will begin with a short summary of the novel, go on to comment on the quest for identity as a theme of the novel with reference to the Polish-British sociologist Zygmunt Bauman's concept of liquid modernity, continue with an analysis of the structure of the enunciation, and finally I will reflect upon my use of the Bakhtinian concept of dialogism.

## Summary

The novel tells the story of the life of the late Gal Ackerman, an American citizen born in Spain during the Civil War. Gal Ackerman's father was Italian and a volunteer in the international brigades. His mother, who was a Spanish republican, died during his birth. An American volunteer called Ben Ackerman took responsibility for the child who he took back to the USA and brought-up as his own. Gal was raised in Brooklyn, as his father before him, and he was not told about his Spanish/Italian background until he was an adolescent. As an adult Gal wanted to be a writer, but he never succeeded commercially. Instead, he earned his living as a translator and a proofreader, and wrote in his free time. An activity he continued with until his death in 1992. The majority of his writings consisted of (auto-) biographical essays about his and his ancestors' lives in Brooklyn. In 1972, when Gal was 35 years old, he met a young Russian emigrant called Nadia Orlov, with whom he fell in love. They had a rather unstable relationship for some years. Gal wanted them to have a baby, and if it turned out to be a girl, he wanted her to be called *Brooklyn*. But Nadia did not want to be tied and left him. Gal continued to work on the manuscript that he also referred to as *Brooklyn*, which now took the form of a novel, told explicitly to Nadia as a narratee.

Towards the end of his life Gal Ackerman lived in a room upstairs from a bar called "Oakland" in Brooklyn. Oakland is a real place, located at the periphery of Brooklyn Heights near the harbour, a place where lonely souls and sailors from all over the world gather. Gal was working on the (an) autobiographical novel and as material for his research he used a huge number of documents gathered by himself, his father and his grandfather before him. This archive was comprised of documents from a wide range of

social discourses e.g., personal letters, diary fragments, literary fiction, essays and newspaper articles.

While Gal was working on the novel, he met a young journalist and travel-writer called Néstor Oliver-Chapman and after the death of Gal, Néstor was asked to finish the novel as a kind of tribute to Gal. During his research Néstor used Gal's archive, and he chose to create a verbal *collage* of narrative fragments, a kind of orchestration of different voices around the two main narratives: first and foremost that of Gal's life, but secondly his own story about the writing process and subsequent circulation of the manuscript.

## Liquid modernity and migrant identity

The novel is basically told by two different narrators: Gal Ackerman and Néstor Chapman. With a reference to Cervantes' *Don Quijote*, we might call them the "first" and the "second author". As the novel itself is swarming with explicit intertextual references to this particular masterpiece of world literature, I think the novel itself invites the reader to make this comparison.

The comparison with *El Quijote* as the first modern novel does enrich the interpretation of *Call me Brooklyn* in several ways. There are a vast number of readings of Cervantes' masterpiece, but I think that most modern readings of the book agree upon at least two things: firstly that one essential theme of the novel concerns the quest for self identity in a changing world (Lukács), and secondly that it is told in a way that directs the reader's attention to the act of telling in an auto referential way: the polyphonic narrative structure, the dialogue of genres and the appearance of the first part of the book in the second, just to mention a few examples.

The subject in search of his self-identity in *Call me Brooklyn* is presumably Gal Ackerman, because it is his biographical story that we are told throughout the novel. But in the end it is not Gal who reaches his goal, but the "second author" Néstor Chapman. Gal dies from cancer, frustrated from having lost the love of his life, the Russian emigrant Nadia, and unable to finish the work of his life, the story about this loss. Néstor, for his part, gives form to Gal's story, and in the process he recognizes that the writing process has helped him find himself and his own identity as a writer (p. 382).

To finish Gal's book was an experience that moved my personality in a fundamental way. It made me go over my own history, and many things broke apart. I decided to leave, to break with everything, to destroy my past and reinvent myself, a very American concept which I in an ironical way used to make a break with that country [United States, HLH]. I quit my career as a journalist, ..., I told Brooklyn, New York and the States goodbye and left all the people that I had known there... I had to do it in order to be me...

I left everything behind, but I did not leave empty handed. Thanks to that experience I had become an author (Lago p. 382. My translation).

In the process of writing, Néstor became aware of something that allowed him to take responsibility, not only as an author of creative writing, but also as an author of his own life. But the reader is never told exactly how this came about. In order to get an idea, we might take a look at Zygmunt Bauman's concept of liquid modernity.

In liquid modernity, Bauman says, nothing is solid, all the institutions which formerly provided security and stability in the life of the individual subject, company, nation, society etc., are disappearing or at least changing, and all the conditions that at an individual level determined the existence of a person are consequently becoming unstable or "liquid" (Bauman 2000). Human relationships are no longer "until Death us do part", but fragile and transitory (Bauman 2008). As characters, both Gal and Néstor fit this description of solitary individuals without a traditional family based personal network. Gal never knew his parents and he lost the love of his life, and Néstor was a globe-trotter who was

just getting divorced when he met Gal Ackerman. This means that both of the narrators were in unstable personal situations at the moment of writing.

In his latest book, *The Art of Life*, Bauman compares the life of a person in the era of liquid modernity to a work of art. (Bauman 2008). Globalization processes circulate people in no time all over the globe in virtual as well as in real life, and the concept of cultural identity that formerly was tied to stable entities like nation, region, profession and language, are destabilized and “liberated”. It is obviously no coincidence that all the characters in *Call me Brooklyn* are emigrants one way or another. Although the reader is told almost nothing about Néstor Chapman, it is revealed in the epilogue that he was born in Trieste, and brought up in England, Spain and the USA. Gal Ackerman was born in Spain and brought up in Brooklyn, but he was taught Spanish as a child and he chose to keep up his Spanish throughout his life by going to México on a regular basis. Nadia, his beloved, was a Russian emigrant, and the rest of the important characters of the novel belong to the environment Gal chose as his *atalaya* at the end of his days: the bar called “Oakland”, a “heteroglottic” place where a group of Spanish speaking people and sailors from all over the world would gather.

The novel uses the character of the migrant as an image of the globalized citizen, and it is obvious that the two main characters and narrators to a certain extent feel uncomfortable about their liquid homelessness. According to Bauman this melt down of social and cultural structures implies that the individual subject has got to create his or her own identity in the same way that we create a work of art. In *Call me Brooklyn* Gal Ackerman tries to express his experience of existential loss in writing, but he cannot find the adequate form. Néstor Chapman for his part does reorganize Gal’s manuscript through creative writing, but he feels compelled to reinvent himself afterwards.

So, what kind of narrative techniques allowed Néstor Chapman to finish the story of Gal Ackerman’s life and then to reconstruct his own cultural identity? What is the adequate narrative form for this kind of “authoring” of the self in liquid modernity? We might get a clue by looking at what is meant by the expression “a work of art” in Bauman’s terminology. According to Bauman, the concept of the work of art in solid modernity was something with a lasting value, i.e. something with unity and coherence; by contrast the work of art in the era of liquid modernity can best be understood as an installation. The installation does not survive the closure of the exhibition, and the life of an individual subject has got to be understood as a series of incongruent and hardly connected episodes. This opens the parameter of coherence vs. fragmentation for investigation.

Another possibility would be to look at the modality used in the expression of the migrant experience and the lost “home”. In his book on literature and exile Claudio Guillén describes two principles in literary descriptions on exile. One inspired in Plutarch that praises the universal experience of mankind and tends towards a cosmopolitan point of view. And another principle inspired by Ovid that regrets the Paradise lost and tends towards nostalgia and national idealization (Guillén 1995).

## Structure of the narrative enunciation

Unlike the chronological summary given above, the structure of the novel is in no way linear, but fragmented and complicated. The novel is composed of three narrative discourses, each of which is tied to a certain historical period of time.

1. Néstor Chapman’s story about the writing process and the subsequent circulation of the manuscript.
  - a. Narrator: Néstor
  - b. Time span: 1990–2010.

2. Gal Ackerman's autobiographical story about his life, his relationship with Nadia etc.
  - a. Narrator: Gal
  - b. Time span: 1938–1972.
3. The story of Gal Ackerman's origins and family background.
  - a. Narrators: character-narrators
    - i. An ex. volunteer from the Spanish Civil War, Abraham Lewis, who knew Gal's biological father, the Italian Umberto Pietri
    - ii. Gal's father and grand father through inserted essays and documents
  - b. Time span: 1900–1938.

The three discourses are framed by one another in the sense that discourse 1 plays the role of a narrative frame for discourse 2, which on the other hand plays the role of a narrative frame for discourse 3.

In the first part of the novel the three discourses are intertwined on a regular basis like a plait, but from chapter 12 onwards they become mixed up in a highly chaotic way. Within each narrative discourse the narrator allows changes to take place between different voices without making these changes explicit by using diacritical markers. The different voices could be the voice of the narrator himself, the voice of a character as a narrator or the voices of the characters within the story. This means that the text presents itself to the reader as a series of episodes spread in time without any obvious coherence between them. And when the observant reader half way through the book thinks that he has found some kind of key with the regular turn taking between the three discourses, this system also breaks down.

If we combine this narrative structure with the fact that all three discourses also integrate a wide range of different literary genres (for instance letters and essays) and fragments of other social discourses (newspaper articles, detective reports, transcriptions of telephone conversations etc.) without any frame or explanation we get a picture of the kind of experience that the reader will have when he first gets acquainted with the text.

## Levels of narration

In order to analyse the narrative structure in the novel, I have chosen to use Gerard Genette's renowned model in my consideration of the narrative enunciation (Genette 1980). If we understand the first narrative discourse (the story of Gal Ackerman's life) as the main story, one could say that Gal is an intra- and homodiegetic narrator who belongs to the level C-4 in Genette's model (a so called first person narrator directly involved in the story), while Néstor Chapman's voice is the voice of an extradiegetic narrator who belongs to the level C-3 (the level that only concerns the narration and not the plot). But as Néstor Chapman's story about the writing process and the subsequent circulation of the manuscript becomes increasingly interesting for the reader in its own right, it is only fair to consider it an independent plot or story. As a consequence it might be more precise to say that Néstor Chapman appears as an extradiegetic narrator at level C-3 in both of the two discourses, and as an intra- and homodiegetic narrator at level C-4 in his own secondary plot.

In the third discourse (that of Gal Ackerman's origins) we find the narrative structure duplicated and triplicated like Chinese boxes as various narrators are inserted and their stories intertwined. Like in Cervantes' *Don Quijote* different persons within the text become narrators of their own stories, and Genette would call these stories within the story metadiegetic levels of enunciation. For instance in chapter 9, the key chapter where Gal Ackerman travels to Madrid in order to meet Abraham Lewis, an ex- volunteer from the Spanish Civil War. Abraham Lewis has met the Italian Umberto Pietri, Gal Acker-

man's biological father about whom Gal knows nothing. The meeting obviously has an enormous emotional effect on Ackerman, not least because of the message Abraham Lewis transmits. Gal Ackerman's biological father, far from being a war hero, turns out to have been a coward and a traitor who chose to sacrifice a whole squadron of Italian volunteers during the Civil War in order to save his own skin.

In different sections of Gal Ackerman's written testimony of the conversation with Abraham Lewis the latter speaks in his own right as an "I", and even the Italian father is given space to speak as a first person narrator. But what seems to be a relatively clear-cut Chinese box structure of separate discourses turns out to be something like a palimpsest of different intertwined voices. Let us take an example from the third discourse. Here the voice of Gal's biological father, who he never knew, is being interpreted and retold through Abraham Lewis' words, whose voice is being remembered and copied by Gal Ackerman's writing. And because of the state of emotional stress that characterized Gal Ackerman at the moment of writing, he is not even sure of the fidelity of his text himself:

I am not sure that I am making an exact reproduction of Abraham Lewis' words. If there happens to be some incoherence here, it is my fault, because he told me everything with absolute clarity and order (Lago p. 181. My translation).

And later in this same chapter, he says:

Although Umberto Pietri did not have a face, his voice was present, wrapped up in that of brigadier Lewis who was telling me the most terrible things in a repetitive and monotonous [monocorde] way, like somebody who recites a never ceasing death litany. The words that I listened to hurt me, but I clung to them. In a way I was afraid that Abe Lewis should stop talking and that the world should come to an end. I wished for his monotonous voice to continue to tear me apart. Yes, only this time, in order for me to be able to transcribe his words like I am doing it now (Lago p. 188. My translation).

This means that a hybrid double voiced discourse is introduced into the novel, and this hybrid character of the discourse even affects the relationship between the voices of the two main narrators, Gal and Néstor.

Also in chapter 9, as Gal Ackerman tells the story about how he got to know about his father, we find various comments in parenthesis apparently inserted by Néstor. They mostly concern the state of the original manuscript that he is editing, but from time to time he also comments on his own process of investigation:

[Here follows a long space in blank. When Gal continues to retell his conversation with Abraham Lewis he seems to guide himself by the letter that Lewis wrote to Ben Ackerman. I have not found the original in the Archive. I only know fragments of it from Gal's transcriptions of it in his note books.] (Lago p. 179–192. My translation.)

The voice of Abe Lewis is paraphrased by Gal Ackerman and the voice of Gal Ackerman's biological father, Umberto Pietri, is paraphrased by Abe Lewis and by Gal Ackerman successively. But even the voice of Gal Ackerman himself as the autobiographical author is the result of a creative process directed by Néstor Chapman. And the other way around, in chapter 4, one of the chapters that belongs to Néstor Chapman's story about the writing process, we find this paragraph within parenthesis:

(I am doing all right, ain't I, Gal? The dialogues without quotation signs, intertwined with the action as you would like it. And now I am going to do something else that I have learned from you: insert fragments of my own diary) (Lago p. 79. My translation.)

This means that Néstor Chapman as a level C-4 intra- and homodigetic narrator imitates the style and literary techniques of Gal Ackerman, whose voice in this way gets entangled in Chapman's writing. The simple narrative structure where two different narrators were

in charge of each of their separate but entangled plots, turns out to be a complex hybrid discourse where the voice of each of the two narrators are present within the voice of the other. And this is not as innocent as it might appear because they belong to different generations and therefore hold different world views and belief systems, something that the novel is very explicit about.

The novel presents the reader to three male representatives of three different generations of the Ackerman family:

- David Ackerman, Gal's grandfather, was an anarchist to the end of his days
- Ben Ackerman, Gal's father, was a left wing intellectual who lost his idealism in the Spanish Civil War
- Gal Ackerman says of himself that politics does not interest him despite of his family background. He dies on the anniversary of the Second Republic of Spain, 14 April.

The relations between the three generations and their political beliefs reflect the general evolution from the collectivist ideologies and idealism that dominated the thinking of much of the population in the era of solid modernity, to the individual answers and pragmatic attitudes towards ethical problems that characterize liquid modernity. As one of the characters, Abraham Lewis says in the novel: "each generation answers to the world according to unforeseeable codes". Or as Mikhail Bakhtin says "all languages of heteroglossia, ..., are specific points of view in the world" (Bakhtin: *Discourse...* 291)

In this sense Néstor Chapman and Gal Ackerman are different subjects with different sets of values, corresponding to their different generations and world views. Gal Ackerman chose to express his sensation of existential loss in a book about Brooklyn, the geographical place of his childhood and the name of the child he never had, but he could not find an adequate form. Néstor Chapman invented an adequate narrative form for Gal Ackerman's story by breaking down any kind of chronological coherence and unity and by the creation of a consistent doublevoiced discourse. But the price was that he had to reinvent the story of his own life afterwards. He chose to leave New York, the capital of the globalized multicultural society, in order to return to Spain. The reason why he chose Spain is not made explicit in the text, but I think that the insight that Néstor Chapman gained through the writing process was that "home" in liquid modernity is not a place, it is not family, it is language. Néstor Chapman found his identity as an author, but he did not have a mother tongue; born in Trieste on the border between Italy and Slovenia by a Canadian mother and a Catalan father (both from bilingual regions) and brought up in Spain, England and the USA, he had to choose his identity through his language, and he chose to go back to Madrid. Not to the nation State of Spain, but to the capital of the Spanish language. Only by choosing language as his "home", he was able to free himself from the nostalgia of the Ovidian principle of loss.

And in the same way as Néstor Chapman struggles with the material left over from the late Gal Ackerman in order to make a story from it, and in the process finds his own identity as an author, so the reader must struggle with the novel's fragmented form and hybrid discourses in order to make sense of the text and ultimately of his own existence. If the novel is the literary form of transcendental homelessness (Georg Lukács), the reader's "authoring" of himself through the dialogue with the heteroglossia of the novel (Bakhtin) is the novel's answer to the character's quest for identity.

## Reflection on the concepts of dialogue and dialogism

According to Bakhtin heteroglossia is introduced in the novel by several means that we all find present in *Call me Brooklyn*: double-voiced speech, dialogue between different kinds of characters, crossovers between English and Spanish spoken language, dialogue

between different genres and social discourses. And heteroglossia always calls for dialogism in the process of interpretation:

Heteroglossia, once incorporated into the novel, is *another's speech in another's language*, serving to express authorial intentions but in a refracted way. It serves two speakers at the same time and expresses simultaneously two different intentions... (T)hese two intentions are dialogically interrelated, they – as it were – know about each other,... it is as if they actually hold a conversation with each other. Double-voiced discourse is always dialogized (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 324. My translation).

Bakhtin's concept of dialogism constitutes an adequate theoretical framework for the understanding of how the reader manages the challenge of heteroglossia and complex narrative structures. But the power of the concept goes beyond the textual analysis. The philological activity of Néstor Chapman and his quest for material and order (sense) in the process of creative writing calls for an auto-referential interpretation of the novel, the text as "mimesis of the literary process" (Hutcheon 1980 & 1987), a parallel that is drawn explicitly towards the end of the novel.

Similar to the activity of the narrator, the complex hybrid discourse of the work requires a dialogic interpretation by the reader in order to create his or her own position, or in Bakhtin's words, in order to author him- or herself as a subject with "answerability" (Bakhtin 1990). This activity parallels the effort needed for the emigrant to reconstruct his cultural identity in a constantly changing social and cultural context, and this is, according to Bauman, the work required of the individual subject to create and recreate his personal identity as an artistic installation in the era of liquid modernity.

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# Biography at the Dialogical Crossroads: The case of Virginia Woolf

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## Introduction

It is self evident that the genre, Biography, is a meeting place for the perspectives of the biographical subject, of witnesses to the life and of the biographical subject itself. It is thus inherently dialogic although curiously this obvious point is seldom acknowledged in discussions of the genre. Rather biographers when discussing their practice have been primarily concerned with truth claims, reliability and authenticity as well as with the role of the historical imagination in re-creating the past. Moreover, readers of biography have come to expect a seamless narrative that offers them a coherent account of a life, and in doing so conceals the flux of experience, the multiple influences and ambivalences that form our lives.

There are many good reasons for being suspicious of biographies' truth claims based as they are on an epistemological impossibility, namely the simple equation of life and text. As Epstein has pointed out in one of the very few extended post-structuralist analyses of biography: "To enter discourse as a biographical subject may be a powerful way of being and becoming in Western culture", but this phenomenon only "*signifies*" human existence; it does not "*prove*" it (1986:84). The notion of the biographical subject, as opposed to the historical individual, as having a substance that precedes discourse leads, moreover, to what Liz Stanley sees as a common fallacy; that is to say that the text produced by the biographer is "precisely referential" of the person whose life is being described (1992:8).

However, constrained, I believe, by the conventions of the genre most biographers not only insist that their narrative is a factual representation of the life of a named person, but they also end up by writing as if their particular account was possessed of a remarkable degree of authenticity or reliability. In fact, biographers enter into what LeJeune has called the "referential pact" with their readers. This is an agreement "sealed by the proper name" that the biographer's act of reconstruction, even if speculative at times, is grounded in an empirical reality and in the life course of an historical individual who occupied that reality. The aim of the biographer is thus "not simple verisimilitude, but resemblance to the truth" (1989:22).<sup>1</sup>

If biography were recognized, like fiction, as entertainment or "poetic truth" there would be no problem, but the referential pact promises an authentic reconstruction to the extent that the narrative is presumed to approximate lived events. This understanding of biography is, however, misrecognition. It conceals the epistemological gap between the extra discursive subject, the person who lived, and the subject of discourse that is the textual construction of the biographical subject. Individual biographer's claims to particular insight based on their reading of source materials conceal this gap insofar as the subject becomes one with the textual record of his or her life. What is in fact interpretation or culturally coded information is thus redefined as fact and then re-reported uncritically. Were it not the case that the narrative of the exceptional life is assumed to be of significance for understanding the works of the subject, the nature of humanity or

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<sup>1</sup> See Philippe Lejeune (1986) Chapter 1.

historical circumstances, once again this would not matter.<sup>2</sup> But, as we shall see, biography rather than offering new knowledge about the human conditions is far more likely to conserve assumptions that are already in place – or to use Bakhtinian discourse – statements that are linguistically encoded in the generic conventions of biography.

As a way of illustrating this I should like to examine the dialogic nature of biography taking Virginia Woolf my model. Herself the subject of innumerable and sometimes salacious biographies, Woolf offers a case-study in the dangers of life writing. She was, however, also a self-conscious practitioner of the genre in a manner that demonstrates the dialogic nature of biography. In other words, her texts illustrate the interaction between the utterances of biographical subject and the biographer as well as how the biographical text looks forward to the potential responses in the future. My aim is to show how this practice may shed some light on biographies of Woolf herself.

## Virginia Woolf as the biographer

Virginia Woolf while fascinated by the aesthetic possibilities of life-writing was also fully aware of the impossibilities of biography's truth claims.<sup>3</sup> Nowhere is this more apparent than in her fantasy biography/novel, *Orlando*. I quote below from the first paragraph of the second chapter of the novel where we learn of the first occasion when Orlando inexplicably falls into a long sleep. When he awakes after seven days he has stepped out of time as we usually understand it and has ceased to age. This is not the kind of event that normally confronts the biographer, but Woolf's fantasy nonetheless enables narrator to reflect on the constraints governing the writing of lives.

The biographer is now faced with a difficulty which it is better perhaps to confess than to gloss over. Up to this point in the telling of the story of Orlando's life, documents, both private and historical have made it possible to fulfil the first duty of a biographer, which is to plod, without looking to right or left, in the indelible footprints of truth; unenticed by flowers; regardless of shade; on and on methodically till we fall plump into the grave and write finis on the tombstone above our heads. But now we come to an episode which lies right across our path, so there is no ignoring it. Yet it is dark, mysterious and undocumented; so that there is no explaining it. Volumes might be written in interpretation of it; whole religious systems founded upon the significance of it. Our simple duty is to state the facts as far as they are known, and so let the reader make of them what he may (1928:38).

The passage encompasses a whole range of the considerations that face the writers and readers of biography. To start with biography is a genre with a whole range of conventions and expectations attached to it. As Woolf indicates the life writer – at least the biographer of a deceased subject – is expected to cover the life from birth to death on the basis of the available documentation. This may consist of private material, such as letters and diaries, or of public records, birth certificates, bank statements and minutes of meetings attended by the subject – to mention just a few possibilities. The resulting narratives are sometimes enlivened by interviews with people who have known the biographical subject, by a study of historical context and/or visits to places the subject inhabited or travelled to. In the modern scholarly biography all of this information appears to be scrupulously documented in the extensive footnotes that normally accompany the narrative; all of which gives the reader a sense of authenticity and reliability.

But, as Woolf also indicates here, the biographer will almost certainly discover that however extensive the documentation there are blank spots or gaps which, like Orlando's mysterious sleep, can only be filled by speculation or interpretation. It is at such moments

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Backsheider who argues that by immersing themselves in the lives of others readers may acquire “coping skills and a satisfying ‘philosophy’ of life” (1999:17).

<sup>3</sup> See primarily Woolf's two essays, “The Art of Biography” published posthumously and “The New Biography” from 1927.

that whatever the scholarly ambitions the biographer's subjective involvement in the narrative becomes obvious and indeed necessary. While Woolf's narrator/biographer insists that it is his duty only to record facts, a paragraph later he too starts to speculate not only over the nature of such a sleep but also over the relation between sleep and death and the essence of life. The purpose of the exercise is, of course, to alert the readers to the role of the biographer in bringing significance to the narrative and in evaluating the life in question. Such a move seems to foresee or has perhaps influenced such present-day biographies which include asides and qualifiers to remind the reader that the story being related is the result of interpretation of the available materials.

*Orlando* is, of course, an extended joke at the expense of the literal-minded biographer. Woolf's skepticism about the possibility of truthfully recording others' lives did not, however, prevent her from being a prolific writer of biographical sketches. Indeed she wrote numerous essay/sketches of this type as part of her extensive journalism and as a way of continuing and adapting a literary tradition that goes back to the eighteenth century, to Dr Johnson's biographical criticism in *The Lives of the English Poets*, to the familiar essay, to the 19<sup>th</sup> century mode of collective biography, to Woolf's father's, Leslie Stephen's, biographical writings as well as to the work of Woolf's friend and contemporary Lytton Strachey. But Woolf's particular take on what was a very popular form was also part of a self-conscious project to allow the past to speak *to* and *in* the present moment.

While her predecessors were naturally equally indebted to their materials, including the recorded perspectives of their subjects, Woolf's sketches are strikingly and overtly a meeting places for various 'voices'. As I have already indicated, Woolf often used recently published biographies of and/or diaries and letters written by the person in question as a basis for a new text that interweaves these sources with her own representation. This mode apparently makes concrete something that Bakhtin talks of in "The Problem of Speech Genres" namely the way various utterances interact in the process of creating a new and unique utterance:

Every utterance must be regarded primarily as a *response* to preceding utterances of the given sphere (we understand the word "response" here in the broadest sense...). These reactions take various forms: others' utterances can be introduced directly into the context of the utterance, or one may introduce only individual words or sentences, which then act as representatives of the whole utterance. Both whole utterances and individual words can retain their alien expression, but they can also be re-accentuated (ironically, indignantly, reverently, and so forth) (1986:91).

In Woolf's practice as a biographer the relevant previous utterances are in the first place those of the subject him/herself which are quite often repeated more or less verbatim. Secondly, when available, they are those of other biographers or commentators as we shall see. As a rather simple example of this method I have taken one of the biographical sketches in *The Common Reader* (1925), "Taylors and Edgeworths" from the section entitled "The Lives of the Obscure". As the introduction to *The Common Reader* makes plain this collection of essays and sketches is designed as an invitation to us to engage in the process of meaning making on the basis of our reading. In other words, we are expected to make use of various forms of linguistic input, "whatever odds and ends" we can come by (Woolf, 1994:19), to construct a model of the world we inhabit. The collection thus works around the notion of conversation. The essays and sketches articles are thus to some degree tentative and questioning opening towards the readers' participation in or resistance to what is said. In the biographical sketches, moreover, the aim is not merely to enter into a conversation about our reading responses and relationship with the past, but also to widen this conversation by giving actual voice to the obscure figures of the past; these texts allow their previous utterances to become audible at the moment of our response to them:

For one likes romantically to feel oneself a deliverer advancing with lights across the waste of years to the rescue of some stranded ghost ... waiting, appealing, forgotten in the growing gloom. Possibly [the figures from the past] hear one coming. They shuffle, they preen, they bridle. Old secrets well up to their lips. The divine relief of communication will soon again be theirs... (1994:119).

How does this work? The first part of the text in question concerns a family, the Taylors, living in Colchester in 1800. Behind this tale of the social life of a number of people, apart from the Taylors “a Mrs Pilkington, a Rev. Henry Elman .... The Strutts, The Hills, the Stapletons” is one Mrs Ann Gilbert remembering her time as a young Miss Taylor. Although written as straightforward narrative the information comes from her autobiography as is clear, for instance, from the insertion of an insistence on the young peoples’ right to enjoyment: “[T]here was poetry, philosophy, and engraving. For the young Taylors were brought up to work hard, and if, after a long day’s toil upon their father’s pictures, they slipped round to dine with the Strutts, they had a right to their pleasure” (Woolf 1994:119). The occasional use of quotation marks also alerts the reader to repetition of previous utterances in this account: “Looking back in the middle of a vigorous and prosperous life, Ann had to lament many broken careers, much unfulfilled promise. The Stapletons died young, perverted, miserable; Jacob with his ‘dark, scorn-speaking countenance’ ... disappeared” (Woolf 1994:119). However, this quote also introduces another voice when it merges Ann Gilbert’s perspective with that of the essayist who proceeds to offer an estimate of Ann’s life course. Indeed the reader needs to remain alert throughout to the distinctions between information repeated and interpretation. When we read of the father in one of the families Ann visited, “old Ben Strutt”, who “was a bit of a character: did not communicate; would not let his daughters eat meat” we hear Ann Gilbert’s voice but the ensuing comment, “so no wonder they died of consumption” inserts the perspective of the 20<sup>th</sup> century narrator who knows the connection between diet and tuberculosis (Woolf 1994:119). Ann Gilbert’s account is thus rearticulated as the essayist’s historical reconstruction and response to the conditions endured by the daughters of tyrannical fathers in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

There is an added complication for other voices are present here although unknown to the common reader. Woolf is, in fact, not only relying on Ann Taylor, but also weaves other reports into her narrative. The main source is “*Autobiography and other Memorials of Mrs Ann Gilbert (formerly Ann Taylor)*, (1874), but Woolf also used *Threescore Years and Ten. Reminiscences of the late Sophia Elisabeth de Morgan* (1895) and Hulda Friedrichs *The Life of Sir George Newnes Bart* (1911). Thus what appears to be an interaction between Ann Gilbert and the essayist is in fact a polyphonic discourse that becomes available to the scholar, as potential addressee, encouraging a response to the text in the form of further research into the context.

The polyphonic effect, as well as the invitation to make connections is enhanced in the second section of the essay which is based primarily on and extensively quotes from the *Memoirs of Richard Lovell Edgeworth*. Edgeworth is introduced as connected to Ann through their shared characteristics: “blindness to fate an indefatigable interest in their own activities” (Woolf 1994:121). Otherwise the only link between Ann Taylor and Edgeworth is that they lived at much the same time, but Woolf’s text effectively puts them in a dialogic relation to one another. We are consequently encouraged to compare their disparate observations and perspectives regarding social interaction at the time. This is not dissimilar to the common practice in biography of bringing the views of contemporary observers to bear on the subject of biography.

## Woolf’s as biographical subject

Even while she lived Virginia Woolf, as writer and woman, was the focus of attention and exposed to comment by others. Her life has since become increasingly over-exposed.

There are innumerable biographies; a number, such as Hermione Lee's mammoth life from 1996 are based on extensive archival research. Others, notably Quentin Bell's account, claim the authority of kinship while some focus on Woolf's writing career or particular aspects of her psyche or private life. Needless to say the sheer number of works means that familiar materials are presented and represented in various guises and from varying perspectives. The familiarity of the materials also means that new biographers must claim that they have something new to offer. However, in the process of reinterpretation and rearticulation they often enter either overtly or covertly into a dialogue with one another; or to use a Bakhtinian phrase each new biography is "filled with echoes and reverberations" of the preceding ones (Bakhtin 1986:91).

Regardless of the method used each new biography also enters into a dialogic relationship with the written sources although the actual nature of the response varies. Some biographers, like Woolf, incorporate the actual wording of the source (with or without question marks) while others radically rearticulate the materials. Since there is extensive documentation both in the form of letters, diaries written by Woolf and her family and friends as well as other eye-witness accounts much of this re-articulation consists of the selection and structuring of sometimes contradictory information.

Not only is this information contradictory because perspectives vary, there is another problem with regard to the reliability of the evidence. This refers back to the problem discussed in my introduction, namely the displaced relationship of textual accounts to extra-discursive events. In other words, the act of recording experience involves elements of conversion whereby what is prior to textuality becomes text. One prominent biographer, Richard Holmes, has been very open about this difficulty, astutely remarking that: "[a] biographer has always to construct or orchestrate a factual pattern out of materials that already have a fictional or reinvented element" (1995:17). In other words the records of a person's life are always already reconstructions of events and these reconstructions are determined by what can be said "within the communality of the sphere of speech communication" (Bakhtin 1986:91), that is to say the terms provided by language and biographical convention within which we can describe and understand our lives.

As an example of the use of what is already a more or less fictional, informed reconstruction of events I have taken the description of Virginia Stephen's wedding to Leonard Woolf from the late Mitchell Leaska's biography *Granite and Rainbow*. His is a particularly tendentious reading of Woolf's life but, nonetheless, the passage I have selected is, since the same sources are available to all, very similar to accounts of this event in other biographies:

The wedding ceremony, like so much in Virginia's life, contained a bit of spectacle. Duncan Grant in borrowed clothes that threatened to slip off; Aunt Mary Fisher had come hobbling on a crutch; the painter Fredrick Etchells "came bearded, bespectacled, uncouth, to lend a final touch of oddity to the scene". Getting married at the Registry Office was quick and efficient. One had to repeat a few words and then sign a paper. "Nothing went wrong" said the bride..." (Leaska 1998:157).<sup>4</sup>

As the quotation marks indicate Leaska, like Woolf in her biographical sketches, is interweaving his own commentary with quotes from somewhere – though curiously enough these particular quotations, unlike many others in his text, are not identified in the notes. He is presumably relying on a reference to "Nessa" (Woolf's sister, Vanessa Bell) to alert the reader to the fact that one source is Virginia herself. Research reveals that this description of the Woolfs' wedding, like Quentin Bell's before it – from which the quote about Etchells is taken – is otherwise based on two letters from Virginia, one to Ottoline

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<sup>4</sup> See also Quentin Bell (1972, 2:4), Panthea Reid (1986:136) and Victoria Glendenning (2006: 150).

Morell and the other to Janet Case. The representation of this event as primarily absurd thus derives from accounts directed to very specific addressees – a woman friend within the Bloomsbury Group and a former, unmarried, teacher. Significantly too, in her correspondence with Case, Woolf had hitherto expressed considerable doubt about the institution of marriage as such.

Even when there are no quotation marks, the text repeats Woolf's words so that Leaska has not changed the formulation to any greater extent. But the repetition of these words in another context is effectually rearticulation and thus creates a new meaning. The words cease to act as a means of displacing emotion through self-irony and, in becoming Leaska's text rather than Woolf's story, the narrative records a ludicrous event that suits Leaska's rather contemptuous treatment of his subject. As an accurate – or impartial – representation of the event the narrative does not, of course, stand up to closer examination, which, given the nature of the evidence, may explain why more scrupulous biographers skip over the story of the wedding entirely.<sup>5</sup>

This particular example demonstrates very clearly both how the biographer's text can work in conjunction with earlier reconstructions, and also how there are pitfalls attached to this interaction. When, as is the case with Virginia Woolf, the subject has left behind so much seemingly private writing, it is tempting to treat this material with the respect due to authenticity and to allow it to permeate the biographer's account. But this is to ignore the element of self-fashioning that occurs with the transformation of experience into text. Although we like to think of private writing, and diaries, in particular, as spontaneous expressions of subjective experience, as Felicity Nussbaum has pointed out they "can only be relatively autonomous from the culture they inhabit, for there is no truly private language or practice." Thus, she argues further: "writing one in an autobiographical text, even asserting the existence of a private self, is complicit in the political and economical production of that subject" (1989:29). The very act of writing a diary endorses the ideological concept of the autonomous subject. This notion then sets the parameters for how the diarist, as autobiographer, constructs herself and conceals the social or genre bound nature of the narrative.

Woolf's diaries – an important source for most biographers – give the impression an uncensored immediate record of experience. If, however, we consider what we know to be omitted (much of her work with the printing press, political meetings, every day shopping, intimate physical details for instance) it is evident that the diarist is selecting aspects of life in order to construct a self within a specific social context. This self is the writer, the wife, sister and friend, the amused observer and at times the madwoman. While all of these aspects of Woolf's life are verifiable, they *are* partial and do not add up to a complete account; they do however create an image of particular kind of reasonably coherent and recognisable subject; the sensitive, creative and exceptional individual.

The same illusion of the autonomous observing subject is present in the letters which, depending on the addressee, nonetheless create different selves. This is a reminder that this kind of source material is even more constrained by social factors than are diaries. In fact, this kind of writing is no different from any other in this respect. As Vološinov's put it in his critique of Freudianism, "any product of the activity of human discourse – from the simplest utterance in everyday life to elaborate works of literary art – derives shape and meaning in all its most essential aspects not from the subjective experiences of the speaker but from the social situation in which the utterance appears" (1976:79).

To consider how Woolf's construction of herself as the exceptional autonomous individual affects biography let us return to the Woolf's wedding. As seen, Woolf's narrative highlights certain aspects of the event that interact with common assumptions about how weddings are normally conducted. In most rearticulations there is an emphasis on the unusual clothing and behaviour of the wedding guests, but for the significance of this to

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<sup>5</sup> See Hermione Lee (1996) and Lyndall Gordon (1984).

be fully felt, the reader must accept the biographer's implied understanding of what a wedding should be like – a serious ritualised occasion, and of how people in their society behave and dress at such events – in formal or elegant clothes. It is this latter convention that enables a shared understanding of the strangeness of Duncan Grant's garments.

If the reader has prior knowledge of Grant – either because he has already figured in the biography or as a matter of cultural knowhow – a new degree of mutual understanding will occur between biographer and reader. Grant (and Etchells for that matter) represents a type, familiar in cultural discourse, namely the avant garde, bohemian artist who is uninterested in his appearance. By cementing the common image of this group of people as radical resisters of the mores of the time (or indeed even of our time) the narrative evokes cultural norms and encourages the reader to respond to their rupture. How this will actually work out is less clear. Some readers will admire the Bloomsbury group's ethos; others may regard them as silly and so on. In other words the account will generate responses that will lead to new utterances that create new meanings out of the previous ones.

At the same time, the reassertion of received ideas is, in effect, a convenient way of concealing from the reader how little is really known. Less dramatically, but quite as significantly as in *Orlando*, there are gaps here that the biographer would need to negotiate if the aim were to give a more "truthful" or at least more two-sided narrative. Had the Registrar, who Virginia described as blind and confused, left a record of events, we might have had a very different version, for instance. Nor do we know how Duncan Grant viewed his participation – or choice of clothes. Nor do we really know why Leonard Woolf's mother was not invited, though we do know how she felt about it. Here the biographer is forced to fall back on speculation and to draw conclusions from what is known of Virginia and Leonard's feelings about his mother.

## Conclusion

Leaska's text is then an easily dissected example of the meeting of subjectivities. However, as expressions of a literary (or cultural) genre biographies – especially those with a Freudian bias – attempt to conceal or play down the social nature of subjective experience. For instance, the factors at play in the construction of the subject are usually individualised even though they are formulaic; the characteristics of the childhood home, traumatic early experiences, education and formative influences may be described as say typical of the age, but nonetheless working on the subject in ways that are specific to this particular life. Biography is, after all, as Backscheider reminds us, conventionally concerned with identifying the characteristics that distinguish the exceptional person from others; otherwise there would be little point in writing the lives of individuals in the first place (cf. 1999:138). These conventions, as seen in the example given here, set up a new dialogic relationship between the biographer and the reader who enter into a collusive project to understand, evaluate and interpret the exceptional individual's life on the basis of interlocking discourses about what constitutes individual subjectivity and the commonplace.

Taking a closer look at moments of biographical practice readily exposes this factor then. It remains to be asked if we should be concerned about this, or indeed if anything can be done to change the conventions of biography – or indeed to solve the problem faced by Orlando's biographer. Quite apart from the epistemological difficulties I have discussed, inevitable gaps in information guarantee that there is no way of retrieving a life in its entirety, while on the other hand the dialogic characteristics of the biographical narrative mediate our contact with the events which inspired it and enclose us in the generic conventions of both language and the genre itself.

As I have suggested, there would be no problem if biography were simply regarded as a literary genre, the problem arises when it is seen as history. Essentially this is an ethical

dilemma. Biography's tendency to conceal the epistemological gap and erase its ideological bias enables the re-articulation of uncertain information as factual and gives it an authority it does not possess. Some biographies respond to this challenge by discussing problems of evidence as well as their own subjective involvement, but most biographers – and Woolf's biographers are no exception – torn between the limitations of the genre and demands for a seamless narrative that conceals its own difficulties opt for the latter. A greater responsiveness to the dialogical crossroads of biography, of biography as a place where the essentially multifaceted and dynamic nature of the interaction of utterances becomes apparent would, I believe, help readers to respond more critically to the information provided. To read biography not to learn the truth about another human being, but as a way of observing interactive utterances about the human subject over time might, moreover, help us consider the linguistic and social factors that are at work when we convert our experiences into a life text.

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# How to Connect the Study of Literature to the Study of History?

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I will present here the basic methodological question of my study. The question is: How to connect the study of literature to the study of history? The subject of my study is Finnish author Algot Untola. His pseudonyms Irmari Rantamala and especially Maiju Lassila are better known in Finland because he didn't use his real name after he started his career as an author. As a historian I am interested in a human being, society and a specific period of time. On the other hand, the main part of available sources written by Untola is novels or other fictional writings. So, how to produce a new historical information about this kind of material?

Mihail Bakhtin's language and literature theory and his ideas about dialogism seem to solve this problem. In this article I will refer especially to his essay *The Problem of Speech Genre*. (M.M. Bakhtin: *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. University of Texas Press, Austin 2004.) Firstly I will present the object of my study. Secondly I will talk about my point of view to the sources and finally I will conclude and estimate shortly the study as a whole.

## Speaking subjects

Firstly I want to stress that historian must produce new information about real life. That determines my point of view to Untola and his production, and that is also why Bakhtin's ideas about language are so important to me.

According to Bakhtin language is above all interactional speech communication. Speech belongs always to the particular speaking subject. Every speaker acts in a given cultural position. When he is writing, he/she presupposes his own and others earlier speech about this same subject. At the same time he is oriented toward actively responsive understanding of readers. He expects for example their agreement or disagreement. On the other hand, when readers understand the meaning of the text, they simultaneously take an active, responsive attitude toward it. Sooner or later this attitude can be also realized somehow in their action. (Bakhtin 2004, pp. 68–69.)

This is shortly and simply the core of Bakhtin's dialogism. So, what these theoretical points mean in the case of my study?

According to my hypothesis Untola was a dissident of his time. His whole production seems to include meanings which were directed against the contemporary official or elitist culture. Untola's articles in newspapers were normally critical comments of current events. It seems that he didn't accept actions of political leaders because they didn't really know or even care about common peoples and their problems. According to his criticism there was oligarchy in Finland despite parliament and elections. Democracy was only apparent. In Untola's opinion also poor and non-educational people would have been the masters of their own life and got more influence to their life conditions.

Also the attitude of literary and political elite was often critical on Untola. It seems that they didn't really understand his points of view. For example, in Untola's opinion common people would have read more newspapers and got information about society. That is why he used unofficial language in his humorous columns. His way to use Finnish

language was familiar to the working class readers while more sophisticated readers, whose own mother language were usually Swedish, considered it brutal and tasteless.

Untola got very confusing criticism from his first novel *Harhama*. After that he said that he wrote his novels and dramas to the peasantry. Characters of his carnivalesque books were described with warm humor and empathy. Many of his novels and dramas have been popular especially among common people. Nowadays it is able to find indirect social criticism also in these books, but contemporary critics considered them as a quite harmless description of folk.

Untola stayed with his people right to the bitter end. Without being actual socialist he was on the red's side during the civil war in 1918 in Finland. This was because of he saw the troubles of working class, as Untola said. His articles in socialist newspaper *Työmies* caused his death after the win of the non-socialist whites. He got death penalty without court case.

My point is that Untola's position between peasantry and elite is worth researching by using Bakhtin's ideas. It is important to see not only Untola and his worldview but also his relation to the others and contemporary ideologies.

## Texts as utterances

Now I will move on to the question of available sources. Untola's writings are the starting point of my study. So, how his worldview can be found from his texts?

According to Bakhtin utterance is a unit of speech. All utterances have some common features. First of all they are very concrete: Every utterance has beginning and the end. They have also clear boundaries when a speaker is changing. (Bakhtin 2004, pp. 71–73.)

This time I will not talk about dialogue but only single utterances. However, there are plenty of different types of utterances. As we know Bakhtin calls them speech genres. They can be primary or secondary in their nature. In the case of my study, Untola's articles and letters are primary speech genres while novels and other artistic works are secondary speech genres. The difference between these genres is very great and fundamental. According to Bakhtin that is just the reason why the meaning of the utterances should be analyzed by using both types of speech genres. (Bakhtin 2004, p. 62.)

Bakhtin says that artistic secondary genres are most individual and ideological. The author manifests his own worldview in all aspects of his work. These aspects are thematic content, style and compositional structure which is inseparable linked to the whole of utterance. (Bakhtin 2004, pp. 75, 90–91.) This kind of ideological nature is very clear in Untola's first novel which name was *Harhama*. As I state earlier it caused extensive polemic among and between different political groups when it was published in 1909. Most part of literature elite didn't accept the ideology of the book, because they consider it too tendentious. After that Untola changed his style and most of his following books were written by carnivalesque style. But beyond all his works were the same worldview and it's values. Why it seems to be so unpopular among cultural elite in those days?

This question gets answer by analyzing both Untola's novels and also wider discussion about their themes in newspapers and other contemporary media. That is why I have to pay attention to the basic difference of primary and secondary speech genres.

According to Bakhtin primary speech genres have immediate relation to the actual reality and the real utterances of others. Artistic secondary speech genres enter also into the reality, but only via the novel as a whole. As Bakhtin stress, the novel as a whole is an author's utterance just as rejoinders in everyday dialogue or private letters. (Bakhtin 2004, pp. 61–62.)

So, it is obviously that I have to analyze the content, style and structure of Untola's novels first inside they own fantasy world. Only after that it is possible to understand the meaning of his utterances in specific historical time. My point is, that also novels and

other artistic works can be relevant source of history, but they demands very careful researching process.

## Finally

As we have noticed my study seems to be neither discipline of literature nor history. The former has avoided talking about an author and his intentions during the last few decades while the latter has mostly taken a distrustful attitude on fiction as a historic source. And to be honest even I don't really know jet the problems and limits of this method. I have presented you only the starting point of my study.

In spite of the fact that this study seems to be between gaps I hope that you believe it's cultural importance. it is rather both the study of history and literature. Bakhtin's theory gives me possibility to research all Untola's texts – also novels and dramas – as utterances of speech communication which reflects on situations of contemporary reality.

# Changing Voicing Practices in Newspaper Discourse

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This paper explores Bakhtin's concept of voicing, theoretically and analytically. According to Bakhtin, all texts are dialogical in the sense that every text includes intertexts from divergent voices and viewpoints. The literature on voices covers a wide spectrum of theoretical and empirical topics, and the concept of 'voice' is often used in contemporary theory of linguistics as well as in discourse analysis of different kinds. Discourse representation or reported speech has during the last twenty years been an object of extensive examination. However, it seems to be unclear how the term 'voice' should be defined as an analytical category, and how it may be operationalized in practical analyses.

The main goal with this paper is to propose some analytical tools for how to analyze various practices of voicing. A second goal is to show how such analysis can uncover historical changes in the construction of status and roles, power and solidarity in newspaper discourse. Selected results from an empirical study of historical changes in voicing practices in newspaper discourse will be presented. The empirical results refer to a ph.d study of voicing practices in one specific Norwegian newspaper, *Dagbladet* (Veum 2008). This study uncovered that orchestration of voices in the newspaper texts changed remarkably during the 20th century. The results presented in this paper illustrate how the examined newspaper gradually achieved increased power through the development of various textual and rhetorical strategies. The study draws on Bakhtin's theories of voices, as well as on Halliday's systemic functional grammar (Halliday 1989, 2004), current social semiotics (Kress & van Leeuwen 1996, Iedema 2003, Baldery & Thibault 2006), as well as some models from Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough 1992, 1995).

The paper is based on the following research questions: a) How do voices express evaluations and attitudes? b) How are voicing practices changing over time? The paper is structured in three sections: 1) Defining the concept of voice, 2) Operationalizing analysis of voicing and 3) Demonstrating analysis of voicing in newspaper discourse.

## Defining the concept of voice

The concept of 'voice' is frequently used in contemporary theory of linguistics as well as in discourse analysis of different kinds. The literature on voices covers a wide spectrum of theoretical and empirical topics. Because there exist no theoretical consensus about how the term "voice" should be defined as an analytical category, the concept appears complex and confusing. The concept might be used and understood in several ways (Veum & Raddum 2006). Firstly, the concept of voice may be understood *formally*, as a verbal category, concerning the distinction between the active and passive voice. Secondly: the concept of "voice" may refer to *discourse representation or reported speech*, sometimes also referred to as the practice of quoting. This understanding of voice is established within the study of stylistics, and refers to the study of narration. Thirdly, we have the broader understanding of voice, which springs out of the writings of Bakhtin. Within this tradition, the concept of voice is connected to the fundamental understanding of *dialogicity*. According to Bakhtin, there does not exist anything like a individual utterance.

### *Approaching voices*

It is possible to set up a main distinction between formal and pragmatic approaches to voices. Within *formal* approaches, voices are understood as a linguistic and text internal phenomenon in terms of narration. Within *pragmatic (social semiotic) approaches*, voices are understood as rhetoric and strategic resources which are reflecting social relations and more underlying ideological positions. Hence, the main difference between formal and pragmatic approach is that when formal approaches focus only on the text internal aspects of a text, pragmatic approaches also include different kinds of social aspects.

Traditional stylistic approaches, for instance, may be regarded as a formal approach, examining how linguistic and grammatical representations express contrasting perspectives and points of view in texts. Such approaches are mainly descriptive, and the overall aim is to classify narrative representations by concepts as direct, indirect and free indirect speech and thought (e.g. Short 1988, Semino, Short, Wynne 1999). On the other hand, we find approaches of a more pragmatic orientation. Within such kinds of framework, quoting and reporting relations are considered not simply as formal linguistic variants, but as rhetoric and strategic resources which are reflecting social relations and more underlying ideological positions (e.g. Thibault 1991, Mey 1999, Fairclough 1995, White 1999). The individual utterance reflects many other voices, cultural, as well as social and ideological voices. "The word is half someone else's" as Bakhtin has claimed (Bakhtin 1981:293–294).

According to Bakhtin, every text and every voice is a result of a historical process. Among researchers within contemporary text- and discourse analysis, there is a growing consciousness of Bakhtin's thoughts of voices as historical, dialogical and ideological. For instance Norman Fairclough (1992, 1995), well known within the framework of *Critical Discourse Analysis*, focused on the boundaries between reporting and reported voices, as well as the hierarchy of voices, for instance in media texts. However, a fundamental problem that often arises in such voice analyses, e.g. in Fairclough's work, is the fact that the analyses in general are not detailed and transparent enough to be generated into a more general analytical framework for the study of textual voices and their communicative textual functions. Linguists may agree that voices express evaluations, attitudes and ideologies, but the research challenge is, through practical analysis, to uncover *how* such evaluations and attitudes are expressed in texts.

### Operationalizing voice analyses

A concrete attempt to trace the phenomenon of the bakhtinian dialogicity and voicing, from a linguistic perspective, is found within the framework of *Appraisal theory*, developed within the Social Semiotics, of researchers as White (2000) and Martin & Rose (2003). This approach is concerned with evaluation strategies and how attitudes are negotiated in text. The Appraisal Theory sets up a main distinction between utterances which do engage with alternative voices (heteroglossic utterances) and those which do not acknowledge alternative positions (monoglossic voices). In order to uncover the dialogicity of a text, the Appraisal Theory suggests a search for so called *linguistic resources of intersubjective positioning* (White *ibid*). In this paper, only few examples of such positioning will be mentioned:

- **Quotes** are probably the most obvious example of how a textual voice engages with alternative voices.
- **Questions**, even rhetorical questions, are regarded as dialogic because they indicate the acknowledgment of alternatives.
- **Modality** is a resource for negotiation, because it acknowledges alternative voices around a suggestion or claim (Martin & Rose *ibid*:50).

- Extensively modalized utterances might indicate that the authorial voice is willing to *negotiate* about the presented information.

## The historicity of the authorial newspaper voice

In this section, voice analysis in practice will be demonstrated and illustrated by some very few examples from a research project of voicing practices in a Norwegian newspaper (Veum 2008). The examined data were 15 Norwegian front pages from three selected periods in the 20th century (1925, 1965 and 1995). This presentation will focus on historical changes and development of *authorial newspaper voice*.

The authorial newspaper voice may be positionized in different ways, quantitatively, linguistically (through resources as modality and evaluation) and visually (through resources as typography, photos and layout). A major result of this study is the acknowledgement that the examined newspaper developed of a stronger and remarkable more positionized authorial voice during the 20th century.

The analyses uncover that at in the eldest newspapers in the sample, newspapers published in 1925, the authorial newspaper voice is not very much positionized at all, verbally nor visually. In the 1920ies, most texts at the front page are referring to what we can call *external voices*, such as news agencies or other newspapers. Such external voices were, to a considerable extent, made responsible for the presented information. The authorial newspaper voice, on the other hand, appears as reserved, ambiguous and non-evaluating.

As one can observe in text example below (Example [1], translated by the author), the current newspaper (*Dagbladet*) is presenting a possible crime story. The newspaper is referring to other specified voices (the newspaper “Socialdemokraten”) and unspecified voices (*‘it was rumoured’, ‘it was said’*). By using such resources, the newspaper negotiates the presented information very explicitly. The newspaper is also using modality markers (*probably, possibly*). Such modality markers indicate that the authorial newspaper voice does not present the news with much authority or conviction. In other words: this newspaper is presenting a texts of extensive heteroglossic utterances.

### Example [1] – Dagbladet 1925



[Headline]

*Two gangsters offer to murder Danish ministers [...]*

[Text] “*Socialdemokraten*” [name of a newspaper] *announces that it was rumoured yesterday here in town that the police should have arrested two Swedes [...]. It was said that prime minister Stauning and social minister Borgbjerg was killed. One of the arrested persons is probably Swedish and the other one is possibly French.*

When comparing the textual and rhetorical strategies of the newspaper front pages from 1925 with an edition of the very same newspaper produced some decades later, in 1965, one realizes that the construction of the authorial newspaper voice has changed remarkably. In the 1960ies, the authorial voice appears more salient, as well as more *evaluating* in the front page headlines. The concept of *evaluation* refers to how verbal resources express attitudes, values and feelings attributed to the utterances. Evaluations are expres-

sed by adjectives or adverbs, metaphors, naming of persons and phenomenon etc. (White 2000, Martin & Rose 2003, Veum & Raddum 2006). In 1965, the authorial voice is expressing evaluations of the current subjects as well as utterances of other external voices very explicitly (see example [2] below, translation and underlines made by the author).

### Example [2] – Dagbladet 1965



[Headline – level 1]:

*Parades and half-hearted celebration in Eastern Berlin*

[Headline – level 2]:

*But in West, the capitulation is not celebrated*

[Headline – level 3]: *Once the power center of Europe – now a desolated boarder street*

Such explicit verbal evaluations, expressed by the authorial newspaper voice, appear frequently at the newspaper front page headlines of *Dagbladet* during the 1960ies. However, in the end of the 20th century, such explicit verbal evaluations rarely appear at all. Analyses of the verbal utterances at the front pages from 1995 show that most of the statements made by the authorial newspaper voice (and positioned in headlines of main stories) are bare declaratives. In other words, the front page news that are published at the front page of *Dagbladet* in the end of the 20th century, are presented as objective “facts” which are not negotiable. This can be illustrated by the example below (example [3]):

### Example [3] – Dagbladet 1995



[Headline ]:

*Birgitte (17) killed with a stone*

This example refers a main headline. The headline presents a murder case where a young girl was killed. Isolated from its cotext and context, the statement in the headline appears as a ‘fact’: There is no reference to external voices and the speaking voice does not express any reservation or evaluation of the statement. In other words: The modern autho-

rial newspaper voice does not open up for any kind of negotiation with alternative voices. From a linguistic point of view, we may conclude that the headline, at the verbal level, is constructed as a monoglossic utterance.

However, this analysis is only valid if the visual and multimodal aspects of the meaning are ignored. As one can observe at the modern front page of *Dagbladet* above (example [3], the evaluative aspects of the meaning making are *transformed from the verbal to the visual level in text*.

The typical modern authorial newspaper voice of *Dagbladet* is, through the conventionalized hierarchic composition and typography, constructed as a dominating voice. The size and colour of the main headlines function, together with pictures, layout etc, as indicators of how the authorial voice is evaluating the presented information (very bad, important, shocking etc).

As mentioned in the introduction of this paper, linguistic resources as questions and quotes function as indications of a negotiating speaking voice. In this sample, such negotiating resources are rather frequent in the text sample from the beginning and the middle of 20th century. By using for instance modality markers or question marks in headlines, the newspaper expresses *doubt or uncertainty* of the forthcoming information. Such linguistic resources of intersubjective positioning may also express that the authorial voice avoids taking the *responsibility* for the presented information. When it comes to the end of the century, the typical authorial front page newspaper voice is constructed as much more authoritative, powerful and certain of the information it presents. The authorial voice appears as monoglossic, at least the first glaze, because it does not open up for any kind of negotiation with alternative voices.

## Conclusion

This paper has explored Bakhtins concept of voices, theoretically and analytically. A main distinction between formal and pragmatic approaches to voices was set up. The paper suggests some analytical tool in terms of how to operationalize various practices of voicing, tools that are developed from Appraisal Theory and multimodal theory. This paper does not offer a clear definition of the term ‘voice’, but support the pragmatic approaches, which includes social aspects of voicing.

The paper presented results of a study of voicing practices in a Norwegian newspaper. This study uncovered how the newspaper gradually, through history, achieved a privileged position through the development of textual orchestration of voices. Selected examples showed how evaluations and attitudes of the authorial newspaper voice were expressed in verbal as well as in visual modes. The results can be understood in the light of Bakhtins assertion that the *utterance*, and not the sentence, is the fundamental unit of language (Bakhtin 1986). The study showed how newspaper voicing practices has changed over time, and that in modern newspaper discourse, utterances are not necessarily expressed in a verbal mode. During the end of the 20th century, newspaper and other media achieved increased ability to orchestrate their voices through a range of semiotic resources, and this matter-of-fact must be regarded as a fundamental aspect of the emerging discursive power of modern media. Hence, this paper stresses the acknowledgement that voices should be understood in a broad perspective, as phenomena represented through various semiotic resources, linguistic as well as visual and multimodal.

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*Pedagogy*



# “Dialogue” as Guiding Figure of Thought and as a Phenomenon in School and Working Life

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## Background

This paper presents a new extensive research project financed by the Swedish Research Council. The project involves five researchers, all of whom take part in this collective paper. Since two of us will in addition present separate papers from the project, less stress is put on presenting their substudies.

The background of the project is the rise of the notion of “dialogue” during the last few decades.

Since the 1980s “dialogue” has become an important figure of thought in many domains. Within philosophy, new prominence has been given to the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer, Martin Buber and others where dialogue functions as a model for the understanding of man’s way of being in the world. Hans-Georg Gadamer talks about “the conversation that we are” and means that every statement must be seen as the response to a question from somebody else. According to the dialogical principle of Martin Buber the I appears only in relation to a Thou, and I-Thou-relations are possible not only between human beings, but also in relation to phenomena around us. And Buber has had very important successors within philosophical ethics, like Emmanuel Levinas. This new prominence is of course given also to the work of Mikhail Bakhtin, literary theorist, semiotician and philosopher. To him dialogue is a way of understanding the world and also at the bottom of the understanding of such a fundamentally human phenomenon as language. The perspective on knowledge is still another example. To take a Swedish example: the philosopher Bengt Molander (1993) asserts that in order to count as knowledge, the *question* to which a certain statement is an answer must be understood, and the statement must also be understood as an answer to a question. Dialogue as a figure of thought is visible within political theory and educational theory (democracy as dialogue, deliberative democracy, the emphasis on deliberative exchange as a model for teaching and in school generally, etc). Last but not least, “dialogue” has become an important concept in political-administrative language use.

Moreover, “dialogue” or “conversation” is a widespread phenomenon in working life and at school today. This makes “dialogue” an important site where influence is exerted and learning takes place. To examine the assumptions behind the notion of dialogue and to problematize the influence these phenomena stand for thus becomes vital.

## Aim and questions

Against this background, and the observation that very little research, if any, seems to have been devoted to this impact of the notion of dialogue or the ideas and beliefs tied to the notion, the overall aim of the project is to scrutinise “the dialogue” as a basic figure of thought and as practice in Swedish school and working life. Analyses of the concept or figure of thought and its development as seen in philosophical and curricular texts are

linked to analyses of actual, empirical dialogues. – What does the concept stand for in different contexts? Which are the main ideas attached to the concept, and what differs due to context? – How could concrete forms that dialogues/”conversations” take in school and in medical care today be described? – How should the impact of the concept so clearly seen from the 1980s onwards be understood?

## The substudies

Five substudies are carried out. One is devoted to the philosophical foundations. It aims at a deeper understanding of the the basic figure of thought and the notions attached to it in Gadamer, Bakhtin, Buber and Habermas. This is done mainly through an analysis of existing research, but also of some original texts. This study will serve as a background and interpretational framework for the other studies in the final, global analysis. (Boel Englund)

Another study uses as its material curriculum and educational policy texts for upper secondary schools and compulsory schools from the last decades of the twentieth century. (Birgitta Sandström) “Dialogue” is a recurrent theme in central school documents during this period (Wikgren 2005). The aim of the study is to discern and analyse the occurrence of dialogical expressions. The approach is genealogic (Beronius,1991,1994), so the analyses start in the present. Are there influences from other, earlier texts? Could you derive meanings from previously established meanings? What meanings are taken up, and perhaps reformulated? How are they legitimated?

Most of the material is collected from The National Board of Education and The National Board for School Development, but Swedish Government official Reports will also be used. The chosen texts are on the one hand texts having dialogue and conversation as their general theme, on the other hand curricular texts with a special focus on the subjects Swedish and mathematics.

The study is at its first stages, but a first brief reading suggests that two categories could be constructed: one concerning school development at different levels, and one pointing out dialogue as a tool for pupils’ learning. A question that has arisen after the first reading is: how are dialogue/conversation and argumentation related to each other?

A third substudy examines dialogue as practised in a school environment today by analysing recorded professional conversations designated as conversations/dialogues followed up by interviews with the participants in these conversations. (Charlotte Skawonius)

An original intention in this study has been to analyse the character of different conversations/dialogues in a school setting, with a special eye for signs of what might be called “genuine dialogue”. Contact has been established with a headmaster in a compulsory school in Stockholm in order to observe and record some co-worker conversations (“medarbetarsamtal”). It turns out, however, that the headmaster carries these through in a very structured way and that they also are the ground for setting wages. Very explicit criteria concerning the substance and performance of work are formulated. The headmaster and the employee each form their opinion of the employees’ work and discuss these estimates according to the formulated criteria. With the very structured setting for a conversation where aim, content and the participants’ positions are very clear, the question of “genuine dialogue” becomes an intriguing question. At first glance it does not seem likely that there are prerequisites for genuineness within this hierarchical setting. But then, on the other hand, perhaps the distinctness in the situation might create it.

The participants in these conversations will be interviewed about their understanding of the conversation and their view on what the concept of dialogue stands for. The analysis of data will focus on three aspects: the ethical dimension, the communication and the social relations and positions of the participants.

Two substudies concern dialogue within medical care. Both of them are devoted to dialogue as practice.

One looks into the meanings ascribed to dialogue by scrutinising “the broken dialogue” (Helena Rehn) A central content in the new dialogue politics within the health-care sector is that doctors and other medical staff are supposed not only to talk *to* but also *with* their patients. To give care involves discussions about different alternatives, and showing respect for the patients’ wishes and life situation. The importance of communication in the health-care sector is confirmed for example by an increasing number of complaints from patients to the Patients Advisory Committee in Stockholm about lack of attention and communication. The material of the substudy consists of 228 complaints from patients to the Committee from the year 2008. The aim is to capture ideas about the requested dialogue. What is taken for granted about “dialogue” in the complaints? What significance is given to dialogue in the patient-doctor-relation? How is the dialogue valued? What patterns and characteristics can be seen?

The other one focuses affordances and restraints within dialogues between doctors and patients at some health centers in Stockholm, examining these clinical encounters with respect to the space, status and agency of dialogue, using videotaped material. (Georg Drakos) Three prominent features of these clinical encounters are highlighted: the clear distribution of roles between those taking part in the dialogue; the fact that the voices meeting in dialogue are lodged in completely different bodies in an ontological sense; and the crucial importance that narratives can have for the dialogic exchange.

The conception of figure of thought forming the basis of the project relies on the views of the Swedish sociologist Johan Asplund (1979, 1991). We will not go deeper into these here, mentioning only the most noteworthy features. According to Asplund’s views, a figure of thought is a notion or a complex of notions *underlying* discourses or texts. It is something *active*, appealing to us. Finally it is something that has a material base.

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# Accounting for Situated Experience in Socio-cultural-historical Inquiry Bakhtinian Utterance in a Mathematics Classroom

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*This paper discusses two cases of instruction from within a mathematics classroom, in which the situated experience of participants is informed using Bakhtinian utterance as analytical construct. The first illustrates situatedness and shared reference between teachers and students in the social speech of the classroom, with reference to the generic 'When we multiply, we add' in the teaching-learning of exponents. The second discusses the sharing of experience and the shaping of reason by students solving a problem as a group, in relation to a graph depicting the movement of an elevator between two floors where the word 'stop' is used to both convince and be convinced by the other. Located within a socio-cultural-historical study and accounting for the materiality of language in which individual intention, meaning and experience is populated, a Bakhtinian analysis enables access to both individual and collective thinking. This approach in turn informs the nature of active knowing in the teaching-learning of mathematics and its authoritative word.*

## Introduction

Of the many analytical constructs that inform the functioning of teaching-learning in mathematics classrooms, the issue of talk or communication has received recent attention. A greater need to understand the tool-kit of discourse has been argued for to appreciate the relationship between language and knowing which thus far may have been taken for granted. The theoretical and methodological challenges in adopting such an approach has begun to be informed by socio-cultural-historical perspectives in providing a basis for dealing with the materiality of everyday instruction. In this paper I report from my classroom study wherein an emphasis on the role of artefacts, both physical and intellectual, in understanding teaching-learning led me to appreciate the role of materiality in mediating various actions of participating students and teachers (Gade, 2006). Adopting a Bakhtinian perspective in unison provided insight in particular to the externalised and spoken aspect of the larger discourse constituted in the classroom. In the construct of utterance one had not only a sensitive index of social change reflecting the progression of teaching-learning, but an epistemic basis for claims about the situated experience of participating students and teachers within instruction. In presenting the two cases that illustrate this approach, I first outline the nature of my socio-cultural-historical study and related view of the mathematics classroom as a particular kind of cultural practice. I then present two cases, the first illustrating situatedness and shared reference between teachers and students within teaching-learning and the second the sharing of experience and the shaping of reason by students as a group. After discussion about the insight such analysis provides about the classroom teaching-learning of mathematics, I conclude with the benefits of analysing situated experience of individuals with Bakhtinian utterances.

## Socio-Cultural-Historical Inquiry in the Mathematics Classroom

One emphasis laid in my classroom study from within which I report is the role of artefacts in the teaching-learning of mathematics (Gade, 2006). The artefacts that I identified and classified for this purpose included physical artefacts like the blackboard, calculator and notebooks and intellectual artefacts like algebraic symbols, notations and mathematical signs of convention. Analysing the role of artefacts led me to analyse various physical and intellectual actions of both teachers and students mediated by these within the teaching-learning of mathematics. Though primarily a medium for visible display the blackboard for example, was also a forum for discussion amongst various groups of students that constituted the collaborative practice established in the classroom. As in the case of exponents that I discuss in this paper, algebraic signs mediated not only the intellectual activity that such notation denoted but also formed the basis for a generic form of social speech that was shared within teaching-learning. An attention to actions mediated by artefacts in everyday instruction thus paved way to analysing the materiality of communication that was situated within the classroom.

Two perspectives inform analysis about the nature of situated communication or discourse. Firstly, in line with a language based theory of learning Wells (1999) recognises the nature of dialogue amongst those who participate as central towards the emergence of knowing. He qualifies the nature of such knowledge construction to be a collaborative process in which various modes of actions like representing, recognising, hypothesising and concluding are involved. Wells argues also that although knowing is necessarily individual, its purpose and fullest realisation is in its socially-oriented creation generated in concrete practices. The second perspective that informs analysis of the nature of situated discourse is offered by the construct of utterance which according to Bakhtin (1986, 1994; Holquist, 1990, Vološinov, 1973) is inherently double-voiced, serving both speaker and listener in anticipating and presupposing the other. In being the materiality *in* which the situatedness of participants is experienced, Bakhtin premises utterances as the basis for claims that can be made about individual and collective thinking. In being able to account for the intention and experience of those participating, Bakhtinian utterances hold promise of insight into the nature of dialogue and the shaping of meaning that Wells argued as leading to active knowing.

Drawing upon Bakhtin and with reference to mathematical instruction in particular, van Oers (2001) portrays classroom teaching-learning as a specific kind of practice wherein both teachers and students participate with differently conceived roles. The teacher argues van Oers, is responsible for the enculturation of mathematics by the apprenticing or initiating his or her students into the more formal mathematical community. In such a scenario the role of students is one of gaining membership and exhibiting a particular manner of thinking or participation to gain membership within that community. The protracted discourse between teachers and students is thus recognised by van Oers as essential towards constituting a practice in the classroom, that is acknowledged as a mathematical one. The nature of situated and shared social speech towards this end, he adds, involves processes of both contextualisation and decontextualisation. Bringing the above mentioned perspectives to bear in analysis, I now turn to discuss the case of exponents followed by the case of an elevator within the classroom teaching-learning of mathematics.

### The Case of Exponents and Bakhtinian Utterance

This case relates to whole-class discussion between teachers and students in my study, while attempting questions from the textbook relating to the multiplication and division of exponents. Prior to the incidence of this discussion in teaching-learning, Olaf the



teacher had derived the rule related to the adding of powers of exponents when they were to be multiplied and of subtracting the powers of exponents in case they were to be divided. At the time of occurrence of this case Olaf was urging his students to apply the rules that they had derived earlier.

In the extract I offer relating to the case (Figure 1) I first draw attention to Olaf's utterance in event 4, 'When we multiply we ...' to which he receives a student's response in event 5 of 'Add'. The discussion in events 6 to 11 thereafter, show Olaf making sure that his students can recall the meaning mediated by the exponential notation in terms of other topics in mathematics like fractions and decimals that the students would have dealt with prior to the topic of exponents being currently discussed. Within instruction, Olaf then turns to discuss a question of his choice from the textbook. His utterance in event 14 of 'What do we do when we divide ...' now elicits the response in the next of 'Subtract' from another student. In reply to the response of his students which he seems satisfied with, Olaf summarises his instruction by offering 'Subtract because we have division' by which he articulates the basis upon which he, as a teacher, is accepting their responses.

I view the two pairs of utterances 'When we multiply, we ...' 'Add' and 'What do we do when we divide ...' 'Subtract' between Olaf and his students as illustrative of a stylis-

Event	Person	Utterance	Action
1	Olaf	Anything you'd like me to explain or do before we go on	
2	Olaf		$2^3 \times 2^{-4}$
3	Olaf	We apply the rules we know before	
4	Olaf	When we multiply we ...	
5	STD1	Add	
6	Olaf		$= 2^{3+(-4)}$ $= 2^{-1}$
7	Olaf	We can do more ...	
8	STD2	Fraction	
9	Olaf		$\frac{1}{2}$
10	STD3	Zero point five	
11	RES		Notes Olaf wait for explicit equivalence of the exponent, fraction and decimal forms of representation
12	Olaf	I want to do c	((Referring to Q1.33(c)))
13	Olaf	((Q1.33(c) Calculate))	$\frac{3^{-2}}{3^{-3}}$
14	Olaf	What do we do when we divide	
15	STD	Subtract	
16	Olaf		$= 3^{-2-(-3)}$ $= 3^1$
17	Olaf	Subtract because we have division	

Figure 1

tic or generic discourse in a Bakhtinian sense. With specific reference to the multiplication of exponents, these pairs refer to arithmetical operations to be performed on powers corresponding to their respective bases which as utterances both anticipate and presuppose the other utterance. Outside of referential meaning to the multiplication of exponents that they denote, these utterances may even seem contrary to everyday experience and carry the risk of being considered as mathematically incorrect. The existence in my study of shared social speech as illustrated by this case, is indicative also of the nature of training by which Olaf is initiating his students. Following van Oers, this nature of apprenticeship is indicative of the kind of participation and thinking that Olaf is asking of his students towards his acceptance of them into formal mathematical practices. With reference to multiplication and division of exponents the nature of shared social speech by which the participation of his students is guided, is indicative also of the kind of decontextualisation that is needed on their behalf to carry out multiplication and division of exponents. The existence of shared social speech or semantic potential between Olaf and his students illustrated by the pair of utterances referred to in this case, seem to exemplify also the meta-contracts of communication that Rommetveit (1974) draws attention to, which he says lend and endorse meaning to the nature of communication that has so transpired.

From a Bakhtinian perspective the pair of utterances ‘When we multiply we ... add’, ‘... when we divide ... subtract’ both express a particular intentional position on behalf of the teacher and elicit a particular responsive position within teaching-learning by his students. As utterances they finalise not so much the grammatical form that is required of formal sentences but rather the idea behind the nature of operations to be performed with respect to multiplication and division of exponents. Following Bakhtin, Dannow (1991) argues that such nature of stylistic discourse enters experience and consciousness in close connection with each other, having the potential of being mastered as fluently as native language. In Olaf initiating his students into choosing not simply a lexicon but a generic mode of expression, he is constraining the nature of speech that his students would use. In so doing he draws attention to two aspects simultaneously – that arithmetical operations are to be carried out on the powers of exponents and not their bases, and that these arithmetical operations differ in either case of multiplication or division. By way of intonation and the manner in which he allows his students to complete his uncompleted utterances, Olaf chooses a strategy by which his students respond and participate in a way he thinks is both appropriate and advantageous. As argued by Bakhtin these utterances do not reflect the situation being experienced by them, but come into existence and represent in words a particular situation and view of the world. These utterances thus simultaneously serve Olaf, his students and the cultural practice of mathematics.

## The Case of an Elevator and Bakhtinian Word

Unlike the case of classroom instruction above, my second case refers to the solving of a problem by a group of students and relates to two graphs that were presented to them in a problem solving task (Figure 2). The task instructed “You will be given two graphs A and B. The graphs relate to the motion of two different bodies. One of the graphs describes the motion of an elevator traveling between two floors. The other graph describes the motion of a ball thrown up in the air and caught on its return. Which of the two graphs given to you shows the movements of the elevator and ball mentioned above and why?” As part of their problem solving task the students were also asked “Refer to the graph labelled B and explain what may be happening at points marked P, Q and R that were marked at the beginning, middle and end of the line drawn in the graph.”

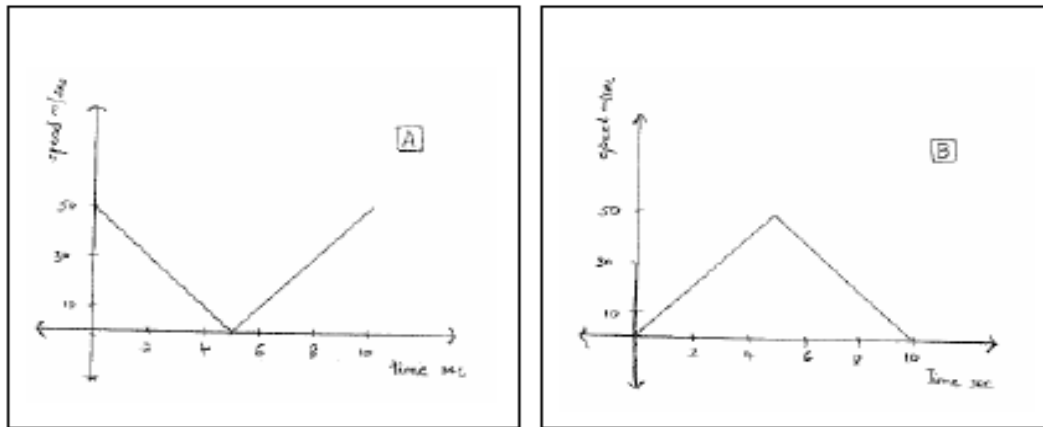


Figure 2

In relation to the two questions mentioned above I present two extracts. In the first extract the group of students Anja, Egil, Lea and Stine attempt to distinguish between the two graphs given to them.

- 03:59 RES 37 That is A and that is B  
 Stine 38 Elevator  
 Lea 39 Hmm, hmm ... and that's the ball  
 Anja 40 And that's the ball  
 Egil 41 No, that's the ball that's the ball because it starts fast and mm mm  
 ((referring to graph A))  
 Egil 42 --arh if you throw up a ball it will go up like this ... this  
 you know  
 Egil 43 --and it will kind of **stop** like this  
 Anja 44 On the ground?  
 Egil 45 On the top  
 Egil 46 On the top and then it will fall down again  
 Anja 47 ((Inaudible))
- 04:37 Egil 48 It says here ... ball thrown up in the air  
 Egil 49 You throw it and it sort of **stops** and falls down again  
 Egil 50 So I think this is the ball definitely  
 Egil 51 And because that ... arh the elevator will increase in  
 speed  
 Anja 52 -- and **stop**  
 Egil 53 It'll **stop** and then it'll go up again
- 05:00 RES 54 What do you think? Is it OK?  
 Many 55 Yes, ya

In the second extract that follows, the students identify points P, Q and R in graph B.

- 07:32 Egil 119 So Graph B then  
 RES 120 Ya  
 Anja 121 OK the P is when it's on the first floor  
 RES 122 So what about P, Q and R  
 Egil 123 Well, here it increases arh an elevator well is similar to  
 the car it will start and it goes faster and faster...  
 Egil 124 And then it will **stop** and then it will arh ...  
 Lea 125 ((Inaudible)) it will slow down  
 Egil 126 Ya  
 RES 127 So P is when you say it is starting?  
 Egil 128 Ya ... and Q is ...  
 Stine 129 [When it is at the top]

	Anja	130	[When it is at the top]
08:19	Anja	131	<b>Stops</b> and then
	Egil	132	Ya, 'cause the elevator has to slow down in order to <b>stop</b> at the next floor
08:33	Lea	133	((Makes <b>sound of an elevator</b> between floors, from low pitch to high and then from high pitch to low))
	Egil	134	So this must be first floor
	Anja	135	second floor
	Egil	136	And this the second floor
	Anja	137	Arh ya the second floor
08:41	Egil	138	Cause, this is when it holds top speed and then it has to slow down in order to ...
	Anja	139	OK
	Egil	140	<b>Stop</b> at the second floor
	Lea	141	<b>Doying!</b> ((Sound of elevator coming to a halt))

In turns 37 to 41 at the beginning of the first extract, where the students are identifying which of the two given graphs is either that of an elevator or the ball there is evidence of disagreement between Anja and Egil as to which of the two graphs depicts the motion of the ball. In turns 41 to 43, Egil relates his experience with a ball thrown up in air and how it will come to a stop. In my arguments it is usage of the word 'stop' that I wish to trace. Not only is the word 'stop' a word that is traded between Anja and Egil, its usage as I now elaborate is one that refers to different contexts on different occasions. To Egil's use of the word stop in turn 43 'And then it will stop and then it will arh ...' Anja wants to know where it is that the ball will stop. By turn 49, Egil's use of the stop in 'You throw it and it sort of stops and falls down again' refers to the general and accepted fact that any ball will stop when it is thrown up in the air. By turn 51 when Egil is now referring to the motion of elevator between two floors and saying that the elevator will increase in speed, it is Anja who completes Egil's utterance in turn 52 by saying that it is the elevator that will stop. This usage of the word stop refers to the elevator and not the ball as before. Finding Anja to agree that it is the elevator that will stop Egil's now 'borrows' Anja's usage and reference of the word stop to add in turn 53 that 'It'll stop and then it'll go up again'. Within this extract it is only in this and last usage of the word stop that Egil and Anja agree upon what it is that is stopping.

The usage of the word stop between Anja and Egil resurfaces in the second extract when as a group the students are identifying what may be happening in reality corresponding to the points P, Q and R at the beginning, middle and end of the line in graph B. Anja identifies point P in turn 121, as representing the elevator being on the first of the two floors between which it is traveling. At this point and explaining the motion of an elevator in real life, in turn 123 and 124, Egil calls upon the experience that all of them would have with a car speeding up and eventually stopping. In response to Egil and wanting to clarify what could be happening after the elevator stops, Anja asks 'Stops and then' in turn 131. Egil then clarifies in turn 132, that the elevator had to slow down in order to stop at the next floor. Taking cue from Egil, Lea another student in the group now shares in turn 133 her experience of an elevator coming to a stop by varying her pitch from a lower one to higher one and another from a higher one to a lower one to represent an elevator actually stopping. She offers her sound representing the stopping of the elevator in turn 141 again, which she verbalizes as 'Doying!' to match Egil's use of the word stop in turn 140. In addition to the first extract where the word stop refers to the motion of either ball or elevator, the word stop in the second extract is now supplied with another meaning and personal experience by Lea, of how an elevator comes to a halt or stops in reality. In this manner the word(sound) stop(Doying) is possessed by neither of the students and is borrowed from each other in a Bakhtinian sense, suffused with

meaning and traded back and forth amongst the group in order to both convince and be convinced in turn by the other.

I argue that the words ‘stop’ and later the sound ‘Doying!’ as words allowed the students in the group to share their individual perspectives, enabling them to negotiate differing positions in solving the given problem. The two extracts illustrate the struggle in the voicing of their personal experiences, allowing insight into how each of them attempted to stride between the real world in which their experiences resided and the world depicted in the problem. These words are intentionally and strategically deployed with their meaning and intent recreated and renegotiated on each occasion. Incorporating contextual meanings as well as behavioral accompaniments like throwing their pencil cases up in the air to represent the motion of the ball, these words become a mode of apprehending and interpreting the world and its objects and concepts. Following Bakhtin the private experiences of the students is informed by the authorship of the word they were using while in communication with each other. Their discourse lies as Danow (1991) points out at the intersection between their own self and the others in their group or between self and not-self. In co-being, co-creating and co-authoring utterances and words in their attempts at solving the problem as a group, there is no unique meaning being striven for as the contexts the words refer to in reality are limitless – underscoring Bakhtin’s dictum that there is never a first word nor a last. In addition it is through *their* utilisation of words that the students gain entry to formal mathematical culture.

## The Classroom Teaching-Learning of Mathematics

Accounting for the situated experience of teachers and students in either a group or classroom with Bakhtinian utterance as analytical construct thus seems to provide insight into how one individual can initiate another to participate in the formal mathematical community, revealing the intentions of either speaker in the process. Such manner of situated analysis informs us of two vital aspects of enculturation in addition, firstly what nature of discourse between teachers and students qualifies their participation in the teaching-learning of mathematics in a classroom and secondly, which of these acts exemplifies those processes which when taken together constitute a cultural practice that could be considered as mathematical. The two cases I present illustrate that classroom teaching-learning conceptualised as that of apprenticing and gaining membership into a formal community is governed by active participation in a particular kind of discourse. The pedagogical attributes of such a practice lie in the opportunities provided for both individual and collective thinking in relevant activities, through the utilisation of social conventions of speech and power relationships by both teacher and his students towards specific goals that the teacher has in mind. Following Bakhtin, the *authoritative* word in teaching-learning is authoritative in two ways – in the teacher using his authority and in the students authoring the words they use with individual intent. Either usage is directed or addressed to another person or self with specific intent, towards eliciting the other’s response. The communication that brings about such participation is as Linell (1998) argues not single-voiced but through words and dialogical, very much presupposing another.

It is whilst adopting a historical methodology and a socio-cultural-historical approach that I present the two cases from within the complexity of classroom instruction in my study. Yet the importance of the two cases I discuss is based on theoretical interpretation which views utterances as the material medium in which the situatedness of participants is being experienced in and not the means of representing that experience. Following Bakhtin, my recognising every utterance as being double voiced, serving two speakers simultaneously and expressing two different intentions at the same time, allows me to treat them as a window to the socio-ideological context of instruction that the teacher and students were participating in. Beyond the gaining of such insight the promise of such an

approach lies as well in addressing questions related to the nature of plurality in perceptions that were shared amongst students, to what purpose they were used by the teacher, which social conventions were addressed, as well as the active nature of situated discourse which contributed to greater knowing. I contend that the possibility of making these aspects explicit informs how talk and discourse is critical not only for individual and collective thinking but also for research in teaching-learning of what Bakhtin argued was the authoritative word of mathematics.

## Bakhtinian Utterance and Word as Analytical Constructs

I conclude this paper by drawing attention to four features that I found exemplified in my study.

- The first of these informs the nature of meaning that was shared between both teacher and students in either of the cases I discuss. The teacher's utterance 'We can do more' in my first case, where it was the students who offered the decimal and fractional equivalents of the exponent being discussed, was illustrative of Bakhtin's contention that an utterance served both speakers – the teacher and the students in co-authorship. The varied usage of the word 'Stop' by the students in the second case illustrates how, far from belonging to any one individual a word was co-authored in the group in collective experience as well.
- The second feature relates to the nature of social speech that prevailed. Following Bakhtin and in the generic sequence 'When we multiply we –' 'Add' one is alerted to the presence of a socio-ideological context between the teacher and his students at a particular point of time in instruction. At a later time in instruction such manner of speech may not even be spoken and may even be taken for granted. In a similar manner, the use of the 'Doying!' as another way of expressing the word 'Stop' is indicative of the presence of shared situated experience amongst the students. Brought into dialogue to meet this very purpose, its use outside of the problem being solved may not even be understood for lack of adequate reference.
- In the third feature I deliberate upon the nature of powerful insight that the Bakhtinian utterance provides. In the sequence 'We can do more ...' ' $\frac{1}{2}$ ' and '0.5' one has access to the social norms that were accepted by both students and their teacher in the classroom, wherein the fractional and decimal equivalents of exponents would henceforth and in all probability be treated as accepted convention. In the second case, attention to use of the words 'Stop' and 'Doying!' provide access to the plurality in perception these words could refer to. In the first extract the same word 'Stop' refers to various and different contexts in reality, where by the second extract two different words 'Stop' and 'Doying!' refer to the same reality.
- In my final feature I refer to understanding about teaching-learning that one has access to with Bakhtinian utterances. The first case enables me to illustrate that it was the presence of both teacher and student as individuals who were answerable to the environment in the classroom, that created the opportunity for either of them to author different words and utterances. For such authorship and participation, the extracts in the second case illustrate how each person drew upon individual experience and contributed personal meaning.

Situated experiences, either within the context of a mathematical problem or within the classroom instruction of mathematics, when analysed as Bakhtinian utterances therefore seem to offer four benefits. In the first, they are means with which to account for concrete experiences lived in the present as well as in the past. In the second, they provide access to the ideological and social aspects that drench the cultural practices in which individuals participate. In the third, they are both a mode with which to apprehend and interpret ones

experience in reality. Finally, they are an active means by which to share meaning in the collective endeavor of human knowing.

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# Vocational Education and Academia: Focus group discussions over time

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## Introduction

In recent years, most vocational training has been academized, which has challenged vocational training. The academization of vocational training has been advocated by reforms within higher education, primarily the 1977 Higher Education Reform, when most vocational training was incorporated to academia. Twelve new university colleges were created, see Franke & Wikberg (2008), and still more have been developed since then. Two of these colleges concern teacher and officer education, which are the focus of this study. Selander (2008) emphasizes that there is a lack of comparative studies on academized vocational training. By this study we hope to contribute with new knowledge about the fusion between vocational training and academia.

## Previous studies

Selander (2008) argues that a dilemma arises between the one who upholds vocational traditions and the one who advocates academia. From the perspective of vocational identity a vocational language is challenged.

Gardner (2009:38) distinguishes between subject and discipline in his analysis of ways of thinking about academization. In disciplinary thinking he regards the difference between subject and discipline as a crucial factor in how people learn, regardless of the subject studied, Gardner claims that disciplinary thinking is a pre-requisite to meet a society in change. This in turn puts demands on education in general, and specifically on professional education attached to academia, because of the fact that: “all these efforts in education are directed at appropriate disciplinary knowledge, mental habits and patterns of behaviour”. Regardless of the topic studied, the goal is the same: “to replace previous thinking with the ways of thinking and behaving, which characterize the disciplined professional”.

Hydén and Ljungberg (2009), who studied the academization of police education found resistance towards academization among the police, and the police cadets. Their findings were that the cadets were more inquiring than the older police officers cf. Agevall and Jenner (2007). Academization represented both threats and an increase of the quality of activity, a conflict between academic culture and traditional police training.

Aspelin and Persson (2009:149) argued that academization represented a threat to identity and proficiency in action: “the police perspective is undermined if the connection to a university college is too strong” cf. (Hydén and Ljungberg 2009). However, their study was based on questionnaires and not on empirical studies of interaction between the counterparts.

Aili, Nilsson, Svensson and Danilico et al (2007) seek to contribute to the knowledge of how to handle the tension between professionals and organisations in a dialogue on issues such as the conditions new professional tasks requires. Furthermore they consider identity as a product of social structure.

According to Fransson (2009) epistemistic shifting represents a gradual change and not a drastic change. This implies that the “known” will be questioned. This in turn has



consequences for professional identity and vocational language. It is still an issue how to merge vocational training with academia.

The previous studies focus the tensions between professionals and organizations in times of change. They reason about consequences of identity and professional language as a product of social structure. A few of these studies have accounted for the importance of dialogue for mutual understanding. Few studies advocate how vocational language and academic language are expressed in focus-group discussions over time and how different professional groups communicate development of academization of vocational education.

Geijer (2003) found that the understanding of “the other” in the focus-group discussions challenged the participants as to their mutual understanding of a certain dilemma. It was argued that focus-group discussions can form an arena for development of interdisciplinary mutual understanding concerning professional language as well as identity. In interaction between different disciplines emotional aspects were aroused and professional judgments and professional accountability and responsibilities were questioned on the base of competencies.

Against the early results in the previous studies we found that the vocational educator’s play an important role as bridges between vocational training and academia.

## Aim of the study

The aim of the present study was to analyze different professional groups’ developing understanding of the academization of two vocational educations, and how this is realized in dialogues between officers<sup>1</sup>, teachers, students and academicians and respectively.

## *Research questions*

- How is vocational language expressed?
- How is academic language expressed?
- Is there a mutual understanding between the different groups?

## Theoretical background

The present study is theoretically based in Vygotskian and Bakhtinian theories. We study zone of proximal development, intersubjectivity, dialogicitet, alteritet and identity. Intersubjectivity of situatedness of definition and collective memory of situatedness of mediated action and alteritet are in focus.

According to Vygotsky’s (1986) theory, language is a cultural and psychological tool and an important link to thinking and the development of language in one’s actions. The use of different languages or semiotic signs creates and changes the way of thinking within different organizations in our society.

According to Vygotsky (1978:86) the zone of proximal development defines functions that have not yet matured within the individual ”but are in the process of maturation”. Furthermore Vygotsky argue that: “the actual developmental level characterizes mental development retrospectively while the zone of proximal development characterizes mental development prospectively (...) and the individual’s mental development can be determined only by clarifying it’s two levels: the actual developmental level and the zone of proximal development”. He also states that: “It is the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.” We have applied this theory to the present study

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<sup>1</sup> Officers teaching cadets within officers programme.

of focus-group conversations, since it aims at a new way of talking and thinking about the new education.

In Bakhtin's studies (1981, 1986) an important component in the dialogue is dialogicity, which could simply be defined as a using of someone else's voice or words that serve new purposes. According to Junefelt (2004:194), "Dialogicality, multivoicedness, and ventriloquation are three closely related terms that stem from the same literature (Bakhtin, 1981; Holquist, 1981; Wertsch, 1991). Essentially, they are each referring to "the process whereby one voice speaks through another voice or voice-type in a social language" (Wertsch, 1991:59). As a result, several voices are mixed in every utterances and word. According to Bakhtin (1981) "words and utterances are fundamentally dialogic because even though they are expressed by one person, they are half someone else's. This ownership comes from the words and utterances first having been used of the people in other context for other purposes. The individual makes the words and utterances their own in acts of ventriloquation but can not disembody the meaning and context of prior use that comes with them. Therefore the individual using these words and utterances is always speaking through the words of others and in more than one voice".

This theory is applied on focus-group discussions in order to analyze the dialogues between the different groups. We regard dialogicity between the participants of the different groups to be a sign of that they have made the counterparts words their own. However dialogicity may express intersubjectivity as well as alterity.

According to Junefelt (2001:107) alterity is a Bakhtinian notion. It is based on the dynamics between "the self" and "the other" in his dialogic view. In "the self" as well as in "the other" there is heterogeneity of different perspectives, of different voices. "The fact is that when the listener perceives and understands the meaning (the language meaning) of speech, he simultaneously takes an active, responsive attitude toward it. He either agrees or disagrees with it (completely or partially)..."

The notion intersubjectivity was not present in Bakhtin's time only the notion of consciousness. Rommetveit has developed the notion, which is nowadays known as intersubjectivity. According to Junefelt (2001:106): "Intersubjectivity may be regarded as an instance when two interlocutors are conscious of each other and share a focus, "world view", values and norms. It is regarded to be a pre-requisite of communication, and also negotiated in a communicative activity (Rommetveit, 1974, 1979, 1985). "Intersubjectivity must in some sense be taken for granted in order to be attained" (Rommetveit, 1985:189). It concerns "the degree to which interlocutors in a communicative situation share a perspective" (Wertsch, 1998:111–112)."

From Bakhtinian (1981, 1984) perspective the "I" and the "you" are linked together, and the "self" can not be created without the "other". A certain identity then can only be shaped with assistance from another. According to Junefelt (2000:185), identity is linked to the individual's use of language: "From an interactionistic perspective the self and the identity is situated and gets its meaning only in a certain context, involving other selves and other identities. From such a perspective, identity is linked to a language with its values and norms and it is due to change over time and space. It is tied to the dialogicality between the self and the other, and a certain identity then, can be shown by the individual's use of language. The self is not that close and autonomous unit taken for granted in the Cartesian tradition. Hence the embeddedness of contextualization and decontextualization in the use of different languages in different activities will play an immense role to the creation of identity."

According to Wertsch (1998), attitudes, values and problems can be made conscious and changed in dialogue. Such a change is illustrated by Mezirow (1990) in his theory on transformative learning where processes of change and personal assumptions are raised to a conscious level in a dialogue with others.

According to Bakhtin (1986) individuals relate to each other's comments as semantic wholes, while at the same time it's unclear what is actually understood by each indivi-

dual. This is in line with Junefelt (2001:112) quoting of Jespersen (1925/1946:4): ... “the particular man is only what he is, and his language is only what it is, in virtue of his life in the community, and the community only exists in and in virtue of the particular beings who together constitute it”.

Bakhtin (1986:77) also states that themes of utterances differ “in various spheres of communication”...“This exhaustiveness can be almost complete in certain spheres of everyday life (questions that are purely factual and similarly factual responses to them, requests, orders, and so forth), in certain business circles, in the sphere of military and industrial commands and orders, that is, in those spheres where speech genres are maximally standard by nature and where the creative aspects is almost completely lacking. Conversely, in creative spheres (especially, of course in scientific ones), the semantic exhaustiveness of the theme may be only relative.”

## Method

The informants were professionals within vocational education of officers, teachers, students and academia. The focus-group conversations with each group consisted of ten professionals in each group and one group of students. The topic of conversation was given: “academization of their vocational education”. Audio recordings were made with each group. The recordings took place at Stockholm University and at the National College of Defense. Three audio recordings were made with each group three times during one year. Each audio recording lasted approximately two hours.

The audio recordings were transcribed as close as possible to spoken language but with a normal alphabet. In this study we use excerpts from two focus-group conversations.

## *Analysis*

The present study used qualitative method when analyzing how teachers and students of two vocational educations expressed how they understood academization of their vocational profession.

## *Variables of analysis*

The following variables of analysis were used: intersubjectivity, alterity, dialogicity and identity, zone of proximal development.

### **Intersubjectivity**

Intersubjectivity was in the present study analyzed with regards to the participants' world view, values and norms. In the present study we regarded the counterparts' intersubjective situation definitions of vocational training and academia as a sign of that they had reached common sense with regard to the values and norms inherited in each disciplinary.

### **Alterity**

Alterity was analyzed with regards to the different perspectives presented by the counterparts expressions of their disagreements concerning their different view upon vocational training an academia.

### **Dialogicity**

Dialogicity was analyzed with regards to the responses to the participants utterances, i e. if an interlocutor re-used the whole, or parts of an utterance from the previous speaker.

## Identity

Identity was analyzed with regards to the participants' utterances about vocational identity contra academic identity. In the present study we use identity from an interactionistic perspective where the participants' identities are linked to each individual's use of language. Furthermore identity was analyzed with regards to a certain context involving the participants' perspectives of meaning.

## Zone of proximal development

The zone of proximal development was analyzed as the process of the participants' maturation during focus-group conversations over time. The perspective of the zone of proximal development in the present study was analyzed according to the individual but, not only individually. We analyzed the individual among other individuals in the group as to how they constituted meaning respectively as they characterized retrospectively and prospectively identity and vocational language in the conversations over time.

## Results and discussion

### *Intersubjectivity*

From the perspective of intersubjectivity the present study showed that the group members connected back to previous discussions. They expressed an awareness of what academia contributed to in form of tools for teaching in academia and not just in vocational training. The conversation continued with an observation, and an acceptance of the importance of academia. Examples of this are the following:

- |             |              |                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Example 1.  | Academician: | Ja det handlar om analysen i akademien.<br><i>Yes, it's about analysis in academia.</i>                                                                           |
| Example 2a. | Officer:     | Ja, jag har lärt mig i en akademisk utbildning<br><i>Yes I've learnt in an academic course</i>                                                                    |
| Example 2b. | Student:     | ja vi skiljer tydligt lärare från akademien<br><i>yes we differ out clearly the academia teacher</i>                                                              |
| Example 3.  | Teacher:     | Ja om myllan och beskriver det utifrån fältet och sedan<br>utifrån akademien<br><i>yes it's about and about "the ground" the field and then from<br/>academia</i> |

In the second discussion the parties reached an intersubjectivity situation definition in the dialogue and the emphasis was now on the process, i.e. the meeting of theory and practice.

The participants expressed the values of the tools of academia such as structured thinking. The values and norms they could accept, such as the value of structured thinking of academia was an example of intersubjectivity.

### *Alterity*

From the perspective of alterity the present study showed the participants' different meanings of academia expressed their worries about theoreticallizing practice. Examples of this are:

- |            |              |                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Example 4. | Academician: | frågan är om akademien skall bry sig om professionens krav på utbildning Det måste ju byggas på någon slags teori i akademisk mening<br><i>should academia acknowledge demands from vocational</i> |
|------------|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

*training, somehow these practices need using the tools of academia.*

Example 5. Officer: Jag är rädd för att våra förmågor och färdigheter i praktiken får stå till sidan för de teoretiska kunskaperna,  
*I'm afraid that our practical abilities and skills have to be left aside for theoretical knowledge*

Example 6. Teacher: Tyvärr blir det väldigt liten tid för praktik och utfallet är inte alls förankrat i verklighet  
*Sorry it's in the doing and not just a mechanical rendering, it's an interpretation that is needed.*

From the perspective of alterity the present study showed that the discussions amongst the teachers reflected, doubtfulness as to their views of identity connected to educational status of academia. They were questioning the tools of academia for practical actions. Different interpretations of identity and professional language were also expressed.

Examples of this are:

Example 7. Student: jag tror att specialistutbildningen är bättre, (...) jag förstår inte varför akademisering är inlagd  
*I think the vocational education is more adequate, can't see the point of academia*

Student: Nej inte jag, jag tror att det kvalitetssäkrar undervisningen, inte bara från lärarhåll utan också ämnena.  
*No on the contrary I believe in getting quality assured education of academia, not only from the teachers but also the subjects.*

Example 8. Student: man lever fortfarande kvar i den militära världen. Kopiöst med barnsjukdomar.  
*Many are still living in the military world that it should be like this and like this, so I can't say this is an academic college as it is suffering profusely from teething troubles.*

From the perspective of alterity the present study showed that the students expressed discrepancy between the teachers of vocational training and those of academia. The present study showed that the new education only to a certain degree met the participants' expectations and partly still was "suffering profusely". In the present study the perspective of alterity was foremost shown by the participants' view of the disadvantages of academization.

### *Dialogicity*

From the perspective of dialogicity the present study showed that between academicians and teachers/officers, respectively they increased re-using words and increased their relation to each other's comments, Examples are as follow:

#### **Focus-group discussion 1**

Example 9. Academician 1: det är vi som producerar kunskap  
*we are the producers knowledge*

Academician 2: ja vi producerar ju kunskap kollektivt men lärarna är ju ensamma, det är på ett annat sätt  
*we produce knowledge collectively in the research groups*

Officer: ja vi behöver akademins strukturer, det efterfrågar studenterna  
*yes, we need academia and the structure of thinking, that's what the students demand, too*

Teacher: ja, men jag tycker det skall bli kul ju mer man vet desto mer vill man veta  
*Yes me too, I look forward to good conversations the more you know the more you want to know*

### Focus-group discussion 3

Example 10. Academicians 1: academin skall bry sig om professionskravet på utbildningen  
*Yes, and academia should see more to the professionals' demand on the education*

Academicians 2: Ja, vi i akademien behöver se på oss inom akademien med kritiska ögon också själva  
*Yes academicians also need to question academia*

Officer: ja vi överväger det här med kompetensutveckling också  
*We also consider this development of vocational education in academia*

Teacher: Ja men det gör vi med, men det är en kul utmaning kan jag se  
*Yes so do we, and it is a stimulating demand*

Officers : ja, man får möjligheter och redskap, verktyg för analys inom akademien  
*Yes, one gets opportunities and instruments, tools for analysis in academia*

It's unclear what was actually understood by each individual. When the teachers were exposed to others' comments in dialogues, understanding was nuanced and they could take on the other's viewpoint. An example of this was that both officers and teachers expressed and identified what academia advocated. This in turn gave opportunities to questioning old conceptions and take on a new stance.

From the perspective of dialogicity the present study showed that focus group discussions over time increased. Both academicians and students expressed by dialogicity, over time, the benefits of academia as a structure of learning and development of thinking.

### Identity

From the perspective of identity the present study showed that some of the teachers expressed concerns as to whether the process of change would safeguard vocational practical skills and affects identity. At the same time, the teachers agreed that the process of change could develop a new vocational education in academia.

The process of change of identity in this material began by the participants questioning their own identity. Thereby they related to what was expected in the new context:

Example 11: (...) Hur vetenskapliga skall vi va. Hur många disputerade skall vi ha, blir det verkligen ett bättre hantverk om vi har fler disputerade. Det är någonting som jag tror man måste diskutera. (Lärare – Lärarutbildningen) Vi behöver praktiker, teoretiker och tänkare. Tyvärr blir det väldigt liten tid för praktik och utfallet är inte alls förankrat i verkligheten. (Lärare – Officersutbildningen)  
*How scientific do we have to be? How many people with PhDs are we going to have; will the result really be better if we have more PhDs? I think that's something we need to discuss because I still believe that the issue is about both one and the other.*" Another agrees and says "(...) I don't know, with PhDs sometimes I think one can have too much faith in that as long as we have people and as long as we raise the academic level and responsibility, we'll have better teachers.

This contribution was followed by consequences and considerations:

- Example 12. Risken är annars att man kör med det man alltid har gjort eller gammal skåpmat. (...) Så länge jag tycker det är kul att utmana mig själv så tror jag det utmanar studenterna också i det akademiska tänkandet och då blir det otroligt goda reflektioner från studenterna också.  
*The risk is otherwise that one does what one has always done; the same old hat. (...) As long as I think it's fun to challenge myself I think it challenges the students to think academically as well and then there are incredibly good reflections from the students, too.*

*Vocational* teachers expressed their knowledge of best practice. Academicians in the study referred to vocational teachers who questioned the course plans/curricula of academia and their significance to teaching:

- Example 13. och många lärare utövar passivt motstånd mot kursplaner som man inte tycker om egentligen.  
*many teachers practice passive resistance towards course plans, which they don't like, in fact.*

In this statement the example showed upon the complexity regarding “practice – test – knowledge”.

The students tried to understand the purpose of the education so as to be able to be socialized into the professional tradition and identity. According to the students, the teachers' attitudes towards the order of learning appeared to be different. The students differentiated between academic teachers and vocational ones. In the students' account, the clarity of the academic teachers stood out as regards to subject requirements and learning order as well as critical attitudes and analysis, structured according to a pedagogical plan. Vocational teachers appeared vague in an academic tradition, which the students interpreted as clinging more rigidly to previous experiences and practices.

### *Zone of proximal development*

The zone of proximal development defines functions that have not yet matured within the individual but are in the process of maturation, and the results of the present study showed this process of maturation: Focus-group discussion one and three exhibited both the participants point of departure with regards to their traditions, and how they reached an intersubjective situation definition about what they could agree upon: Examples are as follow:

#### **Focus-group discussion 1**

- Example 14. Academicians: Frågan är om akademien skall bry sig om professionens krav på utbildning Det måste ju byggas på någon slags teori i akademisk mening  
*should academia acknowledge demands from vocational training, somehow these practices need using the tools of academia.*
- Officers: Jag är rädd för att våra förmågor och färdigheter i praktiken får stå till sidan för de teoretiska kunskaperna,  
*I'm afraid that our practical abilities and skills have to be left aside for theoretical knowledge*
- Example 15. Teacher: Hur vetenskapliga skall vi va. Hur många disputerade skall vi ha  
*How scientific do we have to be? How many people with PhDs are we going to have*

### Focus-group discussion 3

- Example 16. Academician: *academin skall bry sig om professionskravet på utbildninge  
Yes, and academia should see more to the professionals'  
demand on the education*
- Teacher: *Jag tror det är något vi måste diskutera  
I think that's something we need to discuss*
- Officer: *ja, de här utmanar studenterna att tänka akademiskt, och det  
medför riktigt bra reflektioner hos studentern  
it challenges the students to think academically as well as  
developing incredibly good reflections*
- Teacher: *När man startar från en profession eller från akademien får vi  
möjligheter och redskap, verktyg för analys inom akademie  
when one starts from one's profession or from academia one  
gets opportunities and instruments, tools for analysis in  
academia*

The present study showed that the participants at the end of the focus group conversations had increased their sharing of values and norms of vocational education and academia respectively. Thus, the participants developed a mutual understanding, which could be characterized as a development between the actual developmental level i.e. when the focus group discussions started, and the proximal developmental level i.e. when the focus group discussions finished.

### Concluding comments

The notions of intersubjectivity, alterity, dialogicity and identity are all embedded in each other. The participants moved between intersubjectivity and alterity, when a problem in the dialogue moved from being spontaneous to being made conscious and changed during dialogue. An attitude that was expressed was the fear of losing vocational know-how, which has become something taken for granted and just cannot be questioned because the confidence in knowing codes and attitudes will be lost. It was expressed by the vocational teachers regarding course plans. The academic teachers, on the other hand found their identity in course plans that have the purpose of encouraging abilities, and critical scrutinization, and to shape the order of learning of the subject and discipline in question.

The results of the focus-groups discussions provided utterances between alterity and intersubjectivity, which we have analyzed as a negotiation of new knowledge in dialogue. Every individual utterance is a link in the chain of spoken actions, "...reflects the speech process, others' utterances, and, above all, preceding links in the chain (sometimes close and sometimes – in areas of cultural communication – very distant)" (Bakhtin 1986:93). Focus-group discussions over time showed that both officers and teachers expressed their preferences of vocational education traditions and only partly identified what academia advocate. They admit academia was threatening to the traditions of the field from a language and identity perspective. On the other hand academicians and students expressed the benefit of academia as a structure of learning and development of thinking.

Both teachers and officers in the study identified with teachers in the field and high school and with active officers, on the other hand, they identified with teachers within academia. But, the students got different pictures of professional identity. At the same time as teachers and officers were searching for their own identity they related to teachers' and officers' identities by questioning what teacher students and officer students were supposed to know.

The results showed that one of the academicians touched upon identity which encompasses the importance of knowledge for the subject and the role as a knowledge developer. Unlike the vocational teachers' identity, they believed to possess the truth, were



academicians' identity stood up for questioning. Here they expressed the limits of alterity and intersubjectivity in the sense that their specific identities can only be shaped with assistance from another and intersubjectivity clarified the limits of identity for each group. From Bakhtinian (1981, 1984) perspective the "I" and the "you" are linked together, and the "self" can not be created without the "other". A certain identity then can only be shaped with assistance from another language and identity. According to Junefelt (2001:185), identity is linked to the individual's use of language: "From an interactionistic perspective the self and the identity is situated and gets its meaning only in a certain context, involving other selves and other identities. From such a perspective, identity is linked to a language with its values and norms and it is due to change over time and space. It is tied to the dialogicality between the self and the other, and a certain identity then, can be shown by the individual's use of language. The self is not that close and autonomous unit taken for granted in the Cartesian tradition. Hence the embeddedness of contextualization and decontextualization in the use of different languages in different activities will play an immense role to the creation of identity. The result showed that teacher described the practical, identity as referred to as the truth. We argue that the lack of intersubjectivity in dialogue prolonged the inter-disciplinary gap between the participants and opened for alterity.

The results of present study showed that vocational teachers as well as academicians expressed their values of each professional field. According to Vygotsky's (1986) theory, language is a cultural and psychological tool and an important link to thinking and the development of language in one's actions. The use of different languages or semiotic signs creates and changes the way of thinking within different organizations in our society. And, as the participants met in the discussions over time they made a bridge through utterances by negotiating attitudes, values and problems that were changed and made conscious in dialogue. Such a change is illustrated by Mezirow (1990) in his theory on transformative learning where processes of change and personal assumptions are raised to a conscious level in a dialogue with others.

The utterances showed that academization requires the teacher to have a command of the subject at a higher level than the students. There is a gap between factual knowledge and the tools academia offer, according to teachers. The result showed that teachers recalled from discussions that they must find scientific analytic tools so as to clarify evaluate and scrutinize the core of practice. The teachers wanted a language that captured both vocational and academic knowledge, i.e. a vocational language and vocational identity.

In discussions, the consequences of academization of a vocational profession appeared to be a continuous process that hasn't yet had effect. This in turn would have repercussions on forming identity. According to Wertsch (1998), certain mediated, semiotic actions are characterized by mastery of certain tools for a particular activity, though not others, because the person in question hasn't made them his/her own, i.e. atomized them. The reason for this can be that he/she dissociates him/herself from the available semiotic means and refuses to make them his/her own means for thinking. Vocational teachers were identified as being able to convey the know-how in a profession, and that the language the specific profession stands for expressed other requirements for action than what the academic teachers expressed.

## Concluding discussion

The aim of the present study was to analyze different professional groups' developing understanding of the academization of two vocational educations, and how this was realized in focus-group dialogues between officers, teachers, students and academicians, and respectively.

Focus-group discussions over time, we argue, characterized an arena for change in how teachers and students from different educational traditions can negotiate and renegotiate new knowledge by dialogues. According to Bakhtin (1986) and Wertsch (1998), attitudes, values and problems are made conscious and change during dialogue. Mezirow (1990) illustrates such a change in his theory of transformative learning, where the processes of change and individual “taking for granted” are made apparent in dialogue with others.

In the discussions the informants renegotiated meaning, but not from the ultimate start. They echoed the others’ utterances and added an elaborated meaning addressing the other in an attempt to reach intersubjectivity. We argue that the conversation developed in spiral shaped form on their way to “new” understanding.

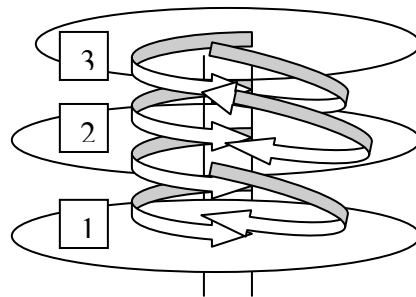


Figure 1. Focus-group discussions 1, 2, 3 and how the conversation developed in a spiral shaped form on the way to a “new” understanding and meaning-makings.

The results of the teacher dialogues showed how teachers reasoned about conditions for learning as a whole and that didn’t differ between subjects and disciplines. Gardner (2009) distinguishes between subject and discipline in his analysis of ways of thinking about academization. In disciplined thinking he regards the difference between subject and discipline as a crucial factor in how people learn. Regardless of the subject studied, Gardner claims that disciplined thinking is the pre-requisite to meet society in change. This in turn puts demands on education generally, and specifically on professional education within academia because of the fact that “all these efforts in education are directed at appropriate disciplinary knowledge, mental habits and patterns of behavior” (Gardner 2009:37–38). According to Gardner regardless of what the student studies, the goal is the same, to eradicate incorrect or unproductive thinking “and replace it with the ways of thinking and behaving, which characterize the disciplined professional”. As we argue, this will have repercussions on professional identity and language.

According to Giddens (1984) development only occurs through identity crises, when habits and routines are challenged. Both teachers and students negotiated their opinions in dialogues about the process of academization. The vocational teachers didn’t differentiate academic structures as they compared theory and practice. Academicians presented the order of learning from an academic structure and between these two domains differences were distinguished in identity and professional language between different professional groups (cf. Selander, 2008; Geijer, 2003)

Both alterity and intersubjectivity are needed to produce a change in communication and thought since the dialogue contains a tense between alterity (Bakhtin, 1986) and intersubjectivity (Rommetveit, 1979). In the focus-group discussions over time, there is both a linguistic and a cognitive emphasis on the proximal level of development. According to Olstedt (2001) understanding is built with the help of previous experience. She claims that an action is built on understanding and personal judgment. An academic professional education should be problematized in order to give access to both one’s own self-reflection and to the critical reflections of others. We mean that from the results of

the present study, there is a lack of integration between knowledge from the vocational area and academic professional knowledge. Here, there are similarities between the researcher's trade in the academic environment and between the approach of the academic world and vocational competence.

The result of the present study showed that not only dialogicity but also language and thought developed in a spiral shaped form during the focus group conversation over time, as to the new situation definition. New understanding matured in focus-group discussion over time in a spiral formed development in the interactions between the participants. We argue that the focus group discussions over time and intermission in between discussions contributed to maturation of the level of development prospectively. The use of different languages or semiotic signs creates and changes the way of thinking within different organizations in our society cf. Vygotsky (1986).

The borders between academic professional education and traditional vocational training stood out clearly in the dialogue in the present study. In order to increase the understanding of an academization process and epistemistic shifting, the results of the study indicated the need for an arena where dialogicity is made possible. In the dialogues over time a mutual understanding between the different groups were bridged from the perspective of identity and language, when involving other selves as well as the identities of others in the focus-group discussions.

Ellström & Hultman (2004) have pointed out that projects of change have the potential of creating an important arena where reasoning and thoughts on development and change can be aired. We have applied the theories of Bakhtin and Vygotsky to the present study since focus-group conversations over time aim at a new way of talking and thinking about the education. We argue that the dialogue within the arena of focus-group discussions over time developed the participants understanding of vocational education and academia. As analyzed by the Bakhtinian concept of dialogism and Vygotskian zone of development, the present study showed that the time in between focus group discussions enhanced the participants' level of consciousness and maturation of development not only applied to one individual's mental development but contributed to that of the group individuals' professional language as well as identity. The present study showed that the participants' interactions as to intersubjectivity provided a spiral shaped development of competency of vocational education and academia as to professional language use and identity.

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# The Future of Healthcare

## Bridging the gap between the science and art of medicine

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### Abstract

Scientific advances are made every day that enhance the healthcare system. At the same time, these advances can present new ethical issues in the practice of medicine. Historically, the human side of medicine has and continues to be considered an art by many, yet this can clash with the use of greater amounts of technology. This paper develops a position on how current and future healthcare professionals must learn to bridge the gap between the advances in science and the human related art of medicine.

### Introduction

The older man walks into the room. His hair is gray, his posture bent. As he lays his worn, black leather bag on the bed, he smiles sincerely at the patient wearing a blue hospital gown and the woman sitting in a chair next to him. He introduces himself as the physician on call in the neurological intensive care unit that evening. The situation is one no doctor wishes to see. The man lying in the bed suffered his second stroke and is slowly falling into a coma. It has been too long since the stroke occurred to reverse the damage. All that is left is to wait and see how much harm took place. The doctor must now tell the family that he does not know what will happen. He has to explain all possible outcomes that the future test results will determine, bridging the gap between science and the human side of medicine.

In the above example, how the physician carries himself, the personal attention he gives to the patient and family, the critical thinking to determine if there is anything left that he can do, are all aspects of the art he practices. This idea of the art of medicine sometimes conflicts with the evidence-based science aspects of the profession. The tension between the art and science of medicine is made even more dramatic by recent changes introduced into health care by technology. Though technological advances mean progress in diagnostics and disease treatment, personalized care can suffer. Almerud, *et al.* (2008), notes physicians frequently find themselves treating a disease based on tests instead of treating a sick person. The position of this paper is that as health care progresses into the technologically advanced future, it is crucial that medical professionals do not forget the art, but rather learn to maintain the human side of medicine in an increasingly scientific world.

### Review of the Literature

Science and research are the foundation of evidence-based practice. Without facts supporting medical procedures and diagnoses, the field of medicine would never progress safely into the future. Yet, medicine is also based on the holist view of human being taking into account the person's social, emotional, and spiritual views and needs. According to Laurence Savett, author of *The Human Side of Medicine* (2002) and professor of a related undergraduate course, medicine is about helping suffering people and science is

purely the way we go about this (p. xxxii). Before the use of technology in medicine, physical observations and patient history were the means to making a diagnosis. The present state of healthcare, however, relies heavily on technology. We have gone from assessing the color of a patient's skin to determine how oxygenated he is to using technology that provides actual empirical data indicating oxygen saturation (Almerud, Alapack, Fridlund, Ekebergh, 2008, p. 56). This has greatly improved evidence based practice, but has caused tension for the human side of medicine.

A recent study by Almerud, et al (2007) showed the views of patients in an intensive care unit (ICU), one of the most technologically advanced wards in a hospital. The patients felt de-humanized, subjects that were being watched and controlled (p. 153). The patients expressed concern that the nurses in the ICU were no longer listening to the cries for help, but were instead only collecting data from a machine. The technology began to take precedence over the human story. Patients also felt that the technology set the tone of both the room and the treatment. Patient rooms were filled with frightening and mysterious machines and devices (p. 154). Yet the patients felt that because the caregivers trusted the technology, they should too. Most people staying in the ICU were not knowledgeable of the equipment, and felt that alarms going off meant they had done something wrong.

The question then arises, when should caregivers look to technology and when should they look to the patient? The answer comes from the idea that medical professionals must not choose one over the other, but most incorporate both into practice. The gap between the science and art of medicine must be bridged; both are of vital importance. Technology is useful in that it supplies objective data in emergency situations (Almerud et al, 2008, p. 59). Yet, the caregiver should use the technology as a tool to help solve a clinical problem and not give it complete power over the care giving process. Technology has flaws in the same way that even empirical research is flawed. Using data from a research experiment and applying it directly to the clinical field requires a "leap of faith" (Kenny, 1997, p. 34). In the same way, technology must not be trusted wholly and completely. If medical professionals use technology as a tool it then becomes one aspect of the whole of medicine. It is available for use, but does not take over the care, especially when it fails (Almerud et al, 2008, p. 59). The noise of the machine is then quieted, and the patient's voice can be heard.

How can this be taught and utilized in the field of medicine? What training must medical professionals receive to be able to provide holistic care while objectively employing scientific data and technology? In an essay from 1906, John Hemmeter shows how both science and art affect the ideas of medicine. He quotes a writer several times who said that the difference between science and art is the difference between theory and application. Science attempts to explain and provide evidence while art puts theory into useful practice (p. 450). This idea can also be used to show how intertwined the two aspects are. Medicine combines ideas with their practical application. To teach the art of medicine to new care-givers requires the understanding that patients must be listened to when determining a standard of care and that the physician must be prepared to forgo personal comfort in this process to become more selfless (Smith, 2008, p.S15). The patient must be viewed as the center of the care, with all technology, research, and pure science built around the patient's needs. As technology advances, medical professionals will find the need for communication skills will only increase in importance just as data management and quick decision making will be vital. These skills will need to be integrated into the important patient-provider relationship in order to be successful (p. S16).

Clinicians must grasp the idea that technology should be used to facilitate an extension of the services medicine provides, and learn to treat the human as the center of these services. Developing the skills necessary for good, holistic medicine can be taught to students. Deloney and Graham (2003) showed that experiencing and being involved in certain situations helps students grasp these ideas. In their study, 138 first-year medical

students attended a performance of the play *Wit*. Told from the view of a dying Dr. Vivian Bearing, the play shows what patients experience while ill and how they communicate with physicians. Ethical and spiritual issues are presented alongside compassion of health care providers. Deloney and Graham found that theater was an appropriate approach to teach these issues to students (p. 250). The observation of the patient's perspective caused many of the students to think carefully about the caring and compassion needed to practice the art of medicine. Observation and knowledge are key to teaching students the human side of medicine.

## Conclusion

An effective caregiver must take into account the human perspective when treating a patient and learn to use technology as a tool, an extension of the services that can be provided. When taught to bridge the gap between the art and science of medicine, medical professionals can utilize science while meeting the patients' social, emotional, and spiritual needs. Medicine must remain centered around the person. Medicine "is thus the recorded dialogue of generations of scholars [and] has all the characteristics of a living dialogue.' If we do not continually write about, clarify, integrate, and carry on the 'dialogue' of medicine, then we do not build on prior knowledge, and we are condemned forever to reinvent the wheel" (Savett, 2002, p. xxxi). We must not forget when medicine was based solely on the care of another human being; we must integrate technology to enhance those early goals. It is up to the already established medical community to continue the dialogue and improve our future.

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# Bakhtin's Notion of the *Internally* Persuasive Discourse in Education: Internal to what?

(A case of discussion of issues of foul language in teacher education)<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

Bakhtin's notion of internally persuasive discourse (IPD) has become more and more influential in education in part because it helps us conceptualize learning. We abstracted at least three approaches to how this notion is currently used in the literature on education. First, the most prevalent approach in education, IPD is understood as *appropriation* when somebody else's words, ideas, approaches, knowledge, feelings, become one's own (e.g., a student's). In this approach, "internal" in IPD is understood as internal to the individual, as a psychological and personal deep conviction. Second, but less prevalent approach in education is IPD understood as *a student's authorship* recognized and accepted by a community of practice, in which the student generates self-assignments and long-term projects within the practice. In this approach, "internal" is understood as internal to the targeted discourse practice. Finally, in the third approach, IPD is understood as *a dialogic regime of the participants' testing ideas and searching for the boundaries of personally-vested truths*. In this approach, "internal" in IPD is interpreted as internal to the dialogue itself in which everything is "dialogically tested and forever testable" (Morson, 2004, p. 319). We argue that although the first two approaches are grounded in Bakhtin's quotes and can be descriptively important for IPD, they do not define IPD. The third approach, rooted in Bakhtin's central notion of dialogue, does describe IPD. We are surprised to find that searching for the bounds of personally-vested truths seem to be grounded in one's ontological plane of existence. When tested yet again, as projected actions in future contexts, the truth ideas take on another set of boundaries and perspectives. Therefore, dialogic IPD has a surprising ontological component that links ideas with the past and the future that activates student's professional discourse in the classrooms setting. Testing ideas within the bounds of a future imagined practice constitutes, in our view, a legitimate participation in professional discourse, as the evaluation of and setting a course for (future) ethical actions is an important part of any practice. We consider the dialogic approach and its implications for education by analyzing online class discourse among preservice teachers about issues of foul language in education.

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## Introduction

We were excited to analyze an intriguing and several weeks long classroom dialogue we had with University level students in this paper. In this dialogue, students were sometimes hesitant to follow our pedagogical attempts to guide the discussion in certain directions, and yet we noticed something shifted across the dialogue that seemed important for student's professional development. We struggled to find what exactly what that shift was, as the discussion theme (foul language in the classroom) stayed fairly consistent. In the analysis of what happened in class web-based discussions, we found useful Bakhtin's notion of internally persuasive discourse (IPD).

First we will consider how IPD is used in the literature. We argue that the ways in which IPD have been defined in the literature promotes certain ethical actions of the author/ teachers which shaped what student discussion can emerge and is considered to represent IPD. We will discuss and provide a critical analysis of the existing diverse pedagogical approaches to IPD. So secondly, we analyze our own class' online discussion in order to understand possible outcomes of a dialogic approach to IPD and its implications for education. According to our analysis, our students developed three distinct stances in their class discussion about issues of foul language in education originating from different ontological planes of their existence, which was a surprise to us as we expected the discussion to develop mainly as a debate among several perspectives. These stances were: 1) a clichéd authoritative discourse focused on how silence their future cursing students, 2) an IPD from their position as students learning about social functions and societal traditions with the regard to foul language in general, and 3) somewhat authoritative discourse that incorporated the multiple perspective they developed in the second stance and which projected their responses into future actions. We also analyzed dialogic relationships among these three distinct thematic discourses as well as considered shifts in one particular student (a case study). In our view, our students did not develop an IPD approach to teaching foul language issues as we modeled in the classroom, and which we tried to promote through dialogue. We consider possible reasons why this was so – perhaps such a discussion will remain unavailable to students until they can examine the classroom process they underwent themselves. We follow one case study, tracing his path through the three stances and noting his shift into a professional teaching discourse which takes a principled stand after considering several perspectives. We noticed this same shift to a lesser degree with other students. We ask, is there a link as students engage in an evaluation and projection of their future professional ethical actions? It seems to us that learning within an IPD approach activates actual participation in the discourse of the teaching practice.

## Bakhtin's notion of the *internally* persuasive discourse in education: Internal to what?

Bakhtin defined internally persuasive and authoritative discourses in the following way:

Internally persuasive discourse – as opposed to one that is externally authoritative – is, as it is affirmed through assimilation, tightly interwoven with 'one's own word'. In the everyday rounds of our consciousness, the internally persuasive word is half-ours and half-someone else's. Its creativity and productiveness consist precisely in the fact that such a word awakens new and independent words, that it organizes masses of our words from within, and does not remain in an isolated and static condition... it enters into interanimating relationships with new contexts. More than that, it enters into an intense interaction, a struggle with other internally persuasive discourses. Our ideological [becoming – EM] is just such an intense struggle within us for hegemony among various available verbal and ideological points of view, approaches, directions and values. The semantic structure of an internally

persuasive discourse is not finite, it is open; in each of the new contexts that dialogize it, this discourse is able to reveal ever new ways to mean (Bakhtin, 1991, p. 346).

IPD and its opposition to the authoritative discourse (AD) helps educators move away from the conventional notion of learning as a transmission of knowledge from the teacher (and/or the official text) to the student. Application of Bakhtin's notion of IPD allows us to develop a new overarching problematic in education. We have found three approaches to the application of IPD in education that each have their own problematics. We argue that each of the three existing IPD educational approaches is characterized by how "internal" in *internally* persuasive discourse is understood, what is "internal" here? "internal" to what?

### *Internal to the individual: Appropriation*

In the first approach, internal is understood as an internal to the individual – it is an individual who has to be persuaded without any imposition or force from someone or something external to the individual source. Or, on the contrary, when a person freely accepts something, it is evidence of their IPD. Thus, for example, in studying Estonian and Russian students and their knowledge of history presented in schools under the Soviet regime, Wertsch (2002) distinguishes a student's mastery of discourse from a student's appropriation of discourse. In the former case, Estonian students could master successfully the official Soviet historical discourse: how the independent Estonian bourgeois republic voluntarily joined the Soviet Union in the summer of 1940 as its response to the Nazi threat. The Estonian students could correctly reproduce official facts provided by the Soviet historiography, provide the correct reasons, and thoughtfully answer comprehension questions, without actually believing any of it. As Wertsch shows, they actually believed in a then unofficial counter-history; that the Soviet forceful occupation of Estonia was a result of the August 1939 Hitler-Stalin peace pact and division of the Eastern Europe by two totalitarian powers. In contrast, according to Wertsch's research, many Russian students not only mastered the official Soviet history but also believed in it. Citing Bakhtin's (1991, p. 346) famous paragraph about IPD (see above), Wertsch suggests that IPD is defined by appropriated words being half somebody else's and half one's own. He argues that the educational process of teaching the official Soviet history for Estonian students has been imposed on them by the Soviet authoritative discourse (AD); while for Russian students, it was guided by IPD. Thus, according to Wertsch, IPD is mastery with "appropriation" or mastery with conviction (sincerity).

Similarly, Freedman (Freedman & Ball, 2004) describes her interviews with Bosnian Croats and marks their passion nationalistic anti-Muslim and anti-Serbian views as evidence of their IPD, "Their internally persuasive discourses sound quite different from those of their Bosniak neighbors" (p. 26). In this appropriation approach to IPD, "internal" in internally persuasive discourse is understood as *internal to the individual*, as one's psychological conviction about ideas as one's own deep and passionate belief. In the same article, Ball analyzes a South African student who was severely bitten by her father in his effort to force her acceptance of Christian beliefs, which was characterized by Ball as AD. When the student learned about social constructivism in her college (by the guidance of the author) and got excited about these ideas, this was characterized by the author as internally persuasive discourse. Thus, in an addition to personal belief, IPD is characterized by the free acceptance of ideas, knowledge, and skills without any imposition or violence (physical or psychological).

Thus, this new concept of IPD, presented by Wertsch, Freedman, and Ball, extends learning beyond traditional educational issues of students' mastery of knowledge and skills, the classic notion of "transfer" (Beach, 1999; Tuomi-Gröhn & Engeström, 2003), to new problematics: How can the teacher make curriculum be *appropriated* by the student so the student cannot only master the learned knowledge and skills but also *freely*

accept, be passionate about, and sincerely believe in them? In this approach, IPD is defined as voluntary and deeply committed mastery.

We see positive sides of this appropriation approach to IPD; in its focus on students' subjectivity through their own ideas, perceptions and beliefs, and in students' freedom to have their own ideas. In our view, this focus on students' subjectivity opens up a possibility for a teacher to provide sensitive guidance to the students (Matusov & Smith, 2007) rather than to focus purely on the students' mastery of knowledge and skills. However, in our judgment, this focus is not sufficient to provide good education.

We raise the following three major oppositions to this first approach to IPD as internal to the individual. First, a student's deep understanding (mastery) of any idea is not and cannot be packaged and closed within an individual, nor is it the sole property of an individual. Any truth is an idea that requires critical replies to itself from other ideas, addressing alternative ideas to itself from the positions and voices of relevant others. To understand a truth of an idea is to reply to the past, present, and future alternative ideas with a personally and ontologically vested reflexivity that asks why what is accepted by myself as an individual is a more truthful idea and is better than the alternatives provided by others, – “better” for what and for whom. Understanding a truth (“правда” in Russian, “pravda”) of an idea also means to find out the limitations of the idea and the limitations of the self as having a vested ontological interest in the truth, something which is impossible to do without help of others. In essence, investigating a truth of an idea is an inescapably dialogic phenomenon.

Second, as Freedman's research shows, the internal to the individual IPD can involve freely and deeply accepted nationalism, prejudices, chauvinism, racism, and fanaticism. This “appropriation” has low educational value. A person's own deep and sincere conviction is not equal to one that is informed or educated by the ideas, objections, concerns and values of others. Even more, it can be of a questionable quality all together from an educational point of view, in contrast to, for example, doubt. An open-minded honest commitment to ideas, knowledge, and skills requires the meeting of alternative ideas, the genuine listening to others, testing ideas, taking one's own and other people's positions seriously, and a commitment to searching for truth rather than to spread one's own dear ideas, manipulate others, and so on. In our view, all of that cannot be a sole property of the individual but rather involves the individual's participation in the specific public discourse and the discourse itself.

Finally, we argue that freedom of and open-mindedness in disagreements as the medium of origin for one's conviction is more important than voluntarism or imposition as the origin of one's ideas. An idea becomes true not because one freely and passionately accepts it, but because it is thoroughly investigated and tested (even if an idea is initially imposed on a person).

### *Internal to the discourse practice: Authorship*

The second approach to IPD in education treats “internal” as internal to the discourse practice. Its concern is with a student becoming an active and recognized member of “a community of practice” (Gee, 2000, 2001; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). The problematics of this approach is; how can the teacher help the students socialize into a targeted discourse practice to become accepted by a community of practice as an active insider and whose authorship is recognized by the community?

Founders of the Ukrainian-Russian pedagogical movement “The School of the Dialogue of Cultures”, Solomadin and Kurganov (Kurganov, 2009; Solomadin & Kurganov, 2009) define the goal of education as students' authorship of their own work. Not only should the students' work have a unique, original, and embodied voice – as in the appropriation IPD approach – but it should also focus on the students' self-assignments and self-initiatives (e.g., students starting writers' clubs, generating their own science

hypotheses and testing them in their own experiments). According to these scholars and educators, to become educated means to join a community of practice (cf. Lave & Wenger, 1991) and find a unique place in what the authors refer to as “a unique author position” in the discourse of the practice. Recently, we also argued for a similar position as “polyphonic pedagogy” (Matusov, Duyke, & Han, 2009, submitted), focusing on students’ self-assignments and students’ setting themselves for learning “journeys” by developing original long-term projects for themselves. This IPD approach is concerned with the acceptance of a newcomer by the community oldtimers, the recognition of the newcomer’s voice as an authentic voice of an insider in the community, the newcomer’s authorship and the development of the newcomer’s contributions within a hierarchy in community (e.g., “novice,” “expert,” “talented,” “promising,” “original,” “mediocre,” “graphomaniac,” and so on). In this approach, IPD is defined as recognized, self-initiated mastery.

In our view, the strong side of this authorship approach to IPD is its focus on students’ activism and authorship and its recognition by a targeted community of practice. Transformation from school- and teacher-initiated assignments to self-assignments and self-journeys as the main educational activities for students to involve themselves in is a right step towards, in our view, of deepening education. However, we think that this step is not sufficient for quality education.

We see a major problem with this authorship approach because of the lack of an explicit critical stance to it (see other critiques in Hayes & Matusov, 2005). The approach implies that only the unilateral critique of community oldtimers and the most respected members of the community (teachers?) can judge the authenticity and quality of the newcomer’s (i.e., students’) authorship and contribution. This approach can be characterized as gatekeeping. In our view, successfully joining a community of practice through one’s authorship is not equal to education. We think that education necessarily involves critical and open (non-hierarchical) dialogue about the practice. One’s individual responsibility to dialogue involves answering diverse voices for one’s own views. We argue that the questioning of the final causes of one’s ideas and values about the quality of work and contributions, – whether held by oldtimers or not, – is more important for education than being accepted by the relevant community through skillful participation. In turn, we distinguish educational settings from apprenticeship or training settings.

### *Internal to dialogue: Testing ideas and responsibility*

In defining IPD, educators often cite Bakhtin’s famous phrase that “the internally persuasive word is half-ours and half-someone else’s.” They seemed to understand this idea *diachronically*: initially words were someone else’s and through appropriation these words become ours. So, the words are half-someone else’s only in history. Thus, everything that is truly appropriated by the individual is IPD. Our understanding of Bakhtin is different. We think that Bakhtin’s famous phrase should be taken *synchronically*, namely, that in internally persuasive discourse, we are aware of someone else’s voices shaping our words. This means that we are aware that our words cannot be understood without the consideration of the words of others – the meaning of our words emerge and exist on the border of our and others’ voices. In IPD, words are “half-ours and half-someone else’s” not in the past, but in the present because they are defined by, at least, by two distinct voices: our own and someone else’s. This can be true in the phenomenon of double-voicedness, described by Bakhtin (1999), where internal dialogue is with imaginary others, or as direct contact through open dialogue with real others. However, in our view, this “half-ness” of our words and our awareness of it are not enough to define dialogic IPD.

In our view, Bakhtinian philologists (Holquist, 1990; Morson & Emerson, 1990) have developed a *dialogic approach* to IPD. They consider Bakhtin’s (1991) description of

IPD in the context of his overarching notion of dialogue (Bakhtin, 1999). In the second edition of his book on Dostoevsky, Bakhtin added chapter 4, which arguably merges the notions of dialogue and IPD. Morson defines IPD as a dialogic regime, in which “truth becomes dialogically tested and forever testable” (2004, p. 319). Here, “internal” in IPD is internal to the entire dialogue rather than to the individual or to some discourse practice to be learned. A participant’s word is persuasive not because the participant is passionate about it, nor because the participant fills the word with his or her own unique intonation, nor because the participant considers the word genuinely as his or her own, nor because it is original and authored by the individual, but because it is dialogically tested and forever testable. Teaching in a dialogic IPD approach means that the student’s learning emerges through their guided engagement in historically and topically valuable internally persuasive discourses where the students become familiar with historically, culturally, and socially important voices, and learn how to address these voices, and to develop responsible replies to them.

We argue that although the first two approaches to IPD are well grounded in Bakhtin’s quotes, they do not define IPD within Bakhtin’s central notion of dialogue. In our view, although the appropriation and authorship approaches to IPD, which focus on students’ ownership of their ideas and contributions have strong points as listed above, they are not sufficient and, at times, even unnecessary for defining IPD. Students can be passionate about their own personal or communal prejudices and can actively author these prejudices as self-assignments in very creative ways – this fails to be IPD as described by Bakhtin which would include all relevant others, but rather, with the subjective view of internal can support prejudices which try to escape scrutiny by becoming a totalizing discourse. Another important difference between the third and dialogic IPD approach from the other two is that doubts, questions, and challenges can also be important parts of IPD, which are lost to the dialogue when the educative focus is only on affirmative statements of conviction, passion, ownership, belief, or the original authorship (self-assignment). Non appropriated words, such as the double-voiced words of the Estonian students, and a non concern for student self-assignments can be IPD in the dialogic approach. The problematics of this dialogic approach to IPD involves the following issues: Why should the students and I, their teacher, care about the curriculum? Whose voices are important for this dialogue outside ours in this classroom? Are some ideas better than others? Better for what and for whom? How do I take a responsible position on this issue? What are my responsible deeds in light of what I know now?

Below we provide a description and analysis of a discourse among our students that we found interesting, if not pedagogically beautiful; from our experience of the dialogue as instructors. Now, after the class we both taught is over, we feel nostalgic about this experience. We first felt that this experience redefined what we wanted to strive for in our educational practice. In this paper we want to reflect on our pedagogical experience, why we are so attracted to it, and how it has acted to redefine our understanding of learning. We have found that Bakhtin’s literary notion of “internally persuasive discourse” (IPD) has become useful for our analysis. We do not think that what we did with our class constitutes an idealized or “perfect” model of this dialogic IPD, and we want to reflect on our shortcomings as well, but rather our pedagogical experience led us to redefine our goal of education. We see the goal of our pedagogical practice as engaging students in an historically unfolding dialogue of a subject matter, rather than as the acquisition by students of certain knowledge, skills, and/or disposition (as it is often considered in conventional education).

## “Watch your language, Mister!”: IPD by pre-service teachers around issues of foul language in education

Imagine yourself as a teacher in a middle school. Your middle school students (let's say in 6<sup>th</sup> grade) are working on an educational computer game (let's say “Oregon Trail”) in peer groups. All of your students are highly engaged with this game. You hear very good learning discussions between the students about planning, decision making, and history (Bigelow, 1996). For some reason in one computer station, you hear that a peer group is frustrated because their computer is frozen in the middle of their game. You hear the students are agitated, loud, frustrated, and angry. Then they curse at the computer using foul language (let's say loud calling the computer “a f\*\*\*ing piece of junk!”). What would you do as a teacher and why?

We posed this question to our pre-service teachers (mostly first-year college students) as part of their professional diversity class. In this class, our students work in a practicum with minority children in two afterschool programs in local community centers (twice a week for 1.5 hours for 9 weeks). We first asked this question as an intellectual homework exercise in an online essay that we call a weekly “mini-project.” Then we addressed it again as a class by having two students act out the “cursing kids.” We asked students to develop a response to the same scenario in small groups of 5–6, then select a volunteer “teacher” who addressed the “kids” at the front of the class. At the next class meeting we discussed these diverse possible approaches of dealing with this situation as well as other options, their PROs and CONs, and the students’ preferences for each of these approaches.

This dialogic provocation (Matusov, 2009) generated an intense and prolonged discussion on the class web that we call Webtalk (Matusov, Hayes, & Pluta, 2005). The web discussion on issues of foul language lasted for one month (of a 4-month semester), involved 28 students (out of 30, or 93%) and both instructors (the professor, Eugene, the first author, and the TA, Kathy, the second author), and involved 102 entries which centered on the following three main emergent themes<sup>2</sup> which we abstracted from the discussion (the titles of the abstracted themes are ours, some web postings had more than one theme):

1. **How can we, teachers, shut up cursing kids?** (15 participants, 50%; 19 webtalk entries, 19%);
2. **Questioning the authoritative tradition of dealing with foul language** (28 participants, 90%; 77 webtalk entries, 75%);
3. **What should education about foul language involve?** (13 participants, 43%; 28 webtalk entries, 27%).

We used the notion of interproblematicity (Matusov, 2010, in press), which is the mutual interest of two or more participants in the same problems, inquiries, puzzlements, and concerns as the unit of our analysis. The three extracted interproblematicity themes were not mutually exclusive and one webtalk entry could have one, two, or all three themes. The first theme was initiated by the students at the beginning of the foul language webtalk discussion – the instructors did not participate in this theme. This theme faded out after the first half of the discussion (after 16 days). The second theme was provoked by the instructors 3 days after the foul language webtalk discussion was launched. The students immediately supported it and initiated their own discussions around this theme. This theme continued until the end of the discussion. The third theme was also introduced by the instructors after 3 days but it was not replied to by the students for some time.

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<sup>2</sup> It is completely incidental that we abstracted 3 and not 4 or 2 themes here. The themes do not correspond to the 3 approaches discussed above but, as we argue further, they constitute overall IPD discourse.

However, almost immediately after that, the students initiated their own, “weaker”, version of this theme discussing the boundaries of education and their multiple roles with the children (in the practicum). Later on the students also discussed a “stronger” version of this theme focusing on what should be the curriculum in teaching about cursing and foul language use. This theme continued to the end of the discussion. Below we try to provide fragments from each theme and communicate why we are so excited about the pedagogical quality of this discussion. We recognize that it might not be easy for readers to catch our excitement without reading the entire webtalk discussion (and participation in the relevant class meetings). But we will try. In selection of the Webtalk excerpts, we tried not to romanticize the discourse and the participants' contributions and not to impose pre-existing grand narratives on them.

### *Authoritative discourse: How can we, teachers, shut up cursing kids? (Theme#1)*

Below is the entire initial student posting that provoked our class webtalk discussion on foul language. Amy (here and below we use pseudonyms for the students and the children mentioned in the discussions) titled her web posting as “Ways to address cursing in the classroom.” As indicated by the time of her web entries, Amy wrote her posting immediately after she submitted her required weekly mini-project which had asked the students to consider their teacher response to cursing in a classroom, but before our class scenario and class discussion of the issue. Such web postings are assigned by the instructors (the students are expected to do a minimum number per week). The content of the posting, however, was not dictated by the instructors. The students could choose to reflect upon any aspect of the curriculum (Matusov, et al., 2005). The fact that this student chose to reflect upon her weekly miniproject and to bring it up for whole class discussion on the Webtalk<sup>3</sup> was a typical but not systematic event initiated by students – these reflections were not required by the instructors. Conrad was the first student who replied to her.

*Amy:* I myself am not exactly sure how I would handle cursing in the classroom. It is obviously inappropriate and the situation needs to be addressed, but what would really make kids stop? I do think that the situation depends greatly on how old the student is. But, my main question is, is telling them it's wrong enough to making them stop regardless of age, I would like to think that it would work, but let's be realistic here. Also at what age is it appropriate to start using curse words? Is it ever okay in the classroom, high school? college? I was just wondering what everyone else was thinking, I want to know what you thought! (Webtalk, March 9, 2009)

*Conrad:* I think kids who curse in class are only looking for attention, or to get their friends to laugh or what have you, that's why I did it, and it was funny. I think the best way to deal with a student who curses to get attention is to give them all the attention they want. I don't mean yell at them in front of the class, I mean make them get up in front of the class, explain why they thought it was okay to use that word (without using the word in the explanation of course) and then send them to the office after they think they're not getting any real punishment, because I'm mean like that. But I really do think that making them stand in front of the class and explain themselves IN DETAIL (no cause it was funny answers here) might dissuade them from doing it again, if only to spare the embarrassment. Is this a bad idea? (Webtalk, March 11, 2009)

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<sup>3</sup> We preserve the original grammar of the web postings. The instructors told the students not to pay attention to the grammar but only on comprehensibility of their postings by their classmates and the instructors, focusing on the content of the messages rather than on their form. By this instruction, the instructors wanted to relax the students to create a safe learning environment focusing on exploration of ideas rather than on perfection of the form.



Although, it was we, the instructors, who initiated the discussion on foul language through a pre-planned mandatory mini-project and pre-planned class discussions, the students' engagement in the class and web discussions of the issues of foul language was *ontological* (Matusov, 2009; Sidorkin, 1999) in our judgment, as students initiated and supported many additional contributions when they were not required to do so. The nature of their contributions was emotional, consumed, intentional, and committed. We think it was due to their *ontological anxiety* (Matusov, 2009) around this issue. The students seemed to perceive the issue of use of foul language in school as realistic, potentially dangerous, and problematic for them. Students reported the common experience of students using foul language in their school experiences, and they view such use as potentially challenging the authority of the teacher. Indeed, in the class discussions, our students were concerned with what their students' parents, school administrators, and other children might think of them, if they, as teachers, openly ignored the use of foul language in their classroom (or even, in school in their presence in general). Not only were our students afraid of experiencing critique of their classroom management and complaints about them, they were also afraid of potential punitive administrative actions taken against them for their failure to stop foul language. Students projected potential adversarial relations of non-cooperation with their future students if they attempted to stop their use of foul language. All of that made our students anxious and seek help from their classmates and us, their instructors. Please notice that both postings ended with the students' questions.

The second web posting by Conrad struck us as being almost desperate. Conrad suggested the deliberate use of public humiliation with additional institutional punishment if the public humiliation alone did not "work" although, he seemed to have some doubts evident in his ending question that it might be an extreme measure. It reminded us of the use of scarlet letter in Colonial America (Hawthorne, 1850). We felt his strong statement and ambivalence reflected both his sense of accountability and disempowerment by school systems for his student's language use, his certainty that allowable punitive measures would be ineffective, and his discomfort in needing such a heavy handed approach with students.

In our judgment, the *interproblematicity* (Matusov, 2010, in press) of this theme discourse – i.e., what was considered to be problematic for the participants in the theme of the discourse, – were: 1) what course of action can be *the most effective* in preventing the students from use of foul language, and 2) a communal sense of what course of action was *appropriate* in this problematic situation and with certain ages of the future students (i.e., the issue of conventionality). The possible critical considerations of the foundations for these inquiries were taken outside of the brackets of the interproblematicity by the participants. For example, is suppression of foul language always good?, what makes language foul?, who decides that and how?, can foul language be good (good for what and whom and why) or is it always bad (bad for what and whom and why)?, is non-foul language always good?, what exactly makes language good or bad?, are societal conventions and normative attitudes are always good?, are they contradictory at some points?, are the societal conventions and norms at odds with common practices?, is suppression of foul language is educational, and so on? All these (and other questions) are almost taboo for students to ask of this theme. Please notice the social boundary against explicit language, what we term a language wall, which affirms this social taboo and forbids questions in the first posting, "It is *obviously* inappropriate..." (the italics is ours). The students thus reassured themselves in their pedagogical actions by relying upon social taboos, a pattern which was noticed among in some other postings by other students in this theme.

After Bakhtin (1991), we called this discourse of the theme#1 *authoritative discourse* (AD). Bakhtin defined the authoritative discourse as oppositional to the internally persuasive discourse, "the authoritative word demands that we acknowledge it, that we make it

our own; it binds us, quite independent of any power it might have to persuade us internally” (p. 342). Bakhtin usually used examples of forceful impositions by institutions, authoritative texts, teachers, political power, church, and so on as examples of AD. Following these examples, many educators associated impositions with AD and AD with impositions (Matusov, 2007). For example, Ball (in Ball & Freedman, 2004) described a South African student in a teacher education program talking about her past as a school student being beaten by her father and teachers. Although it is true that violence can be a part of “authoritative discourse” when it is used for forcing a person to accept certain ideas, violence alone does not always and does not necessarily constitute authoritative discourse. We disagree with such interpretations of Bakhtin’s notion (or if Bakhtin would agree with such version of his notion, with Bakhtin himself). Thus, our goal is not to figure out here what Bakhtin really meant by his literary concept and how well it is translated accurately into education, but rather what understanding can we derive that is important for education. We argue that AD can be defined by its language walls which block critical investigation into the basis of a statement or even inquiry about it. It can be done through imposition as described by Bakhtin, but also in voluntarily accepted traditions or, as it is done in this web post theme #1, as a voluntary commitment to block any critical analysis of what the students experienced as convention and norms. Nobody forbade our students, preservice teachers, to ask critical questions – they just collectively did not in this first theme – and, actually, tried to make it difficult for each other through rhetorical tools emphasizing the certainty of their assumptions. The absence of imposition does not necessarily preclude authoritative discourse<sup>4</sup>.

One might argue that although it was narrow, the students in this discourse were still critical within their thematic framework. We agree that the discourse within theme#1 involves some testing of ideas. For example, Conrad wanted to test his idea of public embarrassment of his future students to see if this sounded appropriate to our class community (and beyond), “Is this a bad idea?” which he brought to our collective judgment. However, we argue that this testing of ideas was uncritical. We use the framework developed by Argyris and Schön (1978) in the field of organizational learning to claim that the discourse with theme#1 involves only Learning #1. Argyris and Schön define Learning#1 as the problem solving of how to return a system back to some pre-established norm (like in a thermostate) – the elimination of the gap between the real state and the known ideal state. Learning#2 is referred to critical examination and re-definition of the norms and values themselves. We argue that such critical examination and re-definition, associated with Learning#2, was absent in theme#1.

### *Internally persuasive discourse in a student role: Questioning the authoritative tradition of dealing with foul language (Theme#2)*

Early on in the web discussion on foul language, the students started exploring the authoritative traditions of societal dealings with cursing and foul language. They did it “in

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<sup>4</sup> Similarly, we argue that imposition of ideas, statements, and situations per se does not yet imply evidence of AD. Elsewhere (Matusov, 2009), we discuss the phenomenon of *dialogic objectivization*, in which imposition becomes a part of internally persuasive discourse. For example, when parents bribe a young child to try to eat an unattractive smoked fish, which the child claims is something undesirable, this imposition through bribing a child with a chocolate candy is NOT a part of AD when parents use the bribe to encourage the child to test an idea that he or she really does not like the smoked fish. In my (the first author) personal experience, when I was 5-year old and was bribed by my parents to try a smoked fish that probably looked and smelled “fishy” for me at the time, I realized that I liked it even without chocolate candies. However, if I had not liked it after tasting it, my parents would probably not have insisted me to eat it more. In our view, this discourse involving imposition is still a part of IPD.

a student role”, learning themselves about foul language, as in contrast to “in a teacher role,” learning what and how to teach about foul language to their future students.

As we tracked back, initially, the students raised issues on the index cards<sup>5</sup> (IC) in the second class meeting on foul language. Below is professor Eugene’s (the first author) reply on webtalk to these IC contributions in his new thread which he entitled, “From IC: Do you (Eugene) curse often?” followed by one of the students’ replies:

*Eugene* (the instructor) Dear folks, Mike asked me a question on his index card, “Do you (Eugene) curse often?”

Linda made a very good point on her index card, “I believe that the amount that a person swears has a great deal to do with their home life and how they were raised.”

Indeed, it is interesting to know why Laura is not swearing [Laura reported that in our class discussion] and why she has an unconditional negative attitude to swearing. Is it coming from her upbringing or not? (Laura, feel free to reply or not to reply, depending on your comfort).

Cathy noticed on her index card that people on the South in the US are more respectful to their teachers and others.

As we know from research, religion, culture, social class, gender play roles in attitude and practice of swearing. I grew up in a Jewish (ethnically, not religiously) family in the Soviet Union with strong state Antisemitism. In my generation (but not in my parents), many Jews tried to behave differently from ethnic Russians by swearing and drinking much less than general population. So, I do not curse often, especially in Russian (I do it more in English), but having many Russian friends in past, I’m very tolerant to swearing of other people.

What about you? How much your upbringing play role in your attitude to foul language?

What do you think?

Eugene

PS According to sociolinguistics, ON AVERAGE, working class people swear more than middle class people. Males swear more than females (again, ON AVERAGE). (Webtalk, March 12, 2009)

*Linda:* As I wrote on my card I really do believe that a persons use of foul language truly depends on how you were brought up. My parents never swore in my house and so I never did which is why still today swearing is not used in my house. While I will say every once in awhile I will swear, when that does happen I do pause to think why it is I used that word. My mom always says that when people swear it is because they are not intelligent enough to come up with another word to use. For this reason I think that we all should try and avoid foul language and try and to use words that express the actual feelings we mean to portray rather than the generalized connotations that come along with curse words or foul language. (Webtalk, March 12, 2009)

In this exchange, the participants explored developmental, sociological, and cultural aspects of the phenomenon of people’s use of foul language rather than just to say that something is (conventionally inappropriate or appropriate). The convention itself was noticed to be different for different communities (e.g., the South of the US versus the

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<sup>5</sup> At the beginning of each class meeting, each student picked up an index card (IC) for what the professor (the first author) called, a “mind attendance roll,” as opposed to conventional attendance rolls which only count to see if the students was physically present in their seats. On the one side of the card, each student wrote name and date and two things that he or she thought learned in the class, and on the other side, the student could write a question and feedback on the class (which was optional). The professor assured the students that these cards provide him with the idea on their attention in the class, which helped him and TA to review the lesson and develop better guidance.

North in the US, males vs. females, Jews in Russia vs. ethnical Russians in Russia, working class vs. middle class, intelligent vs. non-intelligent). The issue of the reasons for this difference emerged in this thematic discourse. Thus, Professor Eugene talked about Russian Jews' opposition to the host culture due to Russian Anti-Semitism reflected in their lesser use of foul language, while Linda repeated her mother's beliefs that the use of foul language reflects a lack of intelligence. These diverse explanations and discussions threads were not just juxtaposed with each other but actively informed and dialogued with each other. We suspected that Linda's statement about the lack of intelligence in people who curse, provoked disagreements in students who curse often but do not consider themselves having a lack of intelligence. For example, Karen directly replied to Linda,

*Karen:* I agree with Linda that the amount a person swears has a lot to do with their home life and how they were raised. But i think it also is affected by your environment as you get older, and the people you are around. As a kid, my parents never swore around me, and it was not a huge issue at home. My friends from home also do not swear excessively, for whatever reason, and I try not to curse frequently at home because I have an 11 year old sister, who I do not think I should be speaking in that way in front of. However, when I came to school [the University – the authors], my friends here swear a lot more than my friends at home, so I found myself starting to talk more in that way. I still notice that when I am at home I curse less than I do at school, mostly because of who I am around. So I think that current environments can also have something do with how much people curse.

Karen's tacit counter-argument to Linda was that cursing has something to do with socialization in a community of choice rather than with intelligence. It is interesting that Karen started with agreement with Linda and then turn to her disagreement started with the marker "but" – as we discussed in the class how to provide supportive but constructive feedback to each other and future students. In the following webposting, Conrad expanded the topic of socialization and added in his newly initiated discussion thread that he titled, "You've heard the bad and the ugly...":

*Conrad:* Now time for the good...

All I've heard all week are all the bad things about cursing, but the majority of the class said it is appropriate or acceptable at some point in time.

I think there are some good points to cursing. It helps you bond with your peers and cope with the day. Everyday when I show up for work and see Mark, the other fellow in my department, the first words out of my mouth are, "What's good, you fat f\*\*\*?" To which he'll respond with something along the lines of, "Not s\*\*\* you pansy mother f\*\*\*er!"

Now, we work in a butcher shop, not a law firm, but we still can't curse around our bosses. I believe our ability to curse around each other allows us to build friendships faster than we do with managers, and helps us cope with unruly customers and the regular stresses of the day.

So what are the situations other people think are appropriate, or when do you think it's helpful to curse? (Webtalk, March 13, 2009).

For the first time on the web (but not in class!), the students turned to explicit discussion of possible positive aspects of cursing and foul language – before that they made either negative or neutral judgment statements about it. TA Kathy turned a discussion on foul language around and instead of asking why people curse that implies the normality of non-use of foul language, she asked for the "purpose of not cursing" (the subject of her posting):

*Kathy* (instructor): I wonder what people think the purpose of not cursing might be? Why do we feel that it should not be part of some settings? When there are strong lines of appropriate and not appropriate, does it serve some necessary purpose – i.e., excessive swearing leads to blindness, or it has deleterious brain effects. Or, is the line drawn simply because people have traditionally felt it should be so. And could that be enough of a purpose? (Webtalk, March, 16, 2009)

*Mike*: I don't really know if there is a purpose of not cursing. I can't help but wonder if somebody just decided certain words were not appropriate to say. Regardless, we feel that it should not be part of certain settings because that is what we are taught and we accept that. In other words, a line is drawn because of a traditional view which has been passed down over the years. (Webtalk, March 19, 2009).

*Randy*: I think Mike makes a really good point. I don't really understand why certain words are viewed as inappropriate, and some way more than others. I would guess that cursing is viewed so negatively because that is what the older generations were taught and this view keeps being passed down. I think that some foul language is inappropriate regardless of the time or place if it has to do with race or sexuality. Other foul language used to express feelings or opinions i think has been viewed so negatively because of tradition. These words don't necessarily hurt anyone so what is the big deal?? (Webtalk, March 19, 2009).

In his reply, Mike made very visible the conventionality of the non-cursing societal norm that might not have any rationality behind it but we still have to respect it as a tradition. This point allowed Randy to raise the issue of acceptance with this conventionality and challenge it. She seemed to reject Mike's demand for respecting tradition just because it is a tradition. Even more, she pointed out (and by that time it was already established by the other participants on the webtalk) that under certain circumstances cursing and foul language might have important positive effects. She did not deny its negative effects as well – when foul language is used for promoting negative stereotypes (we think she meant racism and sexism), but in her final question-exclamation, she seemed to call for, at least, revision of the conventional norms. It is interesting that from a certain point of view, Mike apparently argued for the value of authoritative discourse, respecting a societal tradition, while Randy promoted the value of internally persuasive discourse, demanding answerability from any societal conventional norm.

We argue that this theme of questioning the authoritative tradition of dealing with cursing is an internally persuasive discourse because it involves testing ideas and involves Learning#2, that of considering underlining assumptions, values, and goals. In the examples and fragments above, Karen implicitly tested Linda's idea that cursing is associated with a lack of intelligence by showing that cursing might rather relate to socialization in a community of one's choice (the point that was deepened by Conrad). Similarly, Randy challenged Mike's unconditional acceptance of tradition in demanding answerability to people (i.e., norms and traditions are for people and not people are for traditions and norms). In her response to Randy and Mike, Stacy brought up a point about the historical changes of what has been considered to be foul language and provided evidence undermining even further Mike's position, "This really takes me back to 4th grade when my teacher read us the book 'Frindle.' Frindle was another word these kids came up with for I think it was pen. It got to the point where society accepted this word and put it in the dictionary. Is this what happens with curse words? Society just decides they are unacceptable?" (Webtalk, March 20, 2009). However, Kelly defended Mike's position by claiming that school has to be the agent of the current societal norm, whether the students and teachers agree or not, "When you enter a school, cursing is seen as inappropriate. Whether the teacher or students curse in their home environments is their own business. Cursing has traditionally been seen as negative and rude" (Webtalk, March 22, 2009). There was no final period in these debates – only temporary stops, as we expected the

students to continue discussing these important educational issues (and they did, as they reported to us at the end of the class – they kept discussing these issues with their friends, parents, and colleagues outside of the class).

We view these IPDs as coming from “a student role” because the students position themselves as students of the particular social science curriculum (i.e., about foul language here). Their perspective is as students who are learning about the nature of cursing and foul language and the societal norms about it. Despite the fact that they mentioned schools, teachers, and students in these discourses, we do not see them asking questions from a teacher educational perspective of, “What should I teach my future students about foul language, and how and why?” We do not criticize our students for engaging in IPDs in a student role rather than in a teacher role. Elsewhere (Matusov, 2009), we argue that good teaching requires from teachers to be constantly involved with their students in authentic “*epistemological learning*” – learning around the curricular subject matter in addition to “*pedagogical learning*” – learning around what and how to teach better (i.e., IPD in a teacher role). Deep pedagogical learning is impossible without teacher’s constant engagement in epistemological learning (Matusov, 2009). In this case of foul language, it is possible for our students to consider what they should teach their future students about foul language (i.e., pedagogical learning) without engaging themselves in this (epistemological) learning.

### *Authoritative discourse in a teacher role: What should education about foul language involve? (Theme#3)*

The Professor and the TA introduced the theme in class and again on webtalk of what education about cursing should involve. However, initially, their webpostings were ignored in the sense that the students did not reply to them. Although, as it was evident from the unfolding web discussion, the issues raised by the instructors resonated with the students, and they probably did not know how to address them until Theme#2 fully emerged and guided them through the various stances towards foul language that were raised. The following is one of the first webpostings by the Professor in the Theme#3 that he provokingly titled, “From IC: How to shut up kids’ cursing in the classroom?”:

*Eugene (the Professor):* Dear folks–

Of course, nobody asked on his or her index card how to “shut up” cursing kids but some of you expressed your desire not have cursing kids in your classrooms. Although it is understandable to not have this “nuisance,” especially if you do not see any positive value in cursing and worry about what negative things school administration and parents might say about you as a teacher, I think we should carefully examine our desire as teachers.

It can be OK for a policeman or a police woman to desire having citizens who never break the law and rules, but it can be a bit problematic if a doctor wants to see only healthy patients (why are they in a hospital?!) or if a teacher wants to have only students who produce correct answers (why are they in school?!). Of course, it is not a case that a doctor should be happy when people are sick or that a teacher should be happy when mistakes and ignorance happen, but the [doctor and] teacher has to feel interested in curing and teaching rather than to desire and to hope that neither curing nor teaching is needed.

That is why I think we should be careful in saying, “not in my classroom!” “I wish my students never curse!” “How to make them never curse?”

I think we, teachers, should ask ourselves, “What should I teach kids about cursing? How I should teach them about that [what’s that?!]?” Usually, cursing is not such an emergency that we should automatically prioritize action versus education (like in case of a kid bleeding). We should focus on education, on “why?” questions, rather than on

enforcing rules (which is a role of police). Yes, teachers can and should do policing but it should be never the primary role of a teacher. Policing should be for education, not instead of education.

I think we should teach kids not that 2+2 is 4 as a rule but why 4 is better answer here than 3 or any other answer. The same [is] about cursing. If you think that cursing is not good (in general or in a particular moment and place), better to prepare a lesson on that to answer why you think that way. This is, my view, real education.

For example, Melanie wrote, “I believe that cursing in schools/afterschool programs is wrong. It is not the time and the place for it.” If you agree with Melanie, can you provide a convincing argument for:

1) Why schools and afterschool programs that the kids spend huge chunks of their lives are not appropriate places for cursing?

2) What are appropriate time and place for kids’ cursing? Why are they appropriate and how they are different from school/afterschool programs?

What do you think?

Eugene (Webtalk, March 12, 2009)

This webposting remained without a reply. However, when the Professor asked about their course of action with potentially cursing children at the Centers at their class practicum, the students initiated their own discussion about their roles and their boundaries with the children at the Centers. The instructor started the thread entitled, “How would you response to cursing kids at the Center?” with the following posting following the in-class skit addressing the problem of cursing, “Dear folks, you saw yesterday how Alexis replied to the cursing ‘kids’. I particular like that she got at the kids’ level rather than talked with them from above and that she legitimized their anger and frustration and focused on how else they could express it. What might your response to cursing Center kids be? Can you justify it? What do you think? Eugene” (Webtalk, March 13, 2009). A student replied,

*Conrad:* If I was confronted with the problem a child cursing in the center, I’m not sure how I’d handle it. I think that there are two roles you play at the center, one being “The Friend” and the other “The Instructor”, and that I would have to make the choice as to which role to assume. As the friend I might just laugh about it, maybe say something like, “Don’t let the staff hear you say that.” As the instructor I would probably handle the situation more like Alexis did [i.e., the enacted simulation of the cursing problem in our class – the authors]. At the present time I’m more inclined to think I would play the “friend” role. (Webtalk, March 13, 2009)

*Kristin:* I agree [with Conrad’s pervious webposting], that our role at the centers should be more of “the friend” role. They have the supervisors and instructors there that they look at in “the instructor” role, and I think it should be that way. However, if I were to hear kids cursing at the center, I would tell them that it is not appropriate there, and as Alexis did with the “kids” on Thursday, just get on their level, figure out what is bothering them, and help them deal with whats wrong in another way. (Webtalk, March 13, 2009).

There are several important points that the students made here. First, Conrad admitted (and many students followed this) that the situation is problematic for him, as an educator. Second, he noticed several potential conflicting roles for himself at the Centers in an afterschool program with children: as “a friend” who is concerned with the solidarity with kids (“laughing with”) and safety of kids (“Don’t let the staff hear...”) and as “an instructor” for kids (or, probably, better to say, “a policeman”?) who like Alexis in our class tried to eliminate cursing. Third, he prioritized being “a friend” at the Center (he did not explain why). Fourth, Kristin elaborated the role of “an instructor” as what she was

going “to tell” them and how help the cursing children with a problem at hand and, thus, to eliminate conditions for cursing.

In the Theme#3, the students' approaches to teaching about cursing oscillated between what specifically “to tell” the cursing children why they should not use foul language (in this particular setting or in general) and not knowing what “to tell” kids. Thus, Candy wrote in her webposting to the thread entitled “Why cursing is bad?” started by Professor Eugene, “Dear Lauren, you wrote, ‘For the few troublemakers in the class who like to get attention [by using foul language], it would obviously take more to get them to understand why they shouldn't curse.’ How would you explain to a cursing kid why he or she should not curse? What would you say? But try to push yourself in your guidance and not stop at ‘because it's inappropriate’ – why not [to curse]? What do you think? Eugene” (Webtalk, March 16, 2009),

*Candy:* I think it would take alot to push us to something other than ‘it's inappropriate’. All the recent classes we've had have taught us how to respond to such issues. I think I would address the issue with the student about how cursing is not okay in the classroom. Using those words can be hurtful to other people and have a negative connotation. I would explain that it be acceptable in other places, but I as the teacher will not tolerate cursing. I would also address the classroom as a whole and let them know that cursing is something that offends and hurts people because of what is being said. The definition of the word is hurtful to who you are directing the curse word to. I would explain that if you feel the need to curse, then you should find some other way to express your anger or how you are feeling because cursing will not be tolerated in the classroom. (Webtalk, March 25, 2009).

Please notice that Candy used ideas from Theme#2 to develop her teaching message for potentially cursing children at the Centers.

However, some other students' still remained confused in not only what “to tell” cursing children but what kind of language regime to establish with the children at the Centers and in their future classrooms. Alice redefined the title of another discussion thread, started by Eugene, with her own telling subject, “confused!”,

*Alice:* I really like the analogy of a knife to a surgeon and a knife to a criminal compared to foul language [presented by Professor Eugene in his other Webtalk posting].

I agree it presents a hard problem for teachers because while codeswitching<sup>6</sup> may be their personal view on FL [foul language], others may be extremely offended by this. It is very hard to please everyone, but i do not think anyone should feel uncomfortable in a classroom. After thinking deep into this topic, i am really confused on what approach i would take as a teacher. I do not think people who curse should be silenced completely, but I also understand why it is offensive. (Webtalk, March 19, 2009).

We consider the Theme#3 discourse as authoritative discourse because despite the instructors' attempts, the students did not go beyond Learning#1 (i.e., of what to tell the cursing children and the opposition between them as “a friend” and as “a teacher”). They did not consider the foundation of their own assumptions about education might be not about transmission of the societal idealized norms to their future students but rather investigation, testing, and examination of ideas and their foundations (as they themselves did in Theme#2). They did not ask why they prefer to be “friends” with the children at the Centers and why these two roles are so oppositional for them and if they could be otherwise. They were eager to solve the problem of cursing *for* the children rather than *with* them. In our judgment, we failed to guide the students in this direction by revealing and problematizing their assumptions and hidden values, probably, because we did not

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<sup>6</sup> The concept of codeswitching as one of possible curricula for education on foul language was presented by the instructor in the class.



recognize this urgency at the time of the class – only current analysis revealed this failure for us.

## Was this overall 3-theme discourse IPD? What is IPD?

In our view, our presented analysis may provide something of a wrong impression and misrepresentation of the overall discourse as consisting of the three simultaneously parallel, juxtaposed, autonomous, and self-contained themes. In reality all three themes were intertwined and dialogically connected in the following ways:

1. Many postings included several themes at once (for example, from our point of view, Krisitn's posting above fits Theme#1, focusing on how to shut up cursing children, and Theme#3, focusing on educating about cursing and role of the teacher);
2. Some themes were in a dialogic response to another theme (especially, Themes#2 and #3 were in dialogic opposition to the Theme#1);
3. Some theme referred to another theme (especially, Theme#3 referred to Theme#2 and sometimes Theme#1, see, for example, the beginning of Conrad's posting about him being cursing at his workplace);
4. When the students were not ready to respond to an issue presented by the instructors on the Webtalk (and in class), they completely ignore it, leaving silence in the class or a hanging message on the Webtalk (or they replied to a peripheral issue or redefined the topic) (e.g., when Eugene pushed and educational aspects of the foul language initially);
5. We doubt that before this discussion, the students would go through an examination of the basis for values about foul language on their own (e.g., "Through this class, I was forced to take a look at life through someone else's eyes. I felt like every class I would think to myself "wow, I never thought about it like that before!" It has, without a doubt, opened my eyes to many issues and concerns that I had never given much thought to before. With this new knowledge, I will hopefully be more understanding of others who are different than myself. After doing my final project on total immersion in schools, I am very interested in this. I will continue to research this further and now will probably ask future schools that I work in about their policies and may even have suggestions for how to make it better" Last week's mini-project, Kim, May 28, 2009);
6. Creation of a public arena for exploration which was supported by the instructors (e.g., "I learned more about myself. As i explored these issues i formulated ideas about how i would teach my class. these are things that no class has brought up until 2597, and i doubt they ever will bring up. the way the class was structured, with the discussions and voting, allowed everyone to voice their point of view. i learned how others view issues too. i thought that the way of voting was a great way for people to get their opinion out without being put on the spot. as someone who doesnt usually like to talk aloud in class, i felt very comfortable. aside from the things we talked about in class, i learnd that its not too scary to participate in class" Last mini-project, Alice, May 19, 2009.);
7. Two thirds of our students reported to us that they discussed this issue of the foul language with people outside of the class (e.g., "Originally I was made to take this class because it was a requirement for my major but Im very glad that is ver a requirement because honestly this was my favorite class this semester. It allowed to to see all the diversity that I will have in my classroom and the different teachings and approaches I may use as a future teacher. I don't think there is really much improvement needed for this course but I do feel that time management in the classroom would be better just because we are always in the middle of something when class ends and can't continue because the lack of time. I know that I have learned a lot because I often discuss with friends and families the issues and topics that were brought up in class" Webtalk, Ally, May 19, 2009; Some students defined evidence of learning in the class by their discus-

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<sup>7</sup> The course number.

sions of class topics outside of the class, "I know that I have learned from this class because now in my everyday life, I refer to this class. I talk about it with friends, family, etc. I have a positive outlook on diversity in the classroom, and I really feel like I am able to handle these situations if they were to arise. The evidence for me is simply that I am able to talk about these topics outside of this course in an effective way that shows me that I really understand it" Last week's mini-project, Lisa, May 19, 2009. Although, one student reported at the end of the class that this discussion was too long, "I think that while some topics could be discussed over two days, I think other discussions, such as cursing, went on too long for my liking and got boring by the end of it" Webtalk, Cory, May 18, 2009);

8. Integration with other issues discussed in the class (e.g., in the following posting a student connects our past discussion of educational consequences of taking required classes and the issue of foul language, "That's an interesting idea to have swearing and non swearing classrooms. I agree with you that kids tend to swear because they are not supposed to. It is kind of like when we talked about required classes in the beginning of the year. People usually don't want to have to take the required classes simply because they are told they have to take them. I wonder if students would go into the swearing classroom because of the peer pressure to swear because it is 'cool'," Webtalk, Chandra, April 21, 2009);

9. The students' taking diverse positions in the discussion of the foul language. In the discussion, the students engaged in a great variety of positions including: a position of a class policeman/policewoman, a classroom policymaker, a position of a cursing child in their own family, a position of a cursing person among peers, a position of a cursing person at a workplace, a position of dealing with a cursing sibling, a position of an investigator of the origin and nature of a societal tradition suppressing cursing, a position of an educator considering what to teach his or her students about foul language, a position of an older friend of cursing children, and so on. Multi-positioning allowed students to explore the issues from different angles and social contexts and, thus, to generate alternatives and test ideas (e.g., see Karen's posting above). Multi-positioning also apparently facilitates the participants' noticing diverse values and emergence of Type 2 Learning (Argyris & Schön, 1978) (see, for example, Conrad's posting on cursing at his work discussed above);

10. Recursive future-oriented nature of the learning in the discussion, (e.g., "I have learned that collectively I have learned a lot in this class and will be timely next semester" Last week's mini-project, Ann, May 22, 2009. "I have learned so much in our 259 class, not only about diversity in education, but also about myself as a future teacher. I really liked how so much of our discussion in the classroom was based upon everyone's opinions of how they are going to teach, how they want to teach or how they were taught growing up. I have learned a lot about how different children learn, what can affect the way in which a child learns and what effects that this can have on students. I think that at the beginning of the semester i said that i was taking this class because it was a requirement but i think that after taking the class i have changed attitudes. I think that this class has been very helpful for me and i would take it over even if it was not required for me to do so. This class got everyone discussing many different issues faced by teachers today as a result of cultural diversity. I also think that the practicum that we did at the centers was very helpful. I really enjoyed being able to go and work with all of these students and it was very exciting to go there and see how happy the kids were to see us. It really made me excited to begin student teaching, i can't wait to be up in front of a classroom for real. This class has made me want to teach even more than i thought i did when i entered the major. Learning about all of the ways teachers can have positive effects on their students makes me eager to get out there and help out more students." Last week's mini-project, Kory, May 22, 2009)

We treat the entire, overall, 3-theme discourse as an imperfect internally persuasive discourse. Although, in our judgment, the Theme#1 of how the teacher can silence cursing students was an authoritative discourse, it helped to reveal the students' assumptions, values, and concerns to themselves and the other participants. In our view, in the contexts of the two other themes, it helped the students consider what kind of teachers they want to be and become in-control of their worries, rather than to be slaves of them. Although, the Theme#1 was not IPD internally in its own context as self-contained theme, externally – in the context of the overall 3-theme discourse on foul language – it was IPD. It jump-started the IPD for Theme#2. Similarly, we hope that the Theme#3 can become also IPD externally in the context of our entire class and in the context of the students' entire teacher education. We hope it can jump-start a new IPD about what education is in general about (we had this discussion at the end of the class). Because of these missed and unrealized (yet or never) potentials is why we call the overall 3-theme discourse imperfect IPD, as probably any other concrete IPD discourse. However, we have realized that this “missed and unrealized” potential of this discourse is part of any dialogue, in that dialogues are messy, any “concrete IPD discourse” will be filled with utterances that are, as stand-alone utterances, seemingly only authoritative. However, they are also uttered in response to other utterances in a continual and continuous dialogue.

## Conrad's becoming authorship in a professional discourse

A reader might ask, “So what reveals the quality of the classroom and web discourse as good? Good for whom and how?” Our own definition of good learning focuses on the kind of accountability our students take in their role as teachers. We want to know not only, “What did the students learn from the course?” but “How has it affected their teaching practice, if at all?” We think that these are very legitimate questions that focus us on our accountability as teachers of our students. In our view, we must justify why what we did was good for our students' learning – in this case, to become good teachers of diverse populations of kids.

Traditionally, learning is viewed as something – usually mastery of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and dispositions, – that is taken from the classroom by the students and successfully applied by them in their future activities and practices (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999). In our particular case, this model would examine what important knowledge, skills, attitude, and/or dispositions about issues of foul language in education our students learned or did not learn during the course, and whether the students could take them from the classroom discourse and successfully apply them in their future teaching practices – the process that is often referred to as internalization or appropriation and applied by them in their own teaching practices (Matusov, 1998; Rogoff, 1995). According to this internalization model, when learning is successful then a professional learning discourse on teaching prepares the preservice teachers to teach in their future classrooms. The transfer and internalization models of learning focus on a practice that exists in the future. We propose a different model of learning.

We argue that a professional discourse on teaching itself *is a part of a teaching action*. The teaching action gains its meaning and is shaped, guided, and tested by the professional pedagogical discourse, while the professional pedagogical discourse gains its meaning and is shaped, guided, and tested through the teaching action. The professional discourse is a form of the teaching action and the teaching action is a form of the professional discourse (see a discussion of the relationship of the discourse and the action in Bakhtin, 1986; Freire, 1986; Matusov, 2009). The professional pedagogical discourse defines teaching goals, justifications, pedagogical values, approaches, problems, solutions, and evaluations of the teaching action; while the teaching action implements, tests, problematizes, supports, and provokes the professional pedagogical discourse.

In our view, one of the major problems with a modern teaching practice is that the professional pedagogical discourse remains semi-public and is not institutionalized. Unlike the practice of medical doctors and lawyers, for example, teachers do not have to publish nor read about their teaching practices on a systematic basis in their professional journals – that professional teaching discourses arguably do not exist in the same sense as professional discourses exist in other professions (Hargreaves, 1997). We hypothesize that this is because we, teachers, have not managed to develop a good inscription of our practice that can be publicized to provoke meaningful professional public discourse on teaching. Indeed, when teachers describe a problem they face in their classroom as “an acting out student,” or “a lazy student,” or “a student hungry for attention,” or “a slower learner student”, and so on, it is difficult for their colleagues to visualize what really happened and how the teacher's actions, design, instruction, curriculum, relations and students' perception contributed to the tension experienced by the teacher. The teacher's public professional discourse is often about making his or her students objects of the teacher's pedagogical actions, objects that have to be “fixed” (Matusov & Smith, 2007). We wonder if, with the development of Internet technology, teachers would be able to discuss video recorded teaching moments on the web, and in doing so, a public professional discourse can emerge. Essentially public discourse among practitioners, published or not, is consistent with establishing professions as answerable, and self-reflective.

According to our proposed discourse-action model, we wanted our students to learn to participate in a professional pedagogical discourse that *IS* a part of actual teaching practice *and not* a preparation for it. Specifically, we wanted our students to author their views on the issues of foul language in a professional pedagogical discourse which has been run as an internally persuasive discourse. Below we provide an analysis of the authorship of our student Conrad and its transformation in the web discourse on educational issues of foul language. We selected this particular student for analysis of his authorship because his perspective on foul language remained relatively unchanged in the web discourse while, as our analysis shows, his authorship changed from the *assigned opinionship* to his *ontological authorship* in IPD.

### *Conrad's assigned opinionship*

In his miniproject for week 5 of the course (before any class or web discussions), Conrad provided a rather complex opinion about his attitude toward foul language in response to the instructors pre-planned questions. According to Conrad, foul language serves a social lubricant to provide solidarity, including oppositional solidarity, and helps better articulate one's own situational feelings and views (below Conrad replied on the instructor's questions in his weekly miniproject):

1. *What is cursing and foul language, from your point of view? Why does it exist? Do you think it is universal in all cultures?*

In my point of view cursing is saying words that society deems obscene. It exists so guys have words to use to help them tell stories to other guys. It is also there for people to be able to explain their extreme distaste for situations, things, or other people. It absolutely exists in every culture, because everyone needs to yell sometime.

2. *Please list all possible functions of cursing and foul language and group them to “positive” (i.e., prosocial), “neutral”, and “negative” (i.e., anti-social)?*

See above for uses

Positive: Cursing let's you bond and show mutual dislike for something.

Neutral: It let's you just express yourself about situations.

Negative: It gets you in trouble in school.

... I love foul language, and believe it let's me add that extra something to a good story.

It is unclear how much foul language is gendered and used more by males, according to Conrad (i.e., if his use of the word "guys" refers only to males or also to females). Conrad also provided limited justification for his views,

4. *Why do you think people swear and use foul language? What is the need behind it? Why do so many of us, children included, swear, and what is YOUR response as a teacher to your students' swearing, and why do you respond in that way?*

Swearing is just the easiest way to express yourself. Kids like to do it because they're not allowed to, and adults do it because they've been doing it since they were kids. If a kid cusses in my classroom I will respond to it as dictated in the schools handbook.

7. *What educational and other issues with cursing and foul language do you see, if any, and why?*

The problem with cursing in the classroom is that it disrupts the flow of knowledge because when a kid cusses everyone laughs and then the kid has to get sent out. If cursing was fine in school, or there were no such thing as "curse words" then school would never be disrupted by words.

We characterized Conrad's justifications as limited because in our judgment, he did not try to investigate the basis of his judgments. For example, Conrad did not seem to see any inherent problems for individual's use of foul language – he saw only institutional problems with it, "It gets you in trouble in school." However, he seemed eager to become an unconditional conduit of the institutional policing of the students' language. Thus, we claim that there is no Learning#2 (Argyris & Schön, 1978) about the basis of the one's values and assumptions as described above. Also, Conrad did not find anything problematic in his own opinions. He did not try to test his own or anyone else's ideas.

Although his writing was substantive and informative, Conrad's authorship in this assignment was limited to responding to the instructor's questions (see in italics above) – we did not find evidence of his exceeding or expanding his reply. It is clear to us that he chose not to read the readings assigned by the instructor as is evident in his following response (Conrad completely skipped the question about another assigned reading – they only assignment question that he apparently ignored),

8. *Please read Article#1. Neill's [(Neill, 1960)] article deals with this issue. He was the headmaster of a boarding school in the UK famous for its children-run, "free" philosophy of education. Please describe the Neill's position about cursing and foul language. What are the author's justifications for this position? Do you agree or disagree with this position? Why? If swearing is another of society's taboos, what is our role as educators in guiding students? Should we condemn swearing at all costs? Neill suggests that this is an "anti-life" policy and against common sense. What do you think of his approach of dealing with swearing?*

As educators we need to teach students that society has placed a taboo on curse words and that there are places where you can use it and places where you shouldn't. I don't believe we should condemn cursing at all, I think it's a healthy way to express frustration or anger.

The assigned readings could both support Conrad's opinion about foul language and challenge it but it was clear for us that Conrad decided not to read them, probably, he was not interested in the issue at that time of the assignment enough to invest his time and efforts. Or, it might be that he simply be used to readings in school being irrelevant or

unrelated to any ontological interest (although he read the assigned literature for some other weekly miniprojects before and after this one).

We characterized Conrad's authorship as *assigned opinionship* because although his contribution was informative, creative, and authentic – in a sense that reflected his dear ideas and beliefs, – it was limited to the assigned questions. Conrad did not seem to have *his own* interest and investment in the topic beyond answering to the questions asked by the instructor. He did not try to investigate the basis of his opinion, test his ideas, problematize them, examine possible positive and negative consequences for his dear ideas, consider his own responsibility as an emerging teacher, contextualize his ideas, find their limits, and learn what other people think about the issue (i.e., his classmates, the instructor, other educators presented in the assigned readings). One might argue that this assigned opinionship was determined by the genre of the instructor's assignment itself involving the instructor asking students questions in the context of a graded class (although the assignments were not graded, the students were given the final grade based on class participation and their final project). A student might be forced to or choose to please the instructor. However, we have evidence that some other students in this assignment and Conrad in other assignments deviated from the assigned opinionship form of authorship. Thus, although the genre and pedagogical regime (see, Matusov, 2009) of the class might contribute to Conrad's assigned opinionship, it did not seem to determine it.

On the other hand, we argue the assigned opinionship had important educational value because it provoked the student to develop his opinion on the issue of foul language in school and in general and reveals his values for himself and other people. In our view, this is the beginning of any learning. Conrad also valued the assignment and his contribution as he reported (in the last assignment question about its usefulness) that the assignment “may prove useful, as I have begun to think how I will handle certain classroom situations.” In comparison with his evaluations of the other weekly miniprojects, Conrad did not automatically regard all weekly miniprojects positively as this one.

### *Conrad's IPD authorship*

Conrad was authentically interested, proactive, and ontologically engaged (Matusov, 2009) in participation in the class web discussion on the issues of foul language in education. Conrad chose to contribute 5 webpostings to the classroom forum discussion on foul language (i.e., more postings than on average the other students did). In contrast to his earlier mini-project, all five postings communicated some degree of his uncertainty about his ideas and positions either in a form of a direct question asking the class community what they think about his ideas (e.g., “Is this a bad idea?”, see his full posting on March 11, 2009 above) or indirectly by using conditional words “would” and low modality words like “probably” (e.g., “As the instructor I would probably handle the situation more like Alexis did,” March 13, 2009). Conrad ended four out of five postings with questions to the classroom participants (including the instructor) which reflect his problematicity and addressivity – his genuinely seeking for information from others. All of his postings, even the one new discussion thread that he initiated, explicitly referred to the positions of other participants (see, for example, his postings on March 11 and 13 cited above). We do not know if he read all webpostings on the class forum but his own postings indicated that he read and was interested in at least in some. In contrast to his mini-project on foul language, all but his first webposting on March 11, are contextual and case-based (e.g., “In my classes in high school we had a couple incidents like this where me or one of my friends would ‘forget’ we were in the classroom and let something slip. We were on good terms with our teachers and they knew when we were trying to disrupt and when we had made an honest mistake, and they punished us accordingly,” March 19, 2009).

Did Conrad participate in testing ideas on the web forum with regard to the issues of foul language in education? We think so. It was especially evident in his challenges to the positions of others (and his own), as he noticed a discrepancy (if not hypocrisy) between the near-universal engagement of the class participants in foul language and their rejection of it for their future students, “Now time for the good... All I’ve heard all week are all the bad things about cursing [in the context of schooling and in general], but the majority of the class said it is appropriate or acceptable at some point in time,” (March 13, 2009). Although he did not raise an issue in his posting of how this discrepancy should affect education, in the context of overall web discussion such an issue probably implicitly emerged (see below discussion of Conrad’s change of his approach to foul language in his own future classroom from unconditional to conditional). He also asked the teaching assistant to elaborate on her example of a personal case she provided, in which she claimed that her son’s cursing at her was respectful and supportive. In addition, Conrad was involved in testing his own ideas, – for example, he asked the classroom community if his suggestion of using public humiliation on a cursing student was not a bad idea. Finally, other students were engaged in testing Conrad’s ideas, – for example, they did not support his idea of public humiliation as a teacher’s strategy (and even tacitly criticized it) while many students supported and expanded his idea of their double role as the Centers as “friends” and “teachers” and complexity associated with it. In general, we argue that Conrad’s testing ideas, – justification of ideas, challenging ideas, finding their limitations, revealing and analysis of their foundations and underlining values, and so on – was dialogic by its genre (Matusov, 2009). This means that his testing was between postings (his own and other participants) rather than within his own postings (as in a monologic genre of IPD, see Matusov, 2009, for discussion of differences in monologic and dialogic genres of a discourse). We see a big limitation of Conrad’s IPD on foul language (as for the rest of the students) in that he did not consider (at least on the class web) what he would plan to teach his future students about foul language as he was more interested in exploring foul language himself and his policing role (both in punishing and protecting students via school rules) as a future teacher, although we acknowledge that both of these issues are important for teachers. Hopefully, he can do it later in his teacher education.

### *Has Conrad become a better teacher?*

Since we treat a discourse on teaching as a part of teaching practice rather than just preparation for it, the issue of Conrad’s transformation of his participation in the discourse is important one. We have noticed three changes in his participation: two changes in his initial positions and one big (meta) change in the way he considered the issue itself. First, in his last webposting (Webtalk, March 19, 2009, see below) he apparently abandoned his proposal to use public humiliation on his future students when they would use foul language as he expressed this proposal in his first webposting on the class forum (Webtalk, March 11, 2009, see above). Second, he moved from unconditionally following the zero foul language tolerance of many school codes of student conduct to a nuanced and conditional proposal:

Even though the code of conduct says no amount of swearing would be tolerated, if it were MY classroom, I wouldn’t let it go any further than a verbal reprimand from me.

Keep in mind I am assuming that his child doesn’t go around cursing all day for effect.

I understand that accidents happen and that I am not perfect, and that sometimes you just say something before you realize you are doing this. In my classes in high school we had a couple incidents like this where me or one of my friends would “forget” we were in the classroom and let something slip. We were on good terms with our teachers and they knew when we were trying to disrupt and when we had made an honest mistake, and they punished us accordingly.

I think a STRONG verbal reprimand (Fuck does have a higher value on the words you really shouldn't say in class list) would be sufficient, but any further use of FL would result in parental and administrative involvement.

What grade were the kids? (Webtalk, March 19, 2009 [Conrad replied to a specific case brought by a teaching assistant])

It is interesting that Conrad seemed to self-quote about "the code of conduct" that he had initially referred in his weekly mini-project about foul language, "If a kid cusses in my classroom I will respond to it as dictated in the schools handbook" (Mini-project#5, March, 9, 2009, see above) but now he was implicitly critical of it. Now he proposed 1) no harsh punishment and 2) reprimand conditional of the intentions and severity of students' usage foul language in the classroom. Arguably, the two main changes in Conrad's position was a result of his participation in the web IPD on foul language. We judge these changes in Conrad's position on teacher's policing students' conduct as beneficial because they seemed to be informed by concerns about students' overall well-being and his consideration of societal practices and attitudes toward foul language.

However, an even more interesting (meta) transformation occurred in how Conrad changed his consideration of this educational issue. We argue that he was socialized in a professional teaching IPD as the main medium of searching for a teaching solution, rather than remaining exclusively in his own opinionship rooted in societal traditions and institutional policies. Rather than just ask him or herself what to do, or what the society expects, or what the institutional rules say in a face of educational tension, issue, dilemma, or conflict, the teacher can and, probably, must bring the issue at hand to colleague educators – both current ones through web or face-to-face discussions, and past ones through reading professional literature (e.g., Neill, 1960) – for finding diverse alternatives and testing ideas. Of course, Conrad seemed to be only at the beginning of this road in this web discussion on foul language, – for example, he did not seek what professional literature said, but he admitted discussing this issue with people outside of the class. In our view, metaphorically speaking, in education the journey is more important than destination: the fact that Conrad got engaged in the professional public IPD on teaching is educationally more important than particular (temporary) perspectives that he might have gained (or have transferred to him) by the end of the class.

## Conclusion: New vision of education

In this paper, we propose a shift of the focus for educators from instilling the correct knowledge, skills, attitudes, and dispositions into, conceived of as internal to the students; to organizing and supporting internally persuasive discourse on the subject matter, promoting the emergence and development of the students' voices in this discourse and their informed authorship of answerable replies to others. We argue that education fails when there is no internally persuasive discourse in the classroom, and/or when the students do not have their own voice in the discourse (or it is not supported), and when their authorship is not informed by voices of others in the internally persuasive discourse where the student has to reply and address to voices of relevant others (both present in the classroom or not). Although we have defined here internally persuasive discourse as testing ideas, students' ontological and interested engagement, justification, responsibility, and so on, we think that defining IPD is also a part of IPD and is a communal concept that may also vary depending on the practice of application and the purpose of its defining. We view "internal" in the internally persuasive discourse as internal to a broad societal dialogue rather than to the individual or the practice alone. We view teacher classroom discourse not as a preparation for their future practice in education (e.g., math, social studies, teaching for preservice teachers) but as a part of the practice itself.



We are aware that the presented case of the classroom IPD on the issues of foul language in education is far from being a model/ideal. For example, we know that two students did not participate in the discussion at all, and some students participated lightly. Of course, during the semester the students experienced and discussed many issues and hopefully all of them had opportunities to be actively involved in IPD where some of them and developed their voices and informed authorship similar to Conrad, but it has to be tested in future research. Similarly, we found that our success in promoting IPD on the issues of foul language for education was limited because, in our judgment, we did not succeed in engaging our students in IPD on what and how to teach their future students about foul language. We think and have presented evidence here that we managed to engage students in IPD on foul language but not as much on what and how to teach it in their future classes. Similarly, we succeeded in helping Conrad move from his assigned opinionship to IPD authorship informed by his classmates, instructors, and friends but we failed to promote interest in him to become hungry for reading educational literature on the professional topic of his interest. All this raises an issue of how a pedagogical practice focused on IPD can inform itself about and reflect upon its successes and failures, outside of the context of educational research.

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# Teacher as the Author of Polyphonic Novel: Bakhtinian analysis of a Japanese view on dialogic education

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This paper will argue the following three points on the learning processes in the classroom, based on Bakhtin's idea on the author of the polyphonic novel. First, the teacher is compared to the author in Bakhtin's sense, the classroom activity to the novel produced by the author, and children to the heroes in the novel in this paper. Second, in the dialogic classroom, the teacher is the author of the polyphonic novel, and makes children the heroes of the polyphonic novel. Third, to generate the classroom lesson as the polyphonic novel, the teacher her/himself learn the learning contents which children are supposed to learn before children learn them. In other words, the teacher generates the learning content as the polyphonic work by his encounter with various voices about the learning content in the culture. Learning content as a polyphonic work is the key resource for the teacher to generate her/his lesson as a polyphonic one. This view is produced not by some ideal speculation, but based on the Japanese teachers' knowledge of educational practice called Saitou pedagogy. The paper develops these three points based on the analysis of thoughts and practices developed in Saitou pedagogy.

## Bakhtin's view on the author of polyphonic novel

Among Bakhtin's rich but complicated arguments on the dialogue, this paper focuses on his thought on the authorship of the polyphonic novel. In his essay on Dostoevsky (Bakhtin 1984), he described the characteristics of the polyphonic novel and its author, compared to the characteristics of monologic novel and its author. According to Lodge (1990), setting the concept of monologue is one of the central mysteries of Bakhtin's thought on language. He asked if monologic language is possible, if the language is essentially dialogic. The stance here is that the setting two poles of dialogic and monologic is useful to analyze the authorship and her/his process of production of the literature. It is also useful to analyze the process in which the teacher become a dialogic one, by extending the concepts to the field of education.

In a monologic novel, the author's ideology dominates the whole world. One worldview of the author unites the whole. Though heroes apparently present their own views, these views are submitted to the author's worldview. In other words, heroes are understood fully by the author. Heroes described by the monologic author exist in the world as fully understood, and clearly describable by the author's framework. Nothing new will be discovered among them.

In a monologic design, the hero is closed and his semantic boundaries strictly defined; he acts, experiences, thinks, and is conscious within the limit of what he is, that is, within the limits of his image defined as reality(he cannot exceed the limits of his own character, typicality or temperament without violating the author's monologic design concerning him. (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 52)

In contrast in polyphonic novel, heroes exist in the novel independently from the author, not submitting to her/him. They can oppose to the author in their presentation of their views. There is no dominance of one worldview of the author. The dialogue never ends, and heroes always show new aspects. Unfinalizability is the key for heroes in the polyphonic novel.

But the function of this consciousness and the form of its activity are different than in the monologic novel: the author's consciousness does not transform others' consciousnesses (that is, the consciousnesses of the characters) into objects, and does not give them second-hand and finalizing definitions. [omitted] It reflects and re-creates not a world of objects, but precisely these other consciousnesses with their worlds, re-creates them in their authentic *unfinalizability* (which is, after all, their essence). (Bakhtin 1984, p. 68)

With such heroes as independent others, the author can encounter only dialogically.

Thus the new artistic position of the author with regard to the hero in Dostoevsky's polyphonic novel is a *fully realized and thoroughly consistent dialogic position*, one that affirms the independence, internal freedom, unfinalizability, and the indeterminacy of the hero. For the author the hero is not "he" and not "I" but a fully valid "thou", that is, another and other autonomous "I". (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 63)

However, this does not mean that the author is absent in the polyphonic novel. She/he is not a passive or neutral being. She/he creates the novel as the active subject.

The consciousness of the creator of a polyphonic novel is constantly and everywhere present in the novel, and is active in it to the highest degree. (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 52)

In the way of creation of the work, the monologic author and the polyphonic author are distinguished. In the polyphonic novel, the author creates the stage on which heroes behave and speak, and simultaneously, she/he presents her/his own view on the stage, confronting with heroes who have the equal right about the presentation of the view.

[It] is the author himself who sets the stage for these contests he is not foreordained to win and the outcome of which he does not foresee. The polyphonic author, in short, necessarily plays two roles in the work: he creates a world in which many disparate points of view enter into dialogue, and, in a quite distinct role, he himself participates in that dialogue. (Morson & Emerson, 1990, p. 239)

Polyphonic novels, heroes can and do argue for their own ideologies and contest the author's one as equals. However, it should be emphasized that the author can and do argue for his/her own point of view. And he/she do so in two ways corresponding two roles he/she plays as described above.

[T]he author passionately expresses a point of view in two distinct ways. He may participated in the novel's dialogue ... In addition, Dostoevsky's perspective is embodied in the form-shaping ideology of the work... (Morson & Emerson, 1990, p. 252)

## Teacher as author and teaching as authorship

In this paper, it is argued that the teacher becomes the polyphonic author and makes children heroes in the polyphonic work in the dialogic classroom lessons. Before developing this idea, it is necessary to present my basic methodological tenet on the study of learning. Here, the process of learning will be described by focusing the teacher as a person or a subject, encountering learners as persons as the teacher is.

Most learning theories so far have been and are of learners, if not only of children. Studies that emphasize the collaboration between people, like ones from Vygotskian

perspective are not exception. One typical example is recently developing “the Learning Sciences”(Sawyer 2006). It criticizes studies on learning so far saying that they did study the instruction, but not learners’ learning process. Even if this critique is correct, and it is certainly correct, it is not fully effective as the critique of the studies of learning. This critique fails to differentiate the teachers as personal agents and the instruction as the method detachable from persons.

In this respect, Lave’s critique on the studies of learning is suggestive, though she also criticized them as focusing only on the instruction. She said: the “teaching” that “learning research” is research on has no recognizable relationship to the creative, productive work that arouses admiration for great teachers. Yet it seems likely that most people who devote their lives to education do so in part because they have been deeply affected by one or more (Lave 1996).

To enrich the study of learning, teachers as personal agent and their teaching activity should be focused. This will make possible studying learners as the personal agents who learn in the relation with the teachers as the personal agents.

In this paper, the teacher as the personal agent working in the educational setting, classroom in particular, is compared to the author of the novel. Classroom activities are compared to his/her novel. And children are heroes of the novel. As Emerson said in his analysis of Bakhtin, authorship is the business of living. Everyone author others at each encounter with them and so teachers. I focus, however, on the authorship of teachers that works when teachers organize classroom activity with children. Though the power relationship between teachers and children is a popular topic in the studies on education, and the democratization of the relation is discussed as the premise for the collaborative learning, it is seldom discussed that the teacher as a person is responsible to children as persons for their fruitful learning in the classroom settings. The authorship of the teacher I focus on is this sense, that is, the teacher as a person who is responsible for other persons’ learning. He/she has to create arena for children’s learning in the classroom. This is the work of creation for the teacher, just as the novel is for the author, and artworks for artists.

In this framework, children, or learners are compared as the heroes of the novel. It might be thought that this comparison characterizes children, or learners, as the object of teacher’s operation, as the passive being waiting to be operated, as the one who are subordinate to the teacher.

Is it really so? It depends. It depends on which type of authorship the teacher takes in the classroom activity. If the teacher is there as the polyphonic author, children become polyphonic heroes and the resultant classroom is the dialogic one. In such classroom, children confront with the teacher, present their view as having equal right to the teachers, find out new, unexpected views in themselves and others, and experience themselves “unfinalizable”. Such experiences as polyphonic heroes in the polyphonic novel will prepare children for their polyphonic authorship in the future.

There are other characterizations for the teacher. Popular one in the theories arguing for the dialogic, or, non knowledge-transmission type of classroom, is the teacher as the facilitator of children’s learning(Hicks 1996). Though this characterization sounds democratic and dialogic, it is not necessarily so. The facilitator just facilitates learners’ discussion and thoughts. He/she does not participate in learning. He/she does not participate in the transactions of thoughts him/herself. He/she is not expected to learn the learning contents by him/herself and present his/her view to children. He/she is expected to step aside from children’s transaction, and facilitate them. He/she is not on the horizon same as children’s. He/she is the outside observer. Such a teacher is rather a monologic one.

The teacher as the polyphonic author actively generates the arena on which children present their diverse views and contest each other. However, he/she has one more role as cited above. He/she participates in the dialogue as children do. It means he/she sometimes contests with, opposes with children. He/she is not a neutral facilitator if he/she is the

polyphonic author. In the teacher's serious opposition, children become the heroes of polyphonic novel, or the respectful thou.

## Saitou pedagogy and the dialogic classroom

This view on teacher as polyphonic novel's author is not an abstract theory. This one is based on a large body of the educational practice and the accumulated knowledge of practice of Japanese elementary education teachers. In particular, there is a pedagogy for the dialogic classroom in Japan, named Saitou pedagogy after its founder Kihaku Saitou. Kihaku Saitou (1911–1981) was the legendary elementary school teacher. In his last 18 years of his career, he was a principal of some elementary schools, and led educational practices of these schools. These schools became very famous and became the national icon of Japanese education in 1950s and 1960s. After retirement, he organized his research group, named 'Research group of pedagogical studies'. Many practitioners and researchers gathered in this group and developed his idea. His and his followers idea developed in their practices are organized to the system of pedagogic thought and named Saitou Pedagogy.

Though Saitou did not use the term 'dialogue', or the Japanese common translation for the word, explicitly in his many writings, this pedagogy is actually for the dialogic classroom lesson. It is about how to create the dialogic classroom lesson, and more importantly, about how teacher should learn to be, using Bakhtin's word which Saitou even might have not known, polyphonic author. Saitou's most important keyword for creating the classroom lesson is 'the opposition between children, teacher, and the learning contents'. He says as follows;

Between children, teacher and teaching material should be generated contradictions, oppositions, confrontations, and conflicts. Children and teacher should, going beyond the oppositions, discover and create new views, and go over to the new horizons. (Saitou, 1970)

In a metaphoric word, he compared the creation of the classroom lesson to 'making a fire with charcoal' (Kawashima, 1984). When someone makes a fire with charcoal, he/she has to arrange pieces of charcoal carefully and sometimes he/she has to blow for fire. So in the classroom lesson to develop as the dialogic one, he/she discover various relations among children's views, uniting similar views, and making clear the oppositions between different views. And he/she sometimes has to blow; providing seeds for their thoughts, and in particular, contesting children by presenting his/her own view.

### *One example: Literature education*

Let me see what sense the classroom lesson can be dialogical in the sense of Saitou pedagogy, using one class as an example. It is from the literature education, subject matter that Saitou though most important for children's development. Children are 4th graders. The teacher, Yoko Nishioka, is one of Saitou's disciples who learnt directly from Saitou. The teaching material is the juvenile novel "Gon Gizune"(The fox named Gon), which is the popular material in the Japanese 4th graders literature textbooks. Gon is a child fox who lives alone in a forest. One day, he saw Heiju, a young peasant, catching eels in a river, and stole them just for fun. Later, Gon knew that Heiju caught eels for his sick mother as he came across Heiju's mother's funeral. After that, he repeatedly carried chestnuts and other fruits to Heiju's house. One day, he knew that Heiju thought that it is God who carries nuts and fruits to his house. Nevertheless, he went to Heiju's house to carry nuts and fruits.

The episodes quoted here started with the teacher's question, "why did Gon, not halting his conduct, repeat going Heiju's house the next day?" After some discussion, the teacher asked the next question.

Teacher: Well, then, it became a little bit complicated, which one (among children's thought presented) do you think most possible? All answers seem possible. No one seems wrong. Which one do you think most possible among them?

At this time, the following answers were presented by children, and all of them were written on the blackboard.

1. (Gon went to Heiju's house) because Gon wanted Heiju to know that he carried the nuts.
2. Because this conduct is joyful, for it is worthwhile for Gon to do it.
3. Because Heiju will know (that Gon carried the nuts) someday if Gon keep carrying the nuts.
4. It is natural that I (Gon) should keep carrying because I am making amends for my bad conduct.
5. I (Gon) should do more because I committed bad conduct.
6. Gon keeps making amends. So, it becomes habitual for Gon.
7. As Gon found out something to do, and became busy, he felt pleasant.

And by this time, the teacher pointed out that 1 and 3 are similar, and the class combined them and labeled combined one as A. Fourth response and 5th were also combined and labeled as C. Second response was relabeled as B, and 6th as D. Seventh response was combined with 6th.

Child: I choose C.

Child: I think C.

Teacher: Which ones became confusing?

Children: B and C.

Children: B and D.

Teacher: Yes, B and D became confusing. Combine them, and label it BD.

Child: Then, that one is BD.

Teacher: Yes, this one is absorbed into BD, ok? It becomes BD, and this one is vanished.

Child: OK.

So, three options remained.

A: Gon keeps carrying because he wanted Heiju to know that it was Gon who did it.

BD: As Gon started doing it, it became habitual for him. It is worthwhile for Go to do it. It became felt pleasant for Gon to do it.

C: Gon feels he should do it because he committed very bad conduct to Heiju.

The teacher asked children which one is correct, and the majority votes were for C. After some transactions which I will examine later, the teacher closed the discussion, saying,

Teacher: OK. We are not sure this one is correct[C] or this one is correct [BD]. Anyway, Gon went Heiju's house next day.

### *In what sense this classroom lesson polyphonic*

In what sense this discussion is the dialogue, or the polyphonic work authored by the polyphonic teacher? First one is most easy to discern. As shown in the closing remarks of the teacher, the discussion did not finished. The opposition did not reach one conclusion, but remained open. Theoretically at least, there remains space for new views other than the discussed ones. This open-endedness is the important characteristics of the polyphonic work.

The second, but more important reason is that, in the lesson, a new, unexpected view was discovered, and opposed to the common-sensual views in the discussion. The fundamental opposition examined in this classroom lesson was between the view C, or the view that Gon did it in compensation for his bad conduct, and the view BD, or the view that Gon did it because it is worthwhile and felt pleasant. The view C is the common sensual one which people can easily think of in such a situation. It is so in particular for children who tend to think human relations in moral terms, and it was actually the majority in the class. On the contrary, the view BD, which sees even the positive feeling in such a situation, is not a popular thought. It is difficult to think of both by adults and children. This one is very new, unexpected thought. Such a new thought was discovered, shared and not negated in the end in this classroom lesson. This is the most important reason to characterize this lesson as polyphonic.

The discovery of this new view was not so easy. It is not the case that some child discovered it easily and presented to the class in the explicit way. There was the work of the teacher, which makes her as the polyphonic author. The BD view appeared first in some children's utterances. At first, they were not explicit, appeared dimly. Just a seed, or possibility of this view appeared in their utterances. It was the teacher's revoicing (Wells 1993) that made it the explicit view. In children's utterances which were, at the first glance, similar to the common sensual view, the teacher discovered the seed for the new view, and brought out into the classroom.

For example, one of the seeds for B, or the option 2, was this child's opinion.

Child: Gon was always doing mischief. It [bringing chestnuts] is for him like compensation. It is for him fun.

The teacher revoiced this utterance as follows:

Teacher: Oh, this behavior is his favorite. You said it is fun, but listening to yours carefully, you sound to me saying that it is worthwhile for Gon to do it.

Apparently, there is a big difference in the meanings of the child's utterance and the teacher's revoiced one. There is a big gap in 'compensation' and 'being worthwhile'. 'Doing it for compensation' is a majority's thought. This boy, however, added 'fun'. There is a seed for new thought, though the child was not aware of himself. Contrary to the negative thought that you should do it to compensate the bad conduct, this new thought has a positive implication. The teacher revoiced it to 'being worthwhile', probably because she wanted to focus on this positive implication in the child's utterance. Similar chain of thought must have worked in the teacher's mind when she combined the view D with the view B.

So the teacher discovered a new, non – common sensual view, or the seed of it, and made it explicit by revoicing. It should be noted that this is not a forcing of the teacher's thought to children. One of the basic thoughts of Saitou pedagogy is that there are always the possibilities for new views in children's utterances. Even in the apparently wrong ideas, there are some necessities for a child and there are the seeds for the new, unexpected views. Saito pedagogy's view of children is quite similar to Bakhtin's view on heroes of the polyphonic novels in the sense that both do not yet say their final word.

### *Teacher Confronting With Children*

Last but not the least reason for this classroom activity to be a polyphonic work is that, in this classroom activity, the teacher not only set the stage for children's discussion, but also confronted one view with children. As noted above, the polyphonic author not only set the arena for the dialogue among heroes, but also she/he participates into the dialogue, challenging heroes' views with her/his view.



In this classroom, the view BD was not supported by the majority. Then, she asked children about Gon's face, or his expression, or emotion at the time when Gon went to Heiju's house the next day. Or rather, she pressed children of the majority view, asking if you really think Gon went Heiju's house only with negative emotions as expected in the case of the view C. Though she did not say explicitly that she was against them, practically she confronted with children.

Teacher: Oh, C is the majority's choice. Well then, was Gon's face a bitter one? How about it? (inaudible) I should do more. Uninteresting. I should do more though Heiju does not understand. Did Gon say in such a face? I 'd like to ask to the people who chose C. (unrelated interaction omitted) In which kind of face did Gon say? Said dispiritedly like I am so sorry? Do not you think so?

Children: I don't think so.

Teacher: You don't think so. You don't think that Gon said regrettably. OK.

Child: In an ordinary face

Teacher: In an ordinary face. You mean that Gon was not moved, don't you?

Child: A little bit.

Teacher: Moved a little bit.

Child: Not pleasurable.

Teacher: Not pleasurable. Then, How? Midori?

Midori: Probably, Heiju will be pleased.

Teacher: Heiju will be pleased today.

Child: Cheerful face.

Teacher: You say Heiju will be pleased. Cheerful face. Somehow enjoying and cheerful expression.

Apparently, she just asked Gon's expression. However, as seen in this sequence, the teacher asked this question to children whose choices are C, so that she strongly suggested them to re-think the possibility of BD. And some children really started re-think. After this transaction, many children agreed that Gon had the feeling of pleasure as much degree as the feeling of sorry.

From the teacher as the facilitator view, this teacher might be criticized as pressing her view to children. The teacher's teaching here might be taken as "the undemocratic exercise of the teacher's power toward children". Not so. The teacher can be polyphonic only in confrontation with children by presenting her view. It is needless to add that the teacher should not press her view on children, and she did not do so, as, shown above, she declared at the end of the episode that both views were both alive and the discussion did not end.

## Dialogue on another horizon – Kyouzai–Kaishaku

How can the teacher have such a dialogic classroom? How she/he can be a polyphonic author? In particular, how can she/he make children polyphonic heroes with their new, unexpected views? Though teacher's each teaching action analyzed above is important, teacher should set the stage on which such action can be generated.

The key for setting the stage is to generate a dialogic problem for children. Dialogic problem here means the problem on which people can generate various new views. With such a dialogic problem, children can enter the dialogic relation between themselves, and to the teacher. In the case of example above, the problem of Gon's feeling at his visit to Heiju's house became such a dialogic problem. Though it did not look like such a good problem at the first glance, it actually generated at least one, new and unexpected, answer.

The teacher should generate such kind of problems to have a dialogic classroom. It is teacher's responsibility, not children's to discover the dialogic problems in the learning content in front of children. The discovery of the dialogic problem becomes possible by

teacher's learning of children's learning content. The emphasis of the teacher's learning of this type, that is, the teacher's learning of children's learning contents, is the most remarkable characteristic of Saitou pedagogy. It thinks of the teacher's learning is the key to generate the dialogic classroom and to enrich children's learning. Though Matusov named this type of teacher's learning epistemological learning (Matusov, 2008), it is very rare for the researchers of learning and education to pay attention to the importance of this type of teacher's learning.

In the Japanese teachers' knowledge of practice, this type of learning has been traditionally seen important and named “教材解釈”, or Kyouzai – Kaishaku. Here, Kyouzai literally means teaching material, or the learning content belonged to some subject matter, and Kaishaku literally means interpretation. The concept of Kyouzai – kaishaku, and various practical methods of it are the key idea for Kihaku Saitou and his pedagogy. For Saitou, this learning is not just the accumulation of knowledge on the learning contents. It is not to seek “the correct answer (s)” to the problem. It should be the endless exploration of new discovery in the learning content. In this learning, the teacher should encounter not only various different views, both correct ones and wrong ones included, about the content. In other word, this learning is the quest for the problem that generates various, new answers; the dialogic problem. According to Saitou, Kyouzai–Kaishaku is the process in which teachers as adults confront with the learning contents in all its aspects and discover something important for them as adults. Saitou described Kyouzai–Kaishaku as follows:

First of all, a teacher should encounter and confront wholeheartedly with the teaching material in all its respects as one person. A teacher should wholeheartedly interact with the teaching material, analyze it, have questions on it, ask himself, discover something, and create something, as one person. Though these endeavors, he should accumulate new thinking, new logic, and new development.

Only after the teacher has done such interpretative works on the teaching material and encountered with it, a lesson can have a definite direction, intention and an explicit construction. It is because the teacher's knowledge about the teaching material stops being a collection of random pieces, but becomes a lively one, acquired by his own, sweaty efforts, only after such encounters. It is because the teacher can confront children with the lively knowledge which he acquired by surprised of it, by doubting it, or by discover it afresh. (Saitou 1964)

Learning contents used in children's learning are, after all, for children. So, they would be not new for the teacher as an adult. Even if it were new, it would be not so difficult for the teacher to have “the correct answer” as an adult at the first glance. Rather finding out something new, different from the correct answer in such a content would be difficult for the teacher. However, the teacher should do it. Using Bertland Russel's characterization of education (Egan 1986), the process of Kyozaikai-Kaishaku is to make the familiar learning content be strange for teachers as adults. Holistic encountering as a person with the learning content is the vital part of the process of Kyouzai–Kaishaku (Miyazaki 2007).

In this sense, Kyouzai–Kaishaku is the dialogic encounter with the cultural resources. Or we can use re-encounter, because, as an adult, the teacher has once encountered the learning content for children, so that the content is familiar to them. In this seemingly familiar content, the teacher should find out various, unexpected views, or voices to generate the dialogic problem for the classroom. The problem thus generated is a polyphonic work, with various new views as its heroes.

Saitou argues that teacher's work of Kyouzai–Kaishaku on one learning content, such as the novel of Gongutsune, should and can continue endlessly. The teacher should and can find out new views on the learning content endlessly. Kyouzai–Kaishaku is unfinalizable. The teacher becomes the polyphonic author of the dialogic problem in the work of Kyouzai – Kaishaku.

As Saitou pedagogy is not the idealistic theory of education, but the system of knowledge of practice of teachers based on the teachers' experience of their classroom, there are many practical methods of Kyouzai-Kaishaku in it. There are many resources available for the teacher to do Kyouzai-Kaishaku of some learning content. One of them is the responses of children in the classroom for the learning content. In the case of the example of Gongitsune, the teacher must have learnt from her teaching experience so far that children tend to think Gon's behavior in terms of moral, so that most of children would think that Gon visited Heiju's home again as compensation. This experience would have made her explore the views other than that.

In general, children's views, wrong views in particular, are important resources for the teacher to generate new views for the learning content. This thought seems similar to the one popular recently in the studies about 'collaborative learning' or 'co-inquiry' (Wells 1999), in which the teacher not only teaches children, but learn from them. There is certainly a similarity between two though, there seems be a lack of understanding in such theoretical trend. Saitou pedagogy thinks that the teacher can learn from children because she/he commits Kyouzai-Kaishaku. In other words, Kyouzai-Kaishaku from children as resource interacts with Kyouzai-Kaishaku using other resources. The interaction makes Kyouzai-Kaishaku more fruitful and makes 'learning from children' more deep.

So, other resources must have been used too in this case of Gongitsune. Among them were important the other teachers' lessons and their Kyouzai-Kaishaku on the same novel. She must have gotten countless advices from fellow teachers on this and relating learning contents.

People in the society, including professionals, are important resources for Kyouzai-Kaishaku of the learning contents in many subject matters. Sakuma and his fellow teachers developed 'the field work method' for the learning contents of social studies, in which the teacher, sometimes with children, go out of school, visit the field, and make interview with people in the field for their diverse views about the problems in the learning content(Sakuma 2003). This shows that the work of Kyouzai-Kaishaku is to encounter diverse views as heroes about the learning content, not just in theoretical sense, but in practical sense, too.

## Dialogue on two horizons and the teacher as mediating author

The teacher becomes the polyphonic author on two horizons, for children to participate to the dialogic classroom lesson. First, the teacher becomes the polyphonic author of the learning content for children, and makes it the dialogic problem as the polyphonic work by encountering various views on it in culture in the work of Kyouzai-Kaishaku. Then, she/he brings the problem into the classroom, setting the stage for the dialogue. There, the author becomes the polyphonic author of the classroom lesson, stimulating children to present various views on the learning content. She/he simultaneously participates in the dialogue with her/his own view, and confront with children as heroes.

In the example of Gongitsune, the teacher must have realized through her Kyouzai-Kaishaku that the question about Gon's visit to Heiju's house would generate easily the common sensual, moral oriented answers. She must have discovered that there were possibilities in this question to generate the other, new answers, too. Through her discovery of the new possible answers, the problem became a dialogic one. As there were possibilities of new answers other than common sensual ones, this problem could set the stage for the dialogic lesson. If children themselves did not develop such possibilities, the teacher herself could do it and confront with children. It is easy to find out this question itself. Difficulty lies in finding out the possibilities of new, uncommon sensual answers. The teacher's Kyouzai-Kaishaku made it possible. Without her Kyouzai-Kaishaku, children's answer must have remained common sensual, like 'for compensation', and the teacher might be satisfied with such answers. The classroom lesson might have been a

monologic one, following the pattern of the teacher's question, children's 'correct' answer, and the teacher's acceptance with her satisfaction. Without *Kyouzai – Kaishaku*, the teacher must have been unable to find out new possibilities in children's seemingly common sensual answers. All she could have done was to understand children from her fixed point of view so that she could not have been able to learn from children. She could find out new possibilities in children's answers or, she could encounter with children as unfinalizable heroes. And it was because she had already encountered with the various views in the learning content in *Kyouzai – Kaishaku*, so that she made the learning content an unfinalizable one.

This paper tried to describe how the process of learning is seen when the teacher is understood as a person as subject, not as a cog of a wheel named educational institution or an executor of the instruction method someone invented elsewhere. Bakhtin's idea of polyphonic authors was a useful tool for the analysis. The work of the teacher is to encounter with children and culture, and to make children encounter with culture. When she/he does this deeply, she/he becomes the polyphonic author on two horizons; the horizon of the classroom lesson and the horizon of the learning content. In particular, teacher being a polyphonic author of the learning content is decisive for, in the end, for children to be the polyphonic author themselves. The importance of this aspect of teacher's learning has been ignored by most learning theories so far. Significance of this paper lies on this issue of teacher learning.

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# Engaging Social History to Understand Teacher Trajectories

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## Introduction: Why the present needs historical angle

This paper underlines the importance of History in understanding teachers' pedagogical actions here and now. It shows how their developmental trajectories take shape appropriating meaning from their cultural past, from 'other people's contexts' (Bakhtin, 1981: 294). This concern with continuity in time is captured in Bakhtin's notion of '*great time*' (1986), in which all meanings are linked – those absorbed from the past are linked to the present and these aspects of past and present continue to live in future by providing an orientation for future. He points out that

...there can neither be a first nor a last meaning; it always exists among other meanings as a link in the chain of meaning, which in its totality is the only thing that can be real. In historical life, this chain continues infinitely, and therefore each individual link in it is renewed again and again, as though it were being reborn. (1986:146)

In terms of methodology, this suggests that we need 'to remove ourselves in time from the phenomenon under investigation' (ibid:3–4) and enter '*great time*' to unearth its roots in the distant past. Therefore, in understanding teachers' observed behaviour here and now, I break through the boundaries of their own time to see their practice as a continuation of the past and essentially related to it.

Although teachers as individuals are differently disposed and their activities are meaningful to them, their practice shows remarkable similarities in their individual responses to similar institutional demands. This observed commonality indicates the sociocultural aspect in their thinking. This collective aspect in individual teachers' decision making needs attention in studies of teacher thinking in order to emphasize the contribution of the more socially sourced interaction between individual and collective experience that shape their development. This can be done by unraveling the historical life of teachers' meaning making. When a teacher enters the profession, there is already a cultural practice in place to appropriate from. In developing their practice, teachers 'assimilate, rework and reaccentuated' (Bakhtin, 1981) the 'historically developed' practices available to them (Wenger, 1998). Therefore, a historical perspective on pedagogical approaches can help illuminate

- a) the cultural contextual factors that frame teachers' actions beyond individual intention, and
- b) the possibilities for breaking these frames to imagine new alternatives for action.

## Context of the study

My investigation of teachers is located in the Indian ESL context. At issue here are the dominant transmissive pedagogical practices that seem to be alienating for the culturally diverse students. This monologic teaching, with its built in exclusion of responses (Volo-

cinov, 1973) seems to fail to set up the necessary interaction between the ‘hierarchically alien’ second language that the students must learn and their spontaneous ‘native word’ (Illich, 1981) and make meaningful learning to take place. So the question for my investigation is, ‘What is the dynamics by which monologic aspects of teaching have evolved historically and dominate the present day teachers’ implicit beliefs and practice?’ This has been undertaken by examining the cultural systems of meaning within which pedagogical relationships and communication are embedded. The historical periods analyzed include **Traditional**, **Modern** (the British colonial times) and **Independent** India. The data for analysis is drawn from documents, in-depth interview of teachers and class observations of both traditional Sanskrit and ESL teaching.

## Linking the past to the present: Teacher-learner role relationship

The present day teacher-learner relationship can be seen to link to the past through the image of preceptor and disciple (*guru-sishya*). The traditional guru, who was also the father in most cases, performed the sacraments and imparted the *Veda* (Hindu scriptures). The guru had responsibilities for the pupil’s moral, spiritual and intellectual learning, while the pupil was bound by duties to serve him and his sacred fires (*Āpasthambadharmasūtra* 1.1.1.2 and 1.1.4.28).<sup>1</sup> Obedience and respect form the norms governing all other dyadic relationships in the Indian society such as father-son, adult-child, husband-wife and caste, where respect for elders and superiors is held as an indisputable value. This provides the attitudinal context in which the guru’s authority derives its legitimacy, making it naturally acceptable.

The asymmetry in the relationship between the guru and sishya along with the associated notions of respect, obedience and authority can be characterized at least in two ways. From a dualistic point of view, this could be seen as guru, the knower, and sishya, the ignorant, who will eventually merge with the guru by moving into his epistemic position. In this monologic relationship, respect and authority would mean unquestioning compliance with guru’s knowledge and authority. Alternatively, the difference between guru-sishya can be conceptualized dialogically, where the sishya’s distinctiveness is used by the guru to motivate dialogue through asking questions, responding, agreeing, disagreeing and so on, thus enabling the sishya to develop his own ‘learning stance’ (Littner, 1989). Here, respect for the guru would be shown through reflective and creative assimilation of his word rather than by imitating it. There are indications that the Vedic education had elements of both monologic and dialogic models of teaching.

Early Vedic period (up to about 2000 BC) was a creative period of hymnal activity. However, against the background of mixing of civilizations and the beginning of an evolution in the Vedic Sanskrit language of the *Āryans*, concerns with protecting the sacred hymns in their pristine form resulted in the canonization of the Vedic hymns as Samhita or collections. From creativity, the emphasis in teaching shifted to oral transmission of the Vedic mantras, which was by now regarded as received and therefore, not open to change (Altekar, 1934). Systematic linguistic and kinesthetic devices were developed for

<sup>1</sup> The texts in Sanskrit are referred to conventionally by mentioning their name with the author (e.g., *Mundakōpanishad* means the Upanishad by Mundaka) and the number of the chapter and its subsection for locating the particular sloka/mantra or verse (e.g., 3.1.6, where ‘3’ indicates the main *Adhyaya* (chapter)/*prashna* (question), ‘1’ the *kandha/pāda* (sub-section such as a quarter)/*patāla* (sub-question), and ‘6’ the *slōka/ sūtra/mantra* (hymn/verse). Therefore, a separate bibliography for the Sanskrit material used here, is not warranted. All the *slōkas* referred to in this study have been sourced from original Sanskrit texts. A taped copy of these *slōkas* is available with the researcher for scrutiny. Diacritical marks are used for Sanskrit words to denote longer vowels by ‘~’, ā as in ‘path’, ī as in ‘peel’, ū as in ‘tool’, and ō as in ‘oats’.

the accurate preservation and transmission of the Vedas. For great value and potency was attached to the sound of the sacred words (Agrawala, 1953). Methods exemplifying the traditional oral system are still prevalent in the Vedic *Āgamic* schools which I have had the opportunity to observe. Here, the guru recites the mantra, breaking it into manageable units, and the students recite it after him. Whenever the students falter, the guru stops to correct and make the student repeat till he is satisfied. Thus the first step in Vedic education is correct recitation of the text. There are injunctions in the Sūtra literature that the slightest lapse in uttering the sound of the Vedic mantra will spell ruin (e.g., *Jaiminiya-sūtra*, 1.2.32). It is improbable that today's teachers would establish a conscious link between these myths and their own implicit belief that the first step in teaching ESL is to make students learn to 'pronounce correctly' (Teacher Interview). The ESL teachers' general practice of reading the text aloud or 'model reading' as it is commonly called, followed by students taking turns to read with the teacher intervening to correct their pronunciation (Class Observation) has an uncanny resemblance to the practice of the Vedic guru. As far as the teachers are concerned, it just seems the 'way things are done' (Shotter, 1978:70).

However, this oral *abyās* (constant practice) culture, where teaching consisted of transmission of the text and learning, memorizing it in the way it was received from the guru's lips, did not form the whole of Vedic education. It formed the main part of instruction in the earlier years of education. Dialogic ways of mediating the meaning of the memorized texts received increased emphasis as the mind matured towards greater individuation in thinking. There are several references in ancient literature of the futility of learning the Veda as mere word without the internal development of its meaning. Yāska, for instance, calls a person, who knows merely to recite the Vedic hymns, a bearer of burden and compares him to an ass carrying a load of sandalwood whose weight it feels without enjoying its fragrance (*Nirukta*, 1.18).

There is plenty of evidence to show that a dialogic guru-sishya relationship was the preferred ideal in the ancient Vedic, Upanishadic and Buddhist times. The spiritual quest for self-realization could hardly be envisaged as something that a guru could transmit externally except in a dialogic relationship marked by doubt and dialogue. The Upanishadic guru, like the Vedic guru, has been characterized by Kakar (1991:42) as 'astute and compassionate, demanding from the disciple the exercise of his reason rather than exercises in submission and blind obedience.' The guru's role is one of a mediator, enabling the sishya to discover for himself the knowledge of *Bramhan* (Self). This facilitative role given to the guru invites much thinking and contribution to the teaching process from the learner as well as the teacher.

The pedagogical processes mentioned in the *Upanishads* (Hindu scriptures), (e.g., *Brihadaranyakōpanishad*, 4.5.6) include listening (*shravana*), reflecting (*manana*) and thinking through the consequence of action (*Nidhidyāsana*) give the learner an active responsive role. For instance, Varuna, the father and preceptor of Bhrigu, leads him toward self-realization by repeatedly urging him to reflect on the content of his instruction. Bhrigu goes back to his father each time with a different answer indicating a progressive refinement in his thinking, till he finally experienced the nature of Self (*Taitaryōpanishad*, *Bhriguvalli*, 1–6). Questioning, as a pedagogical strategy was used by Svēthkēthu's father in disturbing his son's complacency over having amassed vast knowledge. This led him to critically reevaluate his own belief and move toward higher understanding (*Chandogyōpanishad*, 6.1.1–7).

## Linking the past to the present: The evolution of transmissive pedagogy

It remains to be seen as to how the mimetic aspect of teaching got isolated from a robust *abyās* culture and has come to dominate the present educational scene. There is already a

hint about the involvement of the larger sociopolitical forces in the pedagogical change process as indicated by the historical context in which the Vedic hymns were canonized. The spread of Vedic Āryans in India and the resulting mixing of cultures mentioned earlier, led to a gap between the growing vernaculars of the learners and the language of the Vedic education. This is much like the present day problem of home-school language and cultural gap. The effort to bridge this gap included compilation of list of Sanskrit words (*Nighantus*) and speculations about grammar and etymology. In course of time grammar came to be regarded as the most important of the sciences ancillary to the Veda (Agrawala, 1953; Yadav, 2005). Along with grammar teaching, text explication acquired significant pedagogical attention from later Vedic period. These pedagogical features as being essential aspects of language learning are echoed in the beliefs and practice of ESL teachers today.

Despite the upanishadic attempts to resurrect the Vedic thought exemplifying various strategies to mediate meaning of the text for its unique appropriation by the learner, learners pursuing Vedic learning for its own sake were becoming less (Agrawala, 1953). The growing secular and scientific fields of knowledge captured the interests of many, who, branched off to specialize in these areas after the initial instruction in grammar and some Vedic hymns. In keeping with this changing trend, there was simultaneous readjustment in the nature of exhortation that shaped the new cultural beliefs. The new myth was that mere memorizing of the Vedic texts confers sanctity and removes all sins and it is a futile exercise to find its meaning for the meaning of the Veda cannot be known (Kane, 1941). In the attempts to preserve the Vedic word, if not its meaning, a shift in tendency from meaningful *abyās* to rote learning can be seen. This transmissive culture became the dominant trend with the growth of popular Bhakti cults of the Middle Ages. The Vedic image of a dialogic guru facilitating transformative learning evolved into a mystical guru, who was to provide spiritual liberation to the populace. The discourse of ‘respect’ and ‘obedience’ took on the unquestioned devotional surrender to the guru/God. The disciple’s salvation lay in merging his whole being with that of the guru (Babb, 1987).

The image of the Vedic guru-sishya, reinscribed and infused with the Bakhti cult meaning seems to pervade the cultural attitude even today and is resonated in daily prayers that commonly form the ritual beginning of the day in school.

The monologic guru-sishya relationship of the Bakhti times continued to hold through colonial times although owing to a different dynamics. It must be noted that the spiritual education in traditional India was the cultural capital of the few. The upper cast Brahmins, whose preserve it largely was, used it as an ideological weapon to wield power and authority, closing access to the ‘lower castes’. There has been a long tradition of enlightening heterodox voices such as Buddha, Mahaveer and later Ramanuja who have challenged the brahminical hegemony with their democratic and inclusive ideology. This got a fillip in the universalistic ideals of Modern education, which opened access to the socially segregated sections. However, in effect, the British progressive educational ideals were surrendered to the complex interaction of moral, religious, economic and political motives. (There is no space here to provide a detailed analysis of this dynamics). Besides, the progressive child centered pedagogy advocated by the British was in conflict with its own rigid curriculum. This curriculum was backed by an examination system which was associated with certification and job. The wash back effect of this on classroom teaching and learning was a single-minded focus on knowing the content of the prescribed text-books. This goal was achieved by using traditionally available tools of text explication and memorization of the given. This was an alienating exercise for the culturally diverse students who had no such prior learning experience. The replacive curriculum that was deaf to children’s ways of knowing developed in their cultural communities upset the synchrony between the word and its meaning. Much of what was learnt was mechanical as teaching did not create zones for its meaningful appropriation.



The norms of pedagogy evolved under colonial rule have not weakened with efforts to equalize educational opportunities in independent India. The monologic practices that one can see in today's classrooms fail to provide cultural and cognitive access to the culturally diverse students. These disadvantaged students fail in large numbers and must 'internalize blame for their failure' (O'Loughlin, 2002).

## Discussion: Implications for teacher education

A historical inquiry into Indian education shows that with changing conditions monologic practices within a dualistic teacher-learner relationship was adopted to cope with the dissonances of successive ages such as differentiation of the spoken language from the Vedic dialect in traditional India, the popular quest for salvation in the Bakhti period, the alien curriculum of the colonial times, the universalization of education in independent India and the commercial competition of the global free market age.

The official concern with reforming education to make it more inclusive has vital links with teacher change. However, in the present set up, a narrow psychological view of learning makes teachers believe that individual ability and effort are all it takes to succeed. For instance, it is a common thinking among them that, '*If students have interest and put in effort, they should be able to learn and pass the examination*' (Teacher Interview). This deficit view of learners blinds them to the social segregation and educational exclusion that has put the culturally diverse students at a disadvantage. It also makes them impervious to their own implicit beliefs that guide their practice in ways that are insensitive to the learning needs of these children.

Culturally diverse students are not without talent. However, teachers seem to fail to identify them. A teacher, who is able to place the problem of the socially disadvantaged learners in historical perspective would perhaps refrain from blaming the learners for their poor school achievement and instead, ask herself, 'What am I doing that contributes to this failure?' (Allen & Hermann-Wilmarth, 2004:214) When such questioning becomes part of teachers' thinking, a heightened self-awareness can open up new possibilities for practice. The primary challenge of teacher education seems to be that of enabling teachers to become aware of their 'unthought known' (Bollas, 1987), of the 'borders' that constrain their understanding and influence their action against reason and intention, so that these borders 'may be substituted by, translated into different borders' (Bakhtin, 1986: xix).

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# Recycling the Teacher's Words

## How children acquire a second language in an immersion kindergarten

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This paper investigates second language acquisition in an immersion kindergarten in Southern Finland.<sup>1</sup> The children entering the immersion have Finnish as their first language (L1), and the immersion language is Swedish (L2). The concept of second language acquisition is approached from a dialogic perspective (see e.g. Hall, Vitanova & Marchenkova 2005). Acquisition is explored as situated interactional processes which involve the whole person, and do not happen in the individual mind but in interaction (see Lave & Wenger, 1991; Hanks, 1991).<sup>2</sup>

In this paper, we will investigate how the children recycle the teacher's words and expressions at different stages of the acquisition process. The data consist of videotaped naturally occurring situations during the first two years of the immersion. The method of the study is ethnomethodological conversation analysis (see Sacks 1992), and more specifically CA-SLA (e.g. Pekarek Doehler [submitted]).

The paper is composed as follows: First we will discuss the background for the study. Then we will introduce the data and the method, and discuss some of its foundational principles in the light of Bakhtin's notions of dialogism. Finally, we will analyze three examples, recorded at different stages of the acquisition process. The examples show a change in the ways in which the children use the second language. Even though traditional approaches to second language acquisition have treated language learning and language use as different phenomena (see, e.g. Kasper 1997), usage-based approaches, like in this study, do not justify any clear-cut distinction. In interaction, it is hard to say where usage ends and learning begins (Firth & Wagner 2007; Larsen-Freeman 2007).

## Background and theoretical orientation

In Dialogic Imagination Bakhtin has stated the following:

The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes 'one's own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language (it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his words!), but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one's own. (Bakhtin 1981:293–294.)

The idea of the words initially belonging to others is a bit modified in a later essay (1986:88) where Bakhtin discusses spoken language. He states that words do not actually belong to anybody but they are always heard as somebody's words, used by someone in a specific situation. – When it comes to language acquisition, one can ask what other possibilities there are for a child than to use others' words at first (Kauppinen 1998:24).

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<sup>1</sup> The study presented in this paper is based on an on-going PhD-thesis (Savijärvi [forthcoming]).

<sup>2</sup> *Learning* and *acquisition* are here used synonymously.

In an immersion kindergarten, the learning situation is reminiscent of the situation of a child learning his or her first language, in the sense that the second language is learned in interaction. The teachers do not teach but rather just speak the second language. The children hear the Swedish words and expressions initially as the teachers' words, in specific situations in the kindergarten.

Bakhtin's ideas are most essential in understanding the nature of language and communication. And, there are some similarities between Bakhtin's thinking and conversation analytic thinking. We will now discuss some basic tenets that seem similar in both approaches.

According to Sacks (1984:22; 1992), who was the central theoretician of CA, there is order at all points in whatever humans do. The basic tenet of CA is that social interaction is not haphazard but orderly, and that the methodical, organized nature of our social life can be studied by close attention to naturally occurring interaction (e.g. Atkinson & Heritage 1984). The same idea is also present in Bakhtin's thinking, as his way of analyzing social language "allowed him to see order where linguists have traditionally seen only randomness" (Wertsch 1991:58).

Another central point in common is the idea of utterances being both responsive and anticipating. In CA, this phenomenon is referred to as double-contextuality. This means that utterances and actions are both context shaped and context renewing. Contributions to ongoing sequences of actions can only be adequately understood by reference to the context. Every utterance also creates the immediate context for some next action in a sequence, and thus contributes to the contextual framework, in terms of which the next action will be understood. Thus, "the interactional context is continually being developed with each successive action". (Drew & Heritage 1992:18.) Again, in Bakhtin's thinking the concept of utterance<sup>3</sup> is always a two-sided act: "In the moment of its use, at one and the same time, it responds to what precedes it and anticipates what is to come" (Hall, Vitanova and Marchenkova 2005:2). And, according to Wertsch (1991:53): "In the formulation of an utterance a voice responds in some way to previous utterances and anticipates the responses of other, succeeding ones."

Thus, there are similarities in the basic assumptions of Bakhtin's thinking and in CA. Of course, Bakhtin's ideas were not based on empirical analyses on interaction but are mainly theoretical. Conversation analysis, on the other hand, is based on detailed analysis of recorded interaction. It is more a method than a theory.

In this paper, we will use the method of conversation analysis in order to show how the process of taking another's words and making them one's own is performed in ongoing interaction.<sup>4</sup> More specifically, we will investigate how this process serves the learning of a second language. We will also apply the idea of recycling with difference, which is suggested to be the method of turn construction that participants use in everyday conversation (see, Anward 2005).<sup>5</sup> In everyday conversation, the turns are produced on-line (e.g. Auer 2009), in concert with other turns, and thus, the emerging constructions are processed dialogically (Linell 2005). Speakers construct their turns on the basis of preceding ones, by recycling them not as such, but as slightly modified (Anward 2005; Du Bois 2001; 2003). In this way, the turns and the linguistic categories as well emerge dialogically, in interaction (Anward 2005; Hopper 1998). The idea of recycling builds very much on the dialogic view of language processing. Because every turn is built on previous ones, every turn contains the others' voices as well.

We will now turn to the data and method in more detail.

<sup>3</sup> The concept of utterance is crucial to Bakhtin's conceptualization of language. Note, however, that the concept of *utterance* in CA and the *utterance* for Bakhtin are not synonymous.

<sup>4</sup> See also Holt & Clift (eds.) 2007, for CA-research on multivoicedness in everyday conversation.

<sup>5</sup> For recycling in everyday-interaction, see also Laury 2005, and for recycling as a means of learning a second language see Suni 2008, and Cekaite & Aronsson 2004. DU BOIS!

## Data and method

The data consist of 40 hours of videotaped interaction in one immersion group with fifteen 4–5 year-old children and two teachers in an immersion kindergarten where the method of Canadian immersion (see e.g. Swain & Lapkin 1982; Laurén 1999) is used. All the children have Finnish as their L1. The caretakers, who are called teachers in this study, always speak Swedish to the children but they understand Finnish, and the children are allowed to use Finnish both with each other and with the teachers. The videotaped situations are naturally occurring. The kindergarten was visited ten times and each time approximately four hours of interaction was videotaped, as presented below. The semester started in August, and the first recordings took place when the children had been in immersion for one month.

I year	1) September	II year	7) November
	2) October		8) December
	3) November		9) February
	4) February		10) April-May
	5) March		
	6) April-May		

As already mentioned, the method of the study is ethnomethodological conversation analysis (see e.g. Sacks, 1992). Lately, there has been a growing interest in applying conversation analysis to the study of second language learning (see e.g. Seedhouse, 2005; Firth & Wagner, 2007; Pekarek Doehler [forthcoming]). The research on second language acquisition has been increasingly focused on the role of interaction in the acquisition process, and in recent studies, acquisition is approached from a dialogic perspective (e.g. Hall, Vitanova & Marchenkova 2005; Suni 2008).

As learning typically occurs in the course of time, it will be more visible in longitudinal data. However, longitudinal studies using conversation analysis have been rare so far (see, however, Wootton 1997; Sellman 2008; Hellermann 2008). There are also some essential features in the immersion teaching method that make the learning situation special, and accordingly, particularly interesting for a conversation analytic research. Because the children can use their L1, they can participate verbally even at the beginning of the immersion. Thus, their interpretations of the teachers' turns in Swedish become visible even when the children are not yet able to express themselves in Swedish. Moreover, the children can share their experiences with each other (see ex 1).

We will now turn to the examples.

## Second language learning as participation in a dialogue

In this chapter, we will present an analysis of three data extracts that represent different stages of the acquisition process. The focus is on the interactional practices that the children engage in when recycling the teacher's words. At the beginning of the immersion, the children seem to treat Swedish as the teacher's voice, and they topicalize the words that the teacher has used (see ex 1). At later stages, the children recycle teacher's words in order to express their own intentions (ex. 2 and 3). During the first months, the recycled elements are mostly lexical items but at the second year, also grammatical structures become recycled.

### *Swedish as "Another's voice"*

At the beginning of the immersion there are some situations where the children repeat words that sound similar to Finnish words. Accordingly, they interpret them as if they were produced in Finnish. Sometimes they correct, and even make fun of the teacher's

funny-sounding words. By doing this, they show an orientation to their first language as a basis for their interpretations, as if they were listening “in Finnish”. In such situations, the Swedish words become the topic of the verbal interaction, rather than a means of conveying a message. Additionally, the children share their interpretations with each other. This is possible because all of them share the same L1, and because they are all beginners when it comes to their L2 skills.

[Ind] Example 1 illustrates these phenomena. In this case, the word that becomes topicalized is the Swedish noun *korv* ‘sausage’ that the teacher (T) uses when serving breakfast. The phonetic form of the noun is reminiscent of the Finnish word *korppu* ‘zwieback’ (in Swedish: *skorpa*). In the situation at hand, five children are eating breakfast with the teacher. A boy called Jussi has just taken a slice of bread and the teacher is now serving cold cuts to him.<sup>6</sup> She has just asked a WH-question, and on line 1 she adds a turn unit that presents the referents (the sausage, the cheese and the egg) verbally. At the same time she points at the referents. The beginning of the extract represents the very typical kind of interaction at the beginning of the immersion. The verbal turns are largely understandable according to non-verbal actions and the situation at hand.<sup>7</sup>

Ex. 1 [1 year, september, breakfast]

- 1 T: **korv eller ost eller ägg.** T POINTS AT THE ITEMS WITH A FORK  
sausage or cheese or egg.
- 2 (2.5) JUSSI LOOKS AT THE PLATE AND POINTS AT SAUSAGE
- 3 T: **ägg** T PUTS THE FORK ON EGG  
egg
- 4 (1.0) JUSSI PUTS HIS FINGER ON SAUSAGE
- 5 T: **↑korv (.) aha: de här e korv↑;**  
sausage (.) [PRT] this is sausage.
- 6 (0.5)  
[JUSSI TURNS TO AKU WHO IS SITTING NEXT TO HIM]
- 7 Jussi: → **£<korb[ (h) e (h) >£**
- 8 T: **vassågod (.) ja (.) k(h)orv.**  
here you are (.) yes (.) sausage
- 9 (): heheh[ehe JUSSI LOOKS AT T
- 10 T: [.hm.
- 11 (.)  
[JUSSI TAKES A GLANCE AT ULLA'S DIRECTION]
- 12 Ulla: → **sehän on [makkar[aa.**  
it[+PRT] is sausage
- 13 T: **[mm: (.) just de.**  
[PRT] (.) exactly.
- 14 (.)
- 15 T: **de e [korv.**  
it is [sausage.
- 16 Jussi: → **[@tää on makkaraa eikä korppua@.** JUSSI TURNS TO T  
[this is sausage [NEG]+[PRT] zwieback
- 17 T: **de e korv** T LEANS FORWARD, TOWARDS JUSSI
- 18 (1.0) JUSSI TURNS TO AKU, SMILING
- 19 (): hihh
- 20 Jussi: **[£korbe£**
- 21 (): [(--)
- 22 Ulla: → **ne ei ymmärrä mikä toi on.**  
they don't understand what that is
- 23 T: **[korv**
- 24 Ulla: → **[(toi on --) (.) se sanoo kur[(kkua)**  
[(that is --) she says cuc[(cumber)
- 25 T: [m(h) [m(h)

<sup>6</sup> The word *korv* has already been mentioned several times by the teacher, as she has served the cold cuts to every child in the situation at hand.

<sup>7</sup> For transcription symbols, see appendix.

- 26 Meri: [(se on) makkalaa  
[(it is) sausage]
- 27 eikä [kolppua  
NEG]+[PRT] [zwieback]
- 28 Ulla: → [se on tätä ↑makkaraa samaa ma[(kkaa)]  
[it is this sausage same sa[(usage)]
- 29 T: [m:m ]
- 30 T: [de e just korv.  
[it is [PRT]sausage  
T TURNS TO MERI AND LOOKS AT HER
- 31 Meri: → [kyllähän aikuisen pitäis käsittää et tää on  
MERI LOOKS AT ULLA'S DIRECTION  
[yes+PRT] an adult should understand that this is
- 32 → .hhh se on makkalaa eikä kolppua  
it is sausage not+[PRT] zwieback
- 33 T: in[t sko-  
no[t rus-
- 34 Meri: → [↑korv kuulostaa [ihan [korpulta.> ]  
[korv sounds [just like korppu ]
- 35 T: [int skorpa utan ↑korv.]  
[not zwieback but sausage]

Jussi expresses which item he chooses by pointing to sausage (line 2). The teacher starts taking egg from the plate, and at the same time, she also names the referent verbally (line 3). The turn could be analyzed as a candidate understanding (see, e.g. Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks (1977:368) or just a misinterpretation of Jussi's pointing. Jussi rejects the teacher's interpretation by putting his finger on the sausage slices (line 4). After that, the teacher takes a turn in which she uses the Swedish noun *korv* twice, at the beginning and at the end of the turn (line 5). Thus, the lexical item becomes more prominent. It is produced with high register, and it is stressed. Additionally, the fact that the teacher is about to give the wrong sort of cold cut might contribute to Jussi's attention.

[Ind] As becomes visible, Jussi repeats the word, laughing (line 7). Thus, he pays attention to the phonetic form of the word. Laughing, on the other hand, indicates that there is something to be laughed at. Another child, Ulla, brings her attention to the referent, the sausage, on the plate (line 12). Her Finnish utterance *sehän on makkaraa* 'it is sausage', shows that she focuses on the connection between the word and the meaning. The clitic particle *-hän* elicits the information as shared knowledge (ISK §830). The new thing, then, seems to be that sausage is referred to with a funny-sounding word. This becomes even more explicit on line 28 when Ulla produces a similar kind of utterance but adds the pronouns *tätä* (the partitive form of *tämä* 'this') and *samaa* (the partitive form of *sama* 'same').

[Ind] Jussi associates the Swedish word *korv* with the Finnish word *korppu* 'zwieback' (line 16). A few moments later, Ulla adds a new object, *kurkku* 'cucumber' (line 24).<sup>8</sup> The grounds for these associations seem to be the phonetic resemblance, which is also explicited by Meri in Finnish (line 34): *korv kuulostaa ihan korpulta* 'korv sound just like korppu'. Meri's turn is a metalinguistic comment, and it shows that she is able to compare the two languages. Moreover, she is able to share her observations with the other children because the children have the same L1. And, her comment, too, has emerged as a result of the on-going conversation.

<sup>8</sup> Opposed to Jussi's interpretation Ulla's remains occasional – it does not become elaborated by the other children. On the other hand, both *korppu* 'rusk' and *kurkku* 'cucumber' belong to the same category as *korv/makkara* 'sausage'. They are nouns that describe something eatable. In addition, both sound similar to the Swedish word *korv*, at least to some extent.

[Ind] There are many indications of sharedness between the children. They build their turns on the previous ones both semantically and syntactically.<sup>9</sup> Momentarily, they exclude the teacher, and speak about her rather than with her. As Jussi repeats the word *korv* (line 7) he turns to Aku. Thus, he addresses another child rather than the teacher. On line 24, Ulla refers to the teacher with the third person pronoun *se* (in this case) 'she', which shows explicitly that the teacher is not the addressee. On line 22 she uses the third person plural pronoun *ne* (in this case) 'they' that refers to a group, one in which the speaker does not belong to. The content of the turn *ne ei ymmärrä mikä toi on* 'they don't understand what that is', together with her other turns (lines 12 and 24) seem to imply that the teacher belongs to a group of people who do not understand what sausage should be called, or what sausage is. Meri adds to this (lines 31–32). She uses the verb *käsittää* 'grasp', 'understand' which is fairly synonymous with the verb *ymmärtää* 'understand' that Ulla has used. She also adds the modal verb *pitäis* 'should' which implies here that the teacher is not capable of something that she ought to be. Like Ulla, Meri also refers to the teacher in third person, with the noun 'an adult'. This, in turn, heightens the contrast between the teacher and the children, who seem to present themselves as a group of clever kids, contrasted to a group of less clever adults, to which the teacher belongs.

[Ind] Of course, there are not so many examples of this kind in the data. However, the same phenomena, sharedness between the children, listening "in Finnish" and highlighting the immersion language (Swedish) come up several times in the first two data samples, collected in September and November. Despite sharedness between the children, which remains an important factor during the two-year-time frame of this study, those features disappear when the children become more familiar with the second language.

[Ind] We will now turn to the later stages of the acquisition.

### *Swedish as a resource in interaction*

After some months of immersion, the children start to recycle the teachers' expressions as part of their own utterances. We will present two examples, in which a child recycles either a lexical item (example 2) or the syntactic structure (example 3) that the teacher has used in her previous turn (also referred to as *format tying* by e.g. Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987). The example 2 is from the data sample collected after 3 months of immersion. The example 3 is from the data sample collected after sixteen months of immersion.

In example 2, the teacher has just served porridge to one of the children, Jussi. She then reminds him to take just a little jam (*sylt*) (line 2). The child sitting next to Jussi starts talking. He uses the same word *sylt* as the teacher has used.

Ex. 2 [I year, November, breakfast]

- 1                    ELLI HANDS THE JAM TO JUSSI AND JUSSI TAKES IT  
 2 T:                **men lite                    sylt sen också när du har lite**  
                      but a little bit of jam then too when you have a bit  
                      **gröt.**  
                      of porridge.  
 3 Santtu: **m<sub>ä</sub> haluun            ↑p<sub>a</sub>ljon sylt?**  
                      I want to have a lot of **sylt**

Santtu starts the utterance in Finnish but he uses the Swedish noun *sylt* for the jam (in Finnish it would be *hilloa*, the partitive form of the noun *hillo*). Clearly, he recycles the noun from the teacher's turn. It is evident, too, that he has understood what the teacher has said. His turn is contrastive to the previous turn. He expresses what he wants in the situation, and that is the opposite of what T has told the other child to do. He replaces the quantifier *lite* with its contrast *paljon* 'a lot', although in Finnish. Even though the noun *sylt* is identical in both turns he does not repeat what T has said. Instead, he uses the word

<sup>9</sup> Cf. e.g. Meri's turn on lines 31–32 with Jussi's turn on line 16, and Ulla's turn on line 22.



for his own purposes. In a sense he is taking the word and making it his own in the ongoing interaction.

In contrast to ex. 1, in 3.1, the teacher's word does not become topicalized but used. In both cases, however, the recycled element is a lexical item, a noun. In the next example a child continues the teacher's turn. She does not use the same lexical items as the teacher, but ones that represent the same grammatical categories as the teacher has used. Thus, she recycles the syntax of the teacher's utterance.

In example 3, a child called Santtu (who does not speak in this extract) is looking for his toy, a gnome, but he cannot find it. Meri, who starts speaking in line 4, is baking. The teacher stands behind her helping another child to tie his jumper. Thus, Meri and the teacher are engaged in different activities, but they are interacting verbally:

Ex. 3 [II year, December, baking]<sup>10</sup>

- 1 T:                    °>de (e no) en< konsti tomte.°  
                          it is [PRT] a strange gnome
- 2                    → just va de mitt på golve här.  
                          eben war er mitten auf dem Fussboden hier
- 3                    (1.0)
- 4 Meri: → å nu e de borta.  
                          und jetzt ist er weg

The teacher evaluates the referent (line 1), the missing gnome. She then continues the turn by adding a turn unit that seems to explain the evaluation (line 2). After a pause, Meri takes the turn. She adds a turn unit that matches T's utterance syntactically. Both turns have the syntactic form of a clause, and both are constructed of similar elements: they begin with a temporal reference followed by a verb (*vara* 'be'), and the last element is a place reference. Note that there is an inversion (*e de* instead of *de e*) which is an obligatory feature in Swedish syntax but would not be used in an equivalent clause in Finnish. Although Meri recycles, she does not use identical lexical items as T but ones that represent the same syntactic categories. (The only identical word is the pronoun *de* 'it'.) Thus, she recycles with difference (see Anward, 2005). The conjunction *å* is not recycled from the previous turn but it is used to express the connection between the two clauses which in this case is additive.

T:                    just va de mitt på golve här  
 Meri:                å nu e de borta

Meri adds a clause to the clause that the teacher has produced. The result can be analyzed as a collaborative construction (see e.g. Sacks, 1992 part II:56–66). This, in turn, shows that she has analyzed the previous turn both semantically and syntactically. Although T's turn is syntactically complete, it is semantically incomplete in the sense that she starts to explain the "strangeness" of the gnome but leaves out a central part of the explanation. The gnome is not strange because it was in the middle of the floor but because it is not there anymore. Meri adds the missing part and completes thus the verbal action that the teacher has started.

The interactional behavior shows that the child in question has learned a great deal of the second language in one and a half years. The very fact that she does not recycle the lexical items as such shows that she is able to recall appropriate ones without hearing them in the immediately preceding turn. As the kindergarten is the place where the children are exposed to the second language, it is very likely that those words stem from previous situations in the kindergarten. They could be called "global recyclings", as opposed to local ones that happen in one situation.

<sup>10</sup> The translation of the target lines is in German because English would not display the inversion.

## Conclusions

In this paper we have shown how the children's interactional behaviors change during the two-year-time in immersion. At the beginning of the immersion the children pick up words that sound similar to their L1 (Finnish), and they treat L2 (Swedish) as the teacher's voice. However, quite soon they start recycling lexical items in Swedish, in order to express their own intentions. At the second year of the immersion they also recycle grammatical structures in Swedish. Recycling seems to be the means by which L2 is acquired, and it also shows that a great deal of L2 has been acquired.

Although the focus of this paper is second language learning in immersion, the investigated phenomena have also wider implications for the research on interaction and language. Language learning can be viewed as a part of the larger processes of language emerging, and language change (Larsen-Freeman, 2007; N.Ellis, 2008; see also H.Paul, 1960:106–120). According to Hopper, (1998:159) “our speech is a vast collection of hand-me-downs that reaches back in time to the beginnings of language.” With conversation analysis it is possible to investigate how the “hand-me-down's” are used in on-going, spoken, interaction (see, Holt & Clift 2007). As conversation analysis is designed to investigate interaction as it happens in naturally occurring situations, it also reveals how the dialogic process of second language learning is performed in interaction.

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## Appendix

Transcription symbols (see e.g. Kurhila 2003:335)

- . falling intonation
- ; slightly falling intonation
- ? rising intonation
- ?, slightly rising intonation
- ↑ rise in pitch
- ↓ fall in pitch
- ↑xxx↑ turn produced with high register
- ↓xxx↓ turn produced with low register
- Emphasis is indicated with underlining.
- >< fast speech
- <> slow speech
- °° quieter talk
- £ smile voice
- @ change in voice quality
- (.) mikropause less than two tenths of seconds
- (0.5) silence timed in tenths of seconds
- [] overlapping talk
- () item in doubt
- NON VERBAL ACTIVITY*
- (( )) transcriptionst's comment

# Dialogue under Check: Negotiation of Training Agreement in Role Training on Role Change. The Perspective of Cultural Organizational Psychology of Organizations

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## Introduction

This article arises from an action-research intervention, seeking to support an ongoing organizational change involving a nursery-schools' Federation.

In the pragmatic organizational contexts, the dialogical theory of Bakhtin assumes the look of a multiple social practice involving people in constant transactions and processes of negotiation and sensemaking (Weick, 1995). It becomes a process of shaping and sharing a social, collective and situated knowledge in which responsive communication needs to be used with the mediation of language, gestures, bodies, objects and artefacts, in a multimodality of interactions.

We can ascribe to the *practice turn* in organizational studies (Schatzki, Knorr-Cetina, Von Savigny, 2001) the acquisition of basic assumptions:

- learning as a social process = belonging to communities of practice, people deal with the social process by which professional identity, organizational knowledge and cultures take form. The exploitation of these social learning systems also an opportunity for studying innovative actions and incentives for sustainable work processes (Wenger, 1998);
- practice-based perspective of research = the practical and daily experience of each professional in his/her workplace becomes the main and more relevant field for studying and detecting professional profiles, understanding how people capabilities for a competent reproduction of practices (Gherardi, 2006);
- ethnomethodological orientation = emphasis on tacit, situated knowledge, embodied and embedded in the interactions and activities of social actors, involved in making an ordinary social order of their life (Lynch et al., 1983) by means of discourses and intermediaries, featured by indexicality, accountability and reflexivity.

In this perspective we can consider Bakhtin's dialogue approach as a social practice, more properly as a *taste-making practice* (Gherardi, 2009), with own vocabulary (social minds, subjectively, otherness, contextually of communication actions,...), epistemic identity (human mind as activity, semiotic mediation, linguistic/discursive turn, dialogical turn in human sciences) and performances constantly refining (situated sensemaking, situation transcending practices, shaping meanings in artefacts use).

However, this practice of dialogism as a taste-making by negotiating how to feel, to interpret, to judge events and situations, to properly use objects, artefacts and technologies, meets the occurrence of conflict and antagonism between people, especially in the case of different ways of power exercise in order to realize organizational transformations.

Opposition, conflict dynamics, inertia, strong resistance to share knowledge can appear at organizational scene (DeDreu, Gelfand, 2007), undermining the basic of dialogue itself (Scaratti, Gozzoli, 2009).

We endeavour to explore how the organizational and professional contexts challenge the Bakhtin's idea to put into dialogue the 'oneself' and the 'themselves'. As in the chess set, when players find themselves in stalemate or in checkmate situations, people involved in organizational processes often get failure in their attempt to understand and communicate each other. Sometimes it happens, and we have to achieve a more complex understanding, improving a disposition to shape and gather new ways of using and developing social interactions.

In this paper we aim to underline how in a training set, promoted for professionals working in a complex organization, the dialogue can assume the configuration of a conflict, strengthening the dilemmatic modes (constructive vs destructive) of its expression.

Firstly we'll give some context information, drafting the situation in which we have been involved as trainers, dealing with the changes of professional role of figures and handling the challenges sprung from the reorganization process arisen in the concerned context.

Then we shall look at the focal point of our work, analyzing conversational pieces stemmed from training sessions related to the dialogue between trainers and trainees.

In conclusion we would point out the main findings of our experience, putting in evidence the nitty-gritty question related to dialogism in organizational context: we need to accept its contingent situation of stalemate or check.

### *Organizational Context*

The process of change takes place in an Italian context – the Provincial Federation of Nursery Schools in Trento –, organization that manages networks of services and centres for child education in nursery schools, providing training, consultancy, support and innovation strategies. The context is a regional confederation of private schools in Northern Italy, where a number of 160 stakeholders are involved both in the schools management and in the relationship with the territory, with the families and with the social agencies in the broader regional system.

The governance system of each school is made by councils, committees and Presidents, elected by people who participate in different institutional forms (parents associations, Educational foundations, Religious agencies,...) who decided to federate themselves and to constitute a common network. Currently the Provincial Federation of Nursery Schools in Trento is an historical institution, about 60 years old, deeply rooted in the regional territory and recognized by public institutions.

A 160 schools, with 1300 teachers and 550 auxiliary operators which are spread on 16 areas co-ordinated and supported by central services in the Federation. These employs 70 people, all placed in Trento. We'll specifically talk about the change connected to the transformation of these central and core services and structure.

A transformation process started up since 2001 because of the impulse towards the reorganization of the services (for better quality, for the requalification of the professionals and the launching of a new confederation identity in response to emergent issues). It involved the two main services of Federation: the pedagogical and the administrative axis. The pedagogical axis deals with a specific professional typology, defined as the "pedagogical co-ordinator": people devoted principally to plan and support the educational activities and to train for nursery school teachers. The administrative axis, managed by "administrative co-ordinators", provides consultancy and assistance to run the service from the point of view of the structures, the duties and the responsibilities to then accomplish the educational program

The challenge was to shift from a bureaucratic model of functioning to a more integrate organizational culture: a way of work oriented to a new professional approach and new model of organizing, able to give more personalised and flexible answers to the system. An action-research intervention was asked to sustain the transformation processes linked to the organizational central core,

A turning point event and a trigger of dialogic dynamics was the introduction of a *new professional role* to sustain the link between the two original ones: a “*unique co-ordinator*” able to run the services within both the perspectives mentioned above, with less superimposition and with better proximity to the stakeholders and the direct customers of the service. A new role with consequences not only in terms of new actions and practices to be implemented, but also at a structural and organizational level. A new role asking for a new identity, new normative accountability and a deep cultural change.

The board federation decision to try pivot experience in using a unique co-ordinator (UC) started with two unique coordinators in 2004; they became 7 in 2006, 16 in 2007, until the changing role of all the coordinators. Such integration of the two dimensions that constitute the Federation (pedagogical and managerial one) represented a trigger for a shifting movement: all people were asked to cope with organisational challenges pointed out by the Federation board.

In this situation HRM and training have been seen as strategic opportunities to develop a shared organisational culture, to consolidate the awareness of a common group of professionals and to test new forms of education and training proposed to the nursery-schools’ teachers.

As trainers we worked to sustain the groups of coordinators (almost 25 people) in structuring and restructuring the cognitive and experiential field and to reinterpret their competencies according to the situations (Scaratti, Stoppini, Zucchermaglio, 2009). We supported the group fostering the construction of a shared knowledge and know how arisen from their common practice. We focused on understanding the dynamics present within a role construction organizational setting. The object becomes the local texture of individual, group, organizational and institutional practices which make role identity more defined. We adopted some conceptual drivers to support the way by which people create their practice (that is a mode of ordering which acquires temporal stability from provisional and unstable agreements in practice):

- the driver of contextual challenge for achieving new role identity;
- the driver of situated and tacit knowledge asked to be shared and used;
- the driver of the essential features of situated practice (indexicality – plural meaning to be negotiated –; reflexivity – make meaning accessible to outsiders–; accountability–giving motive/reasons/explanation).

It was a training based on practice and experience, asking people to a strong commitment, promoting them as the most relevant resources to gather knowledge related to professional and organizational change, inviting them to report events, situations, interactions concerned with the daily construction of their practice and new role. At the beginning, despite the existing differences between coordinators, training started up with the agreement of the large part of trainees, and a silent participation of the rest. Nevertheless, some criticisms occurred, generating inertia, strong resistance to share knowledge between the two main groups of coordinators and in order to achieve reorganization (someone would drop it, others would modify it or deflect it).

An institutional turbulence arose and grew up, with different ways in exercising lobbying and power dynamics, which involved the training set: it became difficult and conflicting, with the opposition of the coordinators closed to the critical institutional lobby, that was fighting against incoming innovation. They didn’t accept to produce description of their practice in action and to actively participate in group elaboration work. A remarkable difficulty was the opposition to reflect on some dimension of embedded knowledge,

related to people's relationship with the organisation and with the context of the work (schedule, shift, resources distribution, benefits, refunds...): the co-ordinators entrenched themselves by saying "we have no time to think about these issues, everything is so urgent!". A co-ordinator sent a formal request to be exempted from training course declaring she was coping with too many jobs and obligations. We couldn't go longer in our training process: a new negotiation of training agreement had to be done.

## Negotiation of a New Training Agreement: Conversational Sequences

As trainers we decided to call all the participant to a one to one interview, seeking to understand and renegotiate which kind of interests and training condition would be considered realistic and suitable. It was a turning point of our training process. All the participants (except four) accepted our invitation: we listened each one, asking them whether the training should be continued or not, and gathering suggestions and indications to improve it.

Thereafter, during a collective meeting, we communicated to the coordinators the exits of our recognition:

- a positive evaluation of the one to one meeting with the trainers (many of the participant expressed their thanks to have been involved in such a personal way);
- the clear indication to continue the training process related to the unique coordinator;
- the need to go deeper in analyzing situations and experiences;
- a warrant about the reciprocal protection between participants in order to enhance more reliable and trustworthy conditions of participation;
- the request of articulating training process in order to intercept different and plural interests, requirements and personal dispositions to training contract.

So we proposed three level of training set, two with different group of people (giving to each group the name of the people as they emerged from individual renegotiation); one open to all the coordinators:

- a work group focused on the analysis of the reports and thick descriptions from the field with the explicit taking in charge for their production by the coordinator;
- a work group focused on the relation between UC and organizational units emerging from the federation structure reorganization;
- a series of workshops focused on topics and issues related to basic areas (psychological, pedagogical, managerial,...)

We presented those issues as realistic conditions to go on in our training work, in respect to the indications of the large part of the coordinators we met. After our feed back, an intense and conflicting discussion started, assuming the features of a dialogue between trainees and their relationship with trainers.

We reconstructed the main conversational sequences and turning point of this discussion, by crossing and validating our notes from the fields. In order to underline the issues of our contribution we report two relevant sequences that represent the main topics of dialogue conversation (as they seem to us) stemming from the described situation.

### *First Sequence*

1. C: well, then I'll say how things are. You ask us to participate but don't you (T1) think that there is a conflict of interests in your being here as a trainer and in your participating to the institutional table as a reorganization consultant? At this point I



- don't feel protected by this training. Who can assure me it will not be used for internal evaluation?
2. T1 (raising his voice): I disagree and I reject this interpretation. You are surely free to do it, but I think you're confusing the levels here. In this context there is a long ongoing reorganization and change process. The training at CU started more than three years ago and we proposed to go on with it considering the institutional decision of extending it to 16 people. We can't superimpose an institutional fact, where there is an assembly of decisional organs, to a training one...the possibility of thinking of what is happening is at stake, and so is the possibility of using training for this purpose...
  3. D: I'm used to training in which the trainer comes and gives you what he can offer and you take it, a pure training... then you choose what you need and what you don't.
  4. T1: it seems like a bit of a predatory conception of training.

### *Second Sequence*

[... other interventions more and more excited, until the trainers propose a different reorganization of the job]

1. T2: Now it seems reasonable to go on with different modalities, taking also into account the indications of many that talked during the interviews... some ask to go on with the records, some to further explore topics of greater interest [some examples of themes and proposals from the interviews follow].
2. G: I didn't say anything about the proposed themes, you're mystifying the data
3. T1: Maybe you're wrong, as both me and T2 have observed and wrote in our notepads these indications from you
4. G: you're questioning my good will!
5. T1: whatever (smiles winking to T2)
6. L: So, as we wanted to demonstrate, you're dividing us into good and bad...
7. T2: at least you shut up, as you didn't even take part to the interviews! (collective laugh)

### **T1 and T2 are the trainers**

C,D,G,L are trainees.

As far as this article is concerned, we don't make here a deep conversational or linguistic analysis. What we want to achieve presenting these sequences is the stalemate (even the checkmate) in which dialogue between trainers and trainees is here getting bogged down: evocating the possible conflict of interests of one of the trainers (and implicitly hinting at his effective impartiality and equity – 'training that could be used for internal evaluation'), the coordinator (C) in the first sequence puts in strong doubt the reciprocal trust that constitutes the basic condition in whatever training set. The second participant (D), answering to T1 in the third turn of speech, gives his knock out to our proposal of training as reflexion and common elaboration of what happens in the participants' experience, assuming then an individualistic concept of learning.

How will the trainer can be able to persuades them to a new challenge if there isn't the customer's willingness to invest? How could they share the desire and the fear in assuming the challenge of a new professional role, living together the discovery of new way of work and the connected personal transformation, making experience of research as mystery driven (like Turner said), a less instrumental and more reflexive aspect of learning in organizing?

The second sequence is anyway explicit in putting trainers under attack: the participant (G) in second and fourth turn of speech accuses trainer of mystifying data, expressing a sentiment of distance and no trust.

How will they can discuss and share the knowledge yielded by thinking, feeling and perceiving, that can mobilize the faculties of hearing, sight, touch, smell and taste what is the meaning of a new role in a specific contest? How will they shape and share a practical knowledge that is non solely instrumental, displaying mastery of practice, but is also related to passion, emotion and aesthetic understanding? How should the participants continue to work with and put their trust in a trainer who ‘divides them into good and bad’?

In this situation, as you can see, dialogue is under check!

## Concluding Reflections: Going through and beyond dialogue check

Our training experience is only a particular case of a vast array of organizational events in which the social practice of dialogue takes multiple and plural forms. Others and more articulated conversational sequences and situations could have been offered to underline the complexity of the challenge to put into dialogue the ‘oneself’ and the ‘themselves’ in organizational contexts. However, we choose those above because of their symbolic evidence of conflict and difficulties we must deal with, undertaking their crossing and going beyond.

We can assume conflict as a physiological and frequent aspect of organizational exchanges and dynamics: organizations are communities of practitioners constantly negotiating their own conception of action, with disagreements on central issues of their practice. Seeking to shape and share common categories to judge what is thought to be correct or incorrect and disputing how is the better way to reproduce their actions, people give rise to contrasts, polarizations, relational transactions. Sometimes the exit of such interactions is a new agreement or the achievement of different and innovative ways of cooperation, sometimes they fail, coming to break down, inertia or stronger antagonism.

In our experience we failed the endeavour to achieve a common training agreement about a fruitful circulation and integration of organisational knowledge, promoting a wider understanding on socio-relational dynamics both formal and informal, on decisional processes, accountability’s data, ways to relate with authority. And also failed the proposal to acquire a shared decision in exchanging knowledge through assimilation of mutual elaboration, starting with a shared analysis of particular routines on the job and practices of action, knowledge developed inside the culture and the organisational identity.

In conclusion, we can summarize some issues and critical question as findings of our experience:

- the proposal to enhance dialogism can getting bogged down, dealing with oppositions, refusals, organizational and institutional involvements, affiliations and conflict dynamics. It can happen and we have to accept it, although relevant could be the injury given to the training set as metaphorical place of dialogical interaction;
- not everything can be negotiated, and our own influence and power to enact making sense processes and to build organizational contexts needs to go over contingent interactions, however important they are. The training lever is only one (and sometime limited) of plural devices and stances to accompany and to support people in their organizational life;
- setting appears as a ground where representations and different meanings of the concept of change and learning seek to find a balance between co-operation and conflict in people and in professional groups;
- we need a cultural organizational psychological perspective to gather a deeper comprehension of complex dimensions, crossing the relation between the ‘you’ and the ‘other’ (e.g. role interpretation, institutional bonds, power dynamics, interests

opposition and composition, managing transaction, conversational practices and negotiations) (DeDreu, Gelfand, 2007; Scaratti, Gozzoli, 2009).

At the end, we would propose a last question. In our concept of training is a matter of fact the need to imagine a definite time and situation to offer people the possibility to dialogue and to jointly cope with problems and to find creative solutions. If people are given time to think and to interpret logics and actions' prospect, they stick to the problem and avoid using inadequate shortcuts repeating unproductive solutions.

Our hypothesis is that the possibility to generate real changes as improvement in work settings, cannot be assigned only to the technical reengineering process, but demands also of a serious work in accompanying, supporting and valuing resources and cultures (a scaffolding process – Scaratti, Stoppini, Zucchermaglio, 2009) through which changes are possible and are able to become new operational routines.

The question is if a training action does maintain some sense when inertia, resistance, rigidity prevail and impede the connection between thought and action, when the refuse of dialogue obstructs the ability to cope with the multiple emergencies growing up in a situation of constant evolution and change.

We have no easy answers. Nevertheless we can underline what we tried to promote and to improve in the contexts described

- seeking to a strong alliance with the key people in the organisation;
- taking into account some issues of internal conflict, associated with organisational power dynamics and competitions between individuals, groups and plural stakeholders;
- nurturing the process of meaning's attribution (new challenges and strategic choices related to the new roles) with a relevant organisational support (organisational choice of having a unique co-ordinator, coherence between declared and utilised values);
- believing that the quality of achieved knowledge depends on people's willingness to look at the situation in different/creative ways, to create new possible worlds (Shön, 1983), to sustain sense-making processes (Weick, 1969, 1995) by organizing and creating their environment in the attempt to build a meaningful reality.

Sometime dialogue may be under check, but we can accept conflicting components of its dynamics and work for a more articulate level of dialogical transactions in organizational contexts.

In organizational contexts, people engage discussions and undertake negotiations about their ethic, aesthetic and utilitarian categories, endeavouring to gain a *dwelling* in their practice (Polanyi, 1958). This is not without passion, emotion, pleasure and pain, desires and threats, quiet and angry, sensorial knowledge: a varying range of feelings and perceptions which may be intercepted, understood and elaborated.

Instead of dropping out of conflicting situation, we have to nurture the disposition to move across them, like sailing paths and trajectories that the relationship with other humans and non-human objects constantly draft, seeking to achieve the good enough stability and balance, socially and collectively elaborated. It's a kind of disposition like that of Dante's description of Ulisse's voyage in unknown regions (Gherardi, 2006, b). As Ulisse inspires in his companions the desire to continue the journey of discovery, when dialogue is under check we are involved to explore the obscure region of organizational inertia and non sense, delivering from underground of tacit and distributed knowledge new source of discovery, creation and invention, generating passion for every day situations and organizational practices.

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# Who is an Addressee of a Younger Pupil's Written Utterance?

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The system of meta-linguistic concepts, which M. Bakhtin developed (1986) and used as a foundation for his speech genre theory, turns out to be productive not only for the description of the supreme forms of written speech, as the researcher himself showed, but also for the analysis of written speech with children, as well as for the training of written speech with junior schoolchildren (Staragina, 1997).

What Bakhtin's concepts are interesting for us? First of all these are:

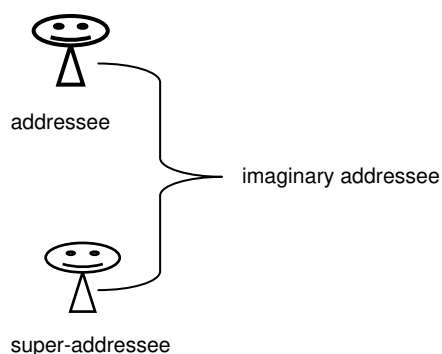
- the utterance
- the addressee and the super-addressee
- the author's vision outlook (“кругозор видения”)
- the author's position of outsideness (“вненаходимость”).

According to Bakhtin, the utterance should be regarded as a speech communication unit. The definitive distinction of the utterance in comparison with any linguistic unit (word or sentence) is addressivity that goes far beyond the field of linguistics.

The addressivity of the utterance by Bakhtin is connected with the author's marking the utterance subject side known by all the communication participants. The author, as a rule, tries to keep the experience of dealing with the subject common for all the interlocutors. Having directed the utterance to somebody, the author supposes that those whom he/she addresses are aware of the subject in question, can potentially understand the speaker, and thus can answer.

M. Bakhtin discussing the developed forms of written speech (“secondary speech genre”) starts dealing with such concepts as the addressee and the super-addressee. The addressee by Bakhtin is one who is in the same meaningful context with the author “here and now”. The concept of the super-addressee is very important for Bakhtinian approach because the super-addressee is someone who will understand the author once. It's the author's desire for understanding. We propose that the super-addressee is one who will have a later access to the written utterance only (“somewhere and once”).

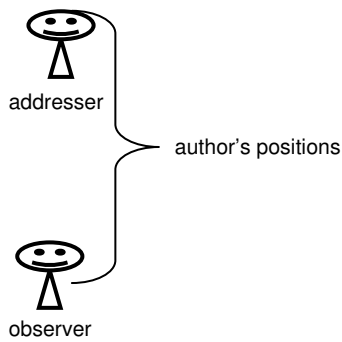
If we set out that in the conditions of written speech the author starts dealing with the imaginary addressee we can assert, according to Bakhtin, that this imaginary addressee has two components: the addressee and the super-addressee (pic. 1).



Pic.1

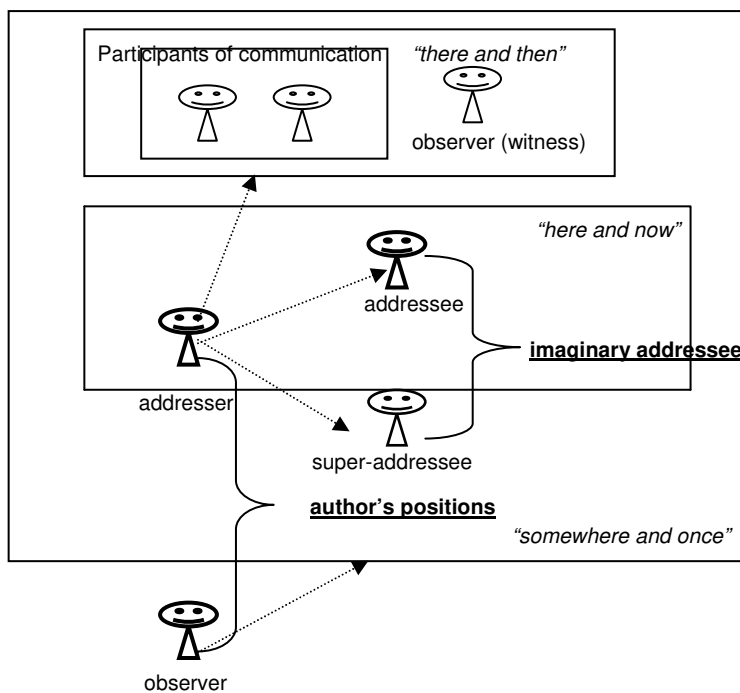
Bakhtinian approach to the utterance allows us to regard the building of the utterance as the act (Старогаина, 2004). We consider the utterance act as the positional one. The ability to act positionally during the building of written speech results in the written utterance being the reference foundation for the return utterance act not only for the addressee who is in the same meaningful context with the author "here and now", but also for the super-addressee having a later access to the written utterance only.

In the positional utterance act we underline such positions as the position of addresser (one who builds the utterance "here and now") and the position of observer (one who is outside the situation of written communication) (pic. 2).



Pic.2

Bakhtin used a concept "vision outlook" for the explanation the meaning of the concept "position" and he wrote about the author's position of outsideness. According to Bakhtin, let us consider the "vision outlook" of the written utterance author (pic. 3).



Pic.3. "Vision outlook" of the written utterance author

As a participant of written communication, the author in the position of addresser interacts "here and now" with his/her addressee concerning the utterance subject. At the same time the utterance subject is not just a certain object in question, but the utterance subject is always somebody's utterance having being pronounced or written "there and then"

concerning this object. In situation of communication “there and then” the utterance author can see himself as a participant of communication or as a witness of this communication. Beside the two mentioned situations of communication, the author in the position of addresser also “sees” a super-addressee and, thus, with the help of own written utterance makes a basis for a possible situation of communication “somewhere and once”.

Proceeding from understanding the fact that what we see is our “Self”, we have a good reason to suppose that the author of written utterance is a complicated phenomenon, integrating a number of “Selves”: “Self” as an addressee “here and now”, “Self” as a participant of communication “there and then” or “Self” as an observer-witness “there and then”, “Self” as a super-addressee “somewhere and once”. But even such a wide “vision outlook” of the author from the position of addresser is nevertheless restricted, because the only thing the addresser does not see during the building of his utterance is himself – it means that his “Self” does not include the integral component “Self” as an addresser. Such a deficiency of “Self”, to our mind, shows up in the absence of meaningful completeness of the written speech.

It is only possible to compensate such a deficiency due to simultaneous acting as an addresser and as an observer. Only the position of observer makes it possible for the author’s “vision outlook” to overwhelm all the three situations of communication as a whole: in these situations, their main participant shows up – the addresser himself. This makes it possible to see oneself from outside, to see oneself as another person.

In this way, the “author’s outlook” supported by the simultaneous acts in two positions – in the position of addresser and the position of observer, allows the author to “assemble” all his possible “Selves” and to act in written communication as an integral “Self”, what actually ensures making an utterance as an addressed meaningful speech.

This model of the author’s “vision outlook” reflects the developed form of written speech. We can say that it is the model of the ideal form (L.Vygotsky). But we are interested in studying the real forms of written speech and in developing ones.

The present research aim is studying the age-related abilities with children who have just gotten down to master writing to act as an addressor in the conditions of written communication. We supposed, according to the famous Russian child’s psychologist D. Elkonin, that for children aged six and seven to act as an addressor in the conditions of written communication is a big problem. The main cause of this problem for children, by D. Elkonin, is impossibility to imagine the interlocutor and keep the inner dialog with him/her (Эльконин, 1998).

## Description of experiment

In order to prove our hypothesis we turned to an experiment where we created such conditions that for children the written speech turned out to be the only means of communication with adult. To evaluate if the child takes the position of addressor acting in the conditions of written communication, the child was suggested not only to write a letter for the adult, but to write a letter where the child was supposed to give his/her answers to some questions. The proposed questions concerned the child’s participation in the game with his/her classmates. Thus, the game, about which the adult put some questions, is the utterance subject for the child who took the position of addressor, because it is that serves as the common meaningful context both for the child and for the adult. The adult whom the child writes the letter with the answers to the questions is the addressee. Somebody else, besides the teacher, who will be able to read the children’s letters, can be considered as the super-addressee. The children weren’t informed about it.

The conditions of written communications were the following. Within a specially developed course of game lessons for the first-graders “Two witches”, during one of such lessons the children (the fifth month of study) were suggested to unite into several groups and to play on their own favorite plot-and-role games (“At a concert”, “Traffic con-

troller”, etc.). After the time for the game had passed, the children returned to the classroom and were asked to tell the teacher how it was to play in groups. The teacher told the children that the only way she could get the story told by every child was to write her a letter where they were supposed to tell 1) about the name of the game they had played, 2) if they liked the game, 3) if the children had broken the rules of the game and 4) if the witches had interfered with the game. The children liked the ideas of the teacher to write her a letter. The teacher's questions weren't written down on the blackboard.

We would like to point out that the children were not systematically taught writing (although many had already command of these skilled after their pre-school learning). The children who could not or did not want to write by themselves were suggested a help from the adult. Only one child from 28 did not started to write a letter; he was suggested help and accepted it. The assistant wrote down the text pronounced by this child.

## Results of Experiment

28 children's works were analyzed. They were divided into groups on the basis of the following evaluation:

- how many teacher's questions the child answers
- if the child answers the own additional questions
- what exactly additional questions connect: the suggested topic; another topic; the written speech itself.

1 group (4%). The child does not answer the suggested questions. All the own additional questions answered in the letter have nothing to do with this subject of utterance.

2 group (68%). The child gives answers to the first one or three questions of the teacher and then turns to the answers to his/her own questions connected with the topic of the letter.

3 group (7%). The child gives answers to the first one or two questions of the teacher and then turns to the answers to his/her own questions concerning not so much the topic of the letter, rather than the written speech itself (for example, whom the letter from).

4 group (21%). The child gives answers to the asked questions only. There aren't own additional questions.

## Discussing the results

**The first group.** We give an example of such a work:

«Goose sits comet Mercury Venice Earth Mars Jupiter Saturn Uranium Neptune Pluto Darina Veronica Ela Ola Duck Fox on the water-melon horse».

The fact that the child fully ignores the questions of the teacher can prove that the child as the author does take the situation of communication “here and now” set forth by the addressee as real.

We can suppose that the child answers the following additional questions:

1. Can you write down the name of the object? Can you write down the name of the action?
2. Do you know the names of the planets?
3. Whom do you play with during the pauses? Etc.

The writing child “does nor see” his real interlocutor in the written communication and communicates definitely with somebody else (we can speak about an “unreal addressee” or “inventing addressee”). In this case, the written speech is a set of words that can hardly be connected with the topic of the letter.



We assert that in this group there is the imaginary addressee in the written communication. This imaginary addressee is the total unreal addressee.

**The second group.** Let us examine the example of the children's works.

«Concert. I would like to play concert again. I hope I will play concert again.»

The reconstruction gives us the following questions answered by the author of this letter:

- What play did you play?
- Do you want to play this game again?
- Are you sure you will have another chance to play this game?

No doubt that the reconstructed situation of communication “here and now” differs significantly from the initial variant.

We got some works where the authors answer the first and the second question or the second question only of the questions proposed by the real interlocutor, adding some answers to the fancied questions.

The fact that the authors in this group answer one or two questions of the four can prove that only for some time the authors see their addressee in the communication situation “here and now” as a real one. Later they start to imagine “their own” addressee substituting the real situation of communication with a fancied one and “putting” the interlocutor into the “Procrustian Bed” of their own will to speak about what they want.

Let us examine one more example of the children's works.

[Ind] «I played concert. I liked it, because everybody kept to the rules, and that is why we made it well. Everything was very beautiful. Everybody clapped the hands very loudly.»

The fact that this child answers nearly all the questions of the experimentalist trying to reconstruct the events of the game may be a strong evidence of the fact that this author has some perception of the situation of communication “here and now”. As in the previous work, it is far from being real, but at the same time the child has a perception of the situation “there and then”. And this may mean that beside some real perception of the addressee, the author imagines own addressee and keeps the inner dialog with this unreal addressee.

In this group in whole there is the imaginary addressee. This imaginary addressee includes such components as unreal addressee and some real one.

**The third group.** Let us see the example of this group works:

«Concert. It was very interesting to you to the concert. Letter. From Vova and from the singers.»

The reconstruction gives us two situations of communication kept by the author: “here and now” and “somewhere and once”. The questions answered by the author of this letter:

- What game did you play?
- How do you think, if I played this game, would I like it?
- What is this?
- Whom is this letter from?

We see that the first question is taken from the real suggested situation “here and now”, the second question is fancied by the child not in a real, but in an imagined situation of communication, which at the same time takes place, according to the child, “here and now”. Supposedly the interlocutor is the same; the author did not change it for the question, but the author “edits” his questions to him.

The third and the fourth question are definitely beyond the situation “here and now”, because they concern the written work itself as if it had been already written and lain “somewhere and once” (for example, on the addressee's table). At the same time it is

obvious that if the fourth question is put for a real addressee from the situation “here and now”, the third question may belong both to him, and to some alien person who does not know what is happening “here and now”. The “vision outlook” of the author must have included somebody else – a super-addressee, the one who may see the written text by chance and ask what it is.

The fact that the authors in this group, as in the previous group, answer the first 1–2 questions only makes it possible to suppose that they also have a certain real perception of the situation of communication “here and now”. And the fact that later they start answering their own questions connected not so much with the topic of the letter, but rather than the written speech itself (for example, whom this letter from), can be an evidence that they have a certain perception of the situation of communication “some-where and once”.

We can assert that in this group there is the imaginary addressee. This imaginary addressee includes such components as the unreal addressee, the real addressee and the super-addressee.

**The fourth group.** Let us see the example of the children's works in this group.

«Concert. I liked it very much. But the Silent Witch cast a spell on Vova.»

The reconstruction gives us the following questions answered by the author of this letter:

- What play did you play?
- Do you like this game?
- Has the witches interfered with the game?

We see that all these questions are taken from the real suggested situation “here and now”. The fact that the authors in this group answer only teacher's questions without any additional questions allows us to assert that in this group the imaginary addressee includes only real addressee's component.

## Conclusions

The research of the written speech with children based on Bakhtinian metalinguistic concepts showed that the six/seven-year-old children who just start mastering writing can build the written speech addressed to the imaginary addressee. But we saw that the child's imaginary addressee is distinguished from the imaginary addressee of the developed author. This fact allows specify the cause of the children's difficulties in mastering of written speech proposed by D. Elkonin.

In our research we divided the Bakhtin's concept of addressee into the concepts of real addressee and unreal addressee. The real addressee is the interlocutor who is in the same meaningful context with the child. The unreal addressee is the addressee who is desirable, “convenient” for the child. The child often turns the real interlocutor into the unreal one. In a situation of direct communication, an addressee, with the help of verbal and non-verbal behavior, can resist such arbitrariness by the addressor. In a written speech, on the contrary, the addressee is defenseless. The child makes the addressee more convenient for himself by truncating the meaningful context. We have got answer to our question about what it meant “to act in the position” during making an utterance action in written speech if it was the position of addressor. We can say that if the author in the conditions of written communication acts in the position of addressor he/she imagines the real addressee and the super-addressee. While the author “sees” the unreal addressee only or he/she “sees” the “unreal + real” addressee but he/she does not see the super-addressee this author acts far beyond the position of addressor.

We think that the difficulties in teaching the younger schoolchildren are connected with that the attention is not paid to learning of the positional utterance act in the con-

ditions of written communication. The children's problems in mastering of written speech are not connected with the impossibility to imagine the interlocutor and keep the inner dialog with him/her only. These difficulties are connected with followings: the children can't act in the position of addressor in the conditions of written speech. The task of "bringing to reality" the addressee is the first important learning task of the younger schoolchildren. Without the solution of this task the written utterance is impossible for schoolchildren in different ages. As for the super-addressee we can say that the task of finding the difference between the unreal addressee and the super-addressee is the second important task of the written speech learning.

Certainly we realize that there are the learning tasks which concern the position of observer, but the examination of them is beyond the frame of our paper.

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*Theory*



# Creative Living and Aesthetic Vision

## Cultivating finer sensibilities

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Forms are many, forms are different, each of them having its limits. But if this were absolute, if all forms remained obstinately separate, then there would be a fearful loneliness of multitude. But the varied forms, in their very separateness, must carry something, which indicates the paradox of their ultimate unity; otherwise there would be no creation.

Rabindranath Tagore, *The Creative Ideal*

In the infinite show of variety in the world, if we can achieve the ideal of unity, the act then becomes creative. Variety is not at the expense of unity or vice versa; instead one sees the centrifugal and centripetal forces at play in the incredible multitude of the world. How do heterogeneous entities relate to each other and how do we shape them into a provisionally conclusive ensemble? In his early works, Bakhtin was preoccupied with these questions. The nature of the relationship between entities – be it between art and life, author and hero, experienced life and narrativised tale and so forth were his main concerns and these fell in the category of “architectonics”, while its sub-category “aesthetics” dealt with the problem of bringing together myriad forms to make a consummated whole.

At the very outset, Bakhtin (1990) lays out the foundation for aesthetic activity by stating the relationship between created works and lived lives as he proclaims, “Art and life are not one, but they must become united in myself – in the unity of my answerability” (p. 2). Bakhtin takes particular caution to point out that any random grouping of elements do not constitute wholesomeness of art, nor should the links be mechanical. A precariously glued relationship between art and life in which the individual leaves in desperation the “fretful cares of everyday life” to enter the world of art for “inspiration, sweet sounds and prayers” only ends up leading a split life. Art bears no responsibility towards life and life remains prosaic, untouched by the vitality of art. Both remain alien to each other because the “mechanical connection” between them only touches at a surface level. Bakhtin insists that only mutual answerability in which art and life converge within the individual – not as a synthesized whole but as partners in a dialogue could set the stage for aesthetic vision. The humble prose of life must challenge the “audaciously self-confident” world of art to assume some blame and guilt. Art cannot inspire by taking possession of life, because all that one would be left with is one dominant voice – that of the art. Any state of possession eliminates the very possibility of a dialogue for Bakhtin. Art cannot be mechanically sliced out of life either; it needs to be outside and has the right to demand some ornamentation to make it high-flown and grand. About the bi-directional and dynamic nature of *answerability* Bakhtin explains:

I have to answer with my own life for what I have experienced and understood in art, so that everything I have experienced and understood would not remain ineffectual in my life. But answerability entails guilt, or liability to blame. It is not only mutual answerability that art and life must assume, but also mutual liability to blame (AA, p. 1).

This push and pull in the relationship is so crucial for Bakhtin; art cannot enjoy the exalted status and not do its duty to pull life to a higher plane and life must push itself to ascend to a higher mode of consciousness in order to gain better perspective on its experiences. Life must also exercise its right to pull art to the ‘plains’ – to the earthly level so that it doesn’t act with impunity and indifference towards all that is quotidian in life.

The genesis of art is certainly in life, but it is not life, nor can it be a mechanical mouthpiece for life to voice its concerns. But art has the ability to express life’s concerns with greater clarity in a profound manner, so much so that the concern and its possible remedies are locked in, and with this dual capacity art answers to life. There is nothing magical about creativity and it does not necessarily burst out like a “flash”; it requires effort and I want to argue that the product of this effort is a developmental achievement. It is convenient to live life without the answerability factor as Bakhtin aptly points out, “For it is certainly easier to create without answering for life, and easier to live without any consideration for art” (AA, p. 2). In this kind of answerability alone can there be a creative, productive and meaningful relationship between the creator and the created – the author and the hero, forming the very basis of architectonics.

In order to understand the psychological dimensions of Bakhtin’s architectonics, it is befitting to bring Lev Vygotsky’s extraordinary, but rarely cited work on *The Psychology of Art* (1971). In his introductory remarks to this work, A. N. Leontiev aptly recommends that this brilliant work be read on two levels – as the “psychology of *art*” and as the “*psychology* of art” (P.VI), so that neither art nor psychology is subordinated to one another. In this unique work, Vygotsky explored various forms of literature from fables to novels with particular emphasis on Shakespeare’s tragedies. Like Bakhtin, Vygotsky also found Formalism to be extremely inadequate in covering all the dimensions of aesthetics. The fundamental problem, Vygotsky says lies in splitting the psychology of *art* from the *psychology* of art – the “aesthetics from above” derived from laws governing the soul, as if the soul had some grand undeniable existential features and as such this approach did not lend itself to any meaningful scientific investigation, whereas the ‘aesthetics from below’ caught up in the rigors of experimentation with exclusive focus on the forms in the art work could not yield anything more than “primordial and fundamentally meaningless facts” (p. 10). With its fact-obsessed methods, this approach was incapable of elevating the art, the artist or the consumer of art to a higher plane. Vygotsky explains that works of art are unquestionably constituted by human feelings, sensations, passions and so forth and these very feelings that contribute to art are also transformed by the art. They are both suppliers for art and beneficiaries of art. Vygotsky argues that art should not be seen as a conveyor belt of author’s emotions. That sort of mechanical transmission of emotions would be very tragic for art, says Vygotsky. For instance, in Shakespeare’s Hamlet, not only is the movement of tragic events conveyed, but also it transforms tragedy itself in a way to draw readers to grasp it on a higher plane of truth. Thus, we see the transformation of all the parties involved – the author, the text, the reader and also the culture along with the concepts of human emotions. For Vygotsky, the “aesthetics from above” and the ‘aesthetics from below’ – the extreme subjective or objective exploration of the psychology of art eliminates the voices of multiple parties and more importantly ignores the metamorphosis of emotions and concepts. Failure to recognize this transfiguration during the interaction between art and life, according to Vygotsky in Shakespeare’s tragedy would only be tragic for aesthetics.

Art seen exclusively as an expression of author’s feelings or as a reception by the reader would be impoverishing, says Bakhtin (1990) and he gives his reasons:

“Expressive” aesthetic theory is but one of many philosophical theories (ethical, philosophico-historical, metaphysical, religious) that we could call “impoverishing” theories, because they seek to explain the creatively productive event by reducing its full amplitude. And they do so, first of all, by reducing the number of participants: for purposes of expla-

nation, the event is transposed in all its constituents to the unitary plane of a single consciousness, and it is within the unity of this single consciousness that the event is to be understood and deduced in all its constituents. (AHAA, p. 87)

When all the voices are placed on a single plane of consciousness, all we are left with is repetition or a “theoretical transcription of an already accomplished event” (AHAA, p. 87), whereas when multiple voices intermingle and interanimate there is the freshness of creativity.

Both Bakhtin and Vygotsky were equally frustrated with the dominance of Formalism in approaching the works of art. Both would argue that the essence and function of art are not contained in the works of art as inherent forms – as if they have independent existence and the audience of the artistic work does not just discover those form for their delight. Aesthetics is more than recognition or discovery of forms, if anything one plays an active role – as a co-participant to construct form during the interaction with the work of art. For Bakhtin, this extraordinary engagement is a serious event in which the work of art is transposed to another “axiological plane” to bestow “the gift of *form* upon it” (AHAA, p. 87), and transmute it formally. Bakhtin goes on to assert, “And this formal enrichment is impossible if a *merging* with the object so treated occurs” (AHAA, p. 87). Bakhtin often repeats almost like a mantra that there is no gain in merger. Without the contribution of multiple parties, aesthetics becomes a study of forms that are “atomized and insipid” and reduced to “positivist empirical data, which are lost in a wilderness of senseless detail” (Bakhtin & Medvdev, 1985, p. 4)

Vygotsky (1971) identifies at least three fundamental errors in experimental aesthetics that has dominated the psychology of art. The first problem is the introspective method, which Vygotsky argues is “starting from the wrong end”, because its focus is mainly on individual feelings, responses and appraisals and these may very well be “arbitrary, secondary or even irrelevant features of aesthetic behavior” (p. 18). Immediate responses, feelings and impressions are far too simple and elementary that they do not necessarily constitute aesthetic experiences. Besides, aesthetic feeling is something that evolves as one reflects on immediate impressions and brings other experiences, texts, and other voices to make sense of those instantaneous and unreflective responses. With the help of other extra-textual materials, the immediate response may be strengthened, rationalized and understood at a deeper level or might even undergo change. This slow evolutionary process cannot be captured by experimental methods.

The second problem that Vygotsky points out is the inability of experimental aesthetics to distinguish between ordinary and aesthetic experience. If the sublime cannot be set apart from the mundane, then the topic we are dealing with is not aesthetics at all. Vygotsky acknowledges that colors, sounds, lines or musical notes or movements of the body are of course integral part of artistic forms, but they are rudimentary and the perception and evaluation of these simple features do not authentically qualify as an aesthetic experience.

Thirdly, the experimental aesthetics erroneously treats “a complex aesthetic experience” as “the sum of individual minor aesthetic pleasures” (p. 18), and this for Vygotsky is the biggest blunder. Stringing together each minor experience with mechanical links do not add up to a wholesome aesthetic experience; it does not show the interpenetration of experiences and impressions to transform each one of them to create a whole new awareness. In a very Gestalt sense, the whole is larger than the sum of parts.

As a corrective measure to these problems, Vygotsky proposes an “objective – analytical method’ – a term he borrowed from Muller-Freienfel to address his twin concerns – the psychological aspects of art and the artistic aspects of psychology. According to Vygotsky psychology for too long has been focusing exclusively on he artist or the audience for the purpose of analysis and has completely disregarded the work of art. It must be noted that he wrote this work in early 1920’s and almost a century later we are still



faced with the same problem. Trapped in rigid disciplinary boundaries we think that the works of art is the exclusive business of literary critics or art historians or any other discipline specific to a particular art form. But then consciousness is the business of psychologists and higher modes of consciousness and understanding finer sensibilities and sensitivities is the business of developmental psychologists in particular and if we want to understand aesthetic experiences we cannot disregard the work of art. Such an error, Vygotsky says is akin to a judge passing a sentence based on the testimonies of the defendant or the plaintiff without considering what the case is. While the statements of the two parties are crucial, they are only few pieces of the puzzle. Psychologists concentrating mainly on the artist or the audience commit the same error, says Vygotsky. This shortcoming stems from taking things all too literally – that only individuals have a psyche, a voice and a personality and hence qualify as worthy subjects for psychological study. Vygotsky reminds us that even works of art do possess these attributes. Like individual personalities, they also invite certain kind of responses, stir certain thoughts and emotions, voice realities in a certain tone, encode messages in a certain manner and although Vygotsky did not use the term dialogue or voice in this specific context, he clearly implies that one must address aesthetics as a living dialogue between the artist, the art and the audience.

The essentialist approach with its experimental methods has failed to adequately address the phenomenon of psychology of art in a comprehensive manner as Vygotsky has pointed out rather convincingly. These methods concentrate mainly on what is readily available – those that are visible and analyzable – all that occurs at a conscious level. But then, art, both at the creating and the receiving end has been associated with something so inexplicable, mysterious and magical and hence inaccessible to the conscious mind. It can only be felt and that feeling is beyond words. Normally, this is how most of us respond to art or express our sense of awe and wonderment when we feel captivated by works of art. There is no language to express the hypnotic trance we enter into. That being so, perhaps the secret of aesthetic experience lies in that mysterious zone of one's being – the subconscious or the unconscious level, and Freud emphatically said that one must plumb that bewildering region to gather fragments from our past buried here long ago as a way of coping with powerful dark forces of the psyche. These fragments provide some cues on the negative and forbidden emotions that have been sublimated to find expression in an artistic form. Vygotsky acknowledges the workings of subconscious in our engagement with art and recognizes that words may not be exacting and faithful in expressing our feelings for and about art. Vygotsky accepts that even artists cannot offer clear-cut methods or formulas they deploy for their creative work. With due consideration to all these factors, Vygotsky makes a compelling argument against the fundamental tenets of psychoanalysis.

First and foremost, Vygotsky (1971) avers that the conscious and the sub-conscious zones are not separated by some well-fortified wall. He says, "Processes generated in the subconscious frequently continue into our consciousness; conversely, many a conscious fact is pushed into the subconscious. In our minds there exists a continuous, lively, and dynamic connection between the two areas" (P.72). Vygotsky goes on to make an even more interesting observation; he says the subconscious does not passively reveal itself in the works of art, but is also transformed in the works of art. This simultaneous revelation and transformation makes it clear that we cannot make any claims of unveiling the hidden zones of our unconscious world in some pure unmixed form. Any conscious interpretation or impressions of the art we offer with some links to the subconscious itself is a work of art according to Vygotsky. He says this reflection "must be regarded as a subsequent rationalization, as a self-deception, a justification before one's own intellect, or an explanation devised post factum" (p. 72).

Vygotsky, like Bakhtin clearly invites us to look into the ambiguous zone to appreciate the development of aesthetic sensibilities. Without the mystification, art would not

retain the aura of grandeur – as something above and beyond the realm of consciousness and without the demystification there would be no understanding of art. The former says a lot about the psychology of art and later speaks about the art of psychology.

For Freud, the psychical mechanisms explain all forms of social activity and organization. Since his theory is built on essential pathos of human nature, he sees art as a cover for our infantile fantasies, aggression and forbidden desires. The shortcoming of the psychosexual theory of development is its failure to adequately explain the changing faces of art in history. What qualifies as a work of art has changed over time and even those great works of art that have survived the test of time have been cast in a different light. Vygotsky (1971) points out that psychoanalysis operates as if it “had a catalogue of sex symbols and these symbols remained the same at all times, for all peoples, and that that it were enough to find corresponding symbols in the artistic creativity of an artist to determine that he is suffering from an Oedipus complex, voyeurism and so on” (P.81). If emotions shown in works of art are treated as coded messages then art loses its rightful place in our lives. Every emotion gets a negative twist: tender feelings of yearning becomes some sort of compensation for feelings of deprivation or as a wish-fulfillment and if the topic is murder or some form of violent aggression it could get a pathological spin of necrophilia and so forth. The real danger in this unconscious driven view of art is the *remedy* for ailment is mistaken as a *symptom* of neurosis. In concluding his critique of psychoanalysis, Vygotsky (1971) judiciously says, “Art as the subconscious is a problem: art as the social solution for the subconscious is its likely solution” (p. 85).

Psychology has had an incredible fascination with the idea of art as an individual affair, be it as a creator or as a recipient. John Dewey (1958) insists in his famous work *Art as Experience* that “the uniquely distinguishing feature of aesthetic experience is exactly the fact that no such distinction of self and object exists in it” (p. 249), and thus claims that there is total absorption of the self in the art form. For Dewey, this self-surrender is crucial not only in experiencing art but in any activity that we undertake, particularly the ones that demand serious attention. Dewey sees this as a mark of maturity, when all the mental energy flows into the activity that one is engaged in.

In a similar vein, Mihaly Csikzentmihalyi (1993) recommends what he calls as the “flow” to reach the pinnacle of human experience. This intense experience, he says is critical for our over-all growth. According to him this necessary “flow” is characterized by clear goals, decisive action, merger of action and awareness, concentration, loss of self-awareness, altered sense of time and finally the experience becoming “autotelic” – meaning an activity “worth doing for its own sake” (p. 178, 179). He cites examples from athletes, musicians, dancers, scientists and even spiritual aspirants to convince us that the “flow” is an essential feature of highly talented individuals. Furthermore, Csikzentmihalyi argues that the “flow” has a therapeutic value and it can be cultivated; in other words, if one feels stagnated in life they can learn to unblock the flow to breakthrough their inhibitions, so that their creative activity may begin or resume. Csikzentmihalyi on one hand does not say at least on a theoretical level that creativity emanates exclusively from the individual. He says it is a combination of individual talent, the artistic domain and the institutions that validate, reward or reject. But when we read his account, clearly the focus is on the individual. Drawing inspiration from Csikzentmihalyi’s works, Howard Gardner (1993) studied the lives of seven influential individuals – Freud, Einstein, Picasso, Stravinsky, Eliot, Graham and Gandhi, in his influential book *Creating Minds*, to present what he calls in the subtitle of his book “An Anatomy of Creativity”. The very word ‘anatomy’ is indicative of his approach; it is precisely that – an attempt to dissect the lives of these individuals to identify some common attributes all of them share, like childishness, childlikeness, incredible powers of concentration and tenacity and so forth. Gardner clearly and emphatically states that he has approached creativity from a “great man/great woman” perspective to perhaps identify the elements of Csikzentmihalyi’s “flow” and in some way to track the course of the flow.

While the idea of “flow” is appealing and on some level is certainly desirable, after all, who could argue against building a steady mind and developing a focused determination to pursue your ideas, I want to argue that it is somewhat limited and falls short in explaining the complex processes of aesthetic experience. Yes, when people are overwhelmed by the power of art, they understandably and justifiably use phrases like “being lost in” or “mesmerized” or “completely taken” by art. Artists also use similar phrases to describe the unwavering attention they paid to their creative work. These expressions of dissolution are real, but they are only the starting point or an intermediary step in the development of aesthetic consciousness. Where there is surrender, there is only genuflection, not aesthetics. It is the world of art that dominates and all other parties are subordinated to its power. In a situation like this we are dealing with a religious and not an aesthetic experience as Bakhtin (1990) says, “when the other consciousness is the encompassing consciousness of God, a *religious* event takes place (prayer, worship, ritual)” (p. 22).

Let us consider an actor trying to play a role. Initially he has to get under the skin of the character he sets out to play and immerse in all the attributes of that character and merge with the character. This is the first step and is absolutely crucial for the actor in his evolving role. Having fully felt the character he is playing, he must come out of the character to play the character. If he remains in the character, there is no acting and consequently no art. But if he had never entered the “body and soul” of the character then the artistic activity had never begun. Only when you are in the ambiguous zone of “being in the character” and “being out of the character”, with dialogic movements between the two, then we are dealing with aesthetics.

To give another scenario, let us say a singer has to render a melancholic song and if she managed to make her listeners sad through that rendition, then she has succeeded as an artist. But, if she herself felt sad on the stage, it would be a failure of art. If your audience cry and they think you are crying then it is art. But if the artist cries it is no longer art. Perhaps it would be a laughable moment. The singer cannot be emoting the emotions she is trying to convey. But how does she develop the capacity to make her listeners feel the melancholy? During the process of learning and perfecting the art form, she feels the emotion, and yes, she feels it with a great deal of intensity and even cries. In other words she is moved by the emotion and has fully experienced the emotion. Once she comes out of the experience, she is able to transform the experience into an art form. Had she been “lost” in the experience as Dewey and Csikzentmihalyi claim then she would never be able to deliver the emotion in right proportion. She must vacillate between “feeling” and “not feeling” the emotion so that it is delivered in the right measure. To bring the artistic effect the emotion can neither spill over nor be inadequate and she must be mindful of various other factors – the musical notes, rhythm, lyrics, musical accompaniments and other considerations of stage. Since these multiple factors have to be carefully woven to bring the desired effect, she must be undistracted and thus appears to be “lost” in her art.

Aesthetic philosophies that guide performance traditions in India explain with great deal of clarity on how the artist must churn the emotion to enhance its effect and transform it into an aesthetic sentiment. According to *Natya Sastra* – a treatise on aesthetics of dramaturgy, the artist must use the basic emotions of the human heart, such as love, courage, sadness, anger, fear and so forth and present them through a story, dance, music or whatever the art form is, such that an aesthetic sentiment is experienced by the spectator. Sage Bharata, the author of *Natya Sastra* describes the sublime emotion as ‘*Rasa*’ – literally meaning “juice”, or “taste” or “flavor”. This gastronomic metaphor is ideal for explaining the dynamics of aesthetic experience. Like a chef who takes the basic ingredient and cooks it with spices and condiments to make the dish tasty and flavorful, the artist also takes the basic emotions and seasons them with right measure of gestures, bodily movements and other devices for the spectator’s delight. In art, one receives a gourmet

version of an ordinary emotion. Abhinavagupta, an aesthetic philosopher who wrote extensive commentary on *Natya Sastra* explains that the artist's task is not only to express an emotion but also to offer an exposition of an emotion. As the spectator absorbs the essence of the emotion, he or she cultivates finer taste and slowly develops into a connoisseur of art. The artist squeezes the *Rasa* – the 'juice' or the 'flavor' from life and combines it with the body of poetry, music, dance and so forth to both mimic life and create newer possibilities for life. Art becomes at once mimetic and poetic for the creator and the receiver, setting the stage for art and life to answer each other.

## Between the creator and the creation

If the world of art and the world of life must connect in the "unity of answerability" as Bakhtin claims, how then is it achieved and what are the indications that this necessary process is taking place for the aesthetic vision to emerge? First of all, answerability is not a give entity; it is achieved through a long and an arduous task. It is not something that can be readily identified in a dialogue at a given moment; rather it is something that is realized over a period of time. Furthermore, for Bakhtin aesthetics is not defined by a set of properties or conditions, thus making the concept elusive. Unlike Kant, Bakhtin had very little interest in fixed categories and operational definitions. In the Kantian world of transcendental aesthetics, concepts gain validity as long as they pass through fixed categories and synthetic judgments that are *a priori*, providing grounds for making sense of all experiences. In the highly abstract philosophy of Kant, there can be no traces of concrete life experiences; it has to be far removed from the specifics, the local and the real time, for these are considered contaminants of the pure transcendental aesthetic. Bakhtin, on the other hand had very little patience with anything so far removed from the specifics of life. He practically shunned *phantom* philosophies – be it on aesthetics, ethics or epistemology. In his early work on the Philosophy of the Act, Bakhtin (1993) asserts:

There is no aesthetic ought, scientific ought, and – beside them – an ethical ought; there is only that which is aesthetically, theoretically, socially valid, and these validities may be joined by the ought, for which all of them are instrumental. These positings gain their validity with an aesthetic, a scientific or a sociological unity; the ought gains its validity within the unity of my once-occurrent answerable life" (p. 5).

For Bakhtin, when the prescriptive "ought" dominate the theorizing activity, it simply loses its veridicality. Once an action or thought has achieved its validity in the "nowness" of life, in all its fullness and contradictions, then we may very well be able to detect the "ought". But, when the "ought" dominates, we are looking at a hierarchical organization that does not entertain differences and without differences there is no dialogue. Bakhtin asks us to place our faith in the ethically acting subject to understand ethics rather than using ethical norms that do not have validity in their own right to judge a subject. Ethics must meet its obligation to life and to human sensitivity.

In the early works, Bakhtin approached aesthetics with all its complex dimensions from a philosophical perspective. His long essay – *Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity* often is repetitious, elaborate in the explanation and the tone is covertly theological. It is an open question whether Bakhtin was trying to redeem aesthetics in theological terms or address theological concerns in aesthetic terms. Bakhtin, like his favorite author Dostoevsky had a very complex relationship with God. One of the members of the Bakhtin Circle – Sergey Bocharov, had close contact with Bakhtin and some of the conversations he had with Bakhtin in the early 70's were published in PMLA (Vol.109. No.5 (Oct. 1994) pp. 1009–1024), and in these revealing conversations Bakhtin reflected on many topics that occupied him life long. About the interconnections between aesthetics and religion, Bocharov opines that "The religious aspect of Bakhtin's aesthetics is deep but

concealed, an unspoken, implicit theme, evidently because of the external conditions of writing in the Soviet period and as if he sought to prevent us from judging it too decisively” (p. 1019). Like any intellect living under oppressive conditions, Bakhtin had to write in riddles, hint at something more profound while writing something that is seemingly acceptable in the political climate. In his conversation with Bocharov, Bakhtin confesses that he made compromises in his writings, “Everything that was created in this graceless soil, beneath this unfree sky, all of it is to some degree morally flawed” (p. 1012). When pressed about the “moral flaws”, in his work on Dostoevsky, Bakhtin said that he would have written differently and addressed the “main question”, which he says he never addressed. When Bocharov sought clarification, Bakhtin said:

Philosophical questions, what Dostoevsky agonized about all his life – the existence of God. In the book I was constantly forced to prevaricate, to dodge backward and forward. I had to hold back constantly. The moment a thought got going, I had to break it off. Backward and forward. I even misrepresented the church (p. 1012).

In his mind Bakhtin considered his works on Dostoevsky as merely literary criticism, without any scope of leading the ideas to “other worlds”. In Bakhtin’s self-assessment about the discovery of the “new word” in Dostoevsky’s works – those words that capture the non-merger of voices, in his view “won’t be examined in the highest council. *Up there* it won’t be read” (p. 1013), because in his judgment he did not and/or could not sketch an image of a world that he shared with Dostoevsky in which one sees “the church as a communion of unmerged souls” (p. 1012).

I draw attention to these personal reflections of Bakhtin, because they enable us to understand why he so strongly proposed the kind of relationship between the Author (the creator) and the Hero (the created), in which every voice retains its originality and integrity even while engaging in a dialogue. Bakhtin did not approach religion as an abstract code of conduct – he was not interested in the ‘do’s and the don’ts’, but a feeling for your creator who embodies the “synthesis of ethical solipsism” with “ethical-aesthetic kindness toward the other” (AHAA, p. 6). Bakhtin consistently displayed amazing predilection for un-appropriating relationships not only between fellow human beings, but also between the creator and his or her creation. It was not the abstract or institutional religion that interested him, but it was faith, a living faith or a feeling for faith that energized him. Bakhtin says Dostoevsky was drawn towards, “Not faith (in a sense of a specific faith, in orthodoxy, in progress, in man, in revolution, etc.), but a *sense of faith*, that is, an integral attitude (by means of a whole person) toward a higher and ultimate value” (Toward a Reworking of the Dostoevsky Book (1961) TDP, p. 294). Bakhtin in short celebrated the artistic vision of Dostoevsky because as an author he created characters that were philosophers in their own right; they were not mouthpieces for the author’s worldview. The author may unequivocally disapprove the worldview of his characters, but their voices were never silenced. In Bakhtin’s view, Dostoevsky was endowed with special radar to pick up multiple voices, with all their intermittent pauses to hear dialogicality in our social life.

Bakhtin’s approach to the relationship between the creator and his creation is similar to Nietzsche, whose Zarathustra firmly asserts, “The creator seeks companions, not corpses or herds or believers. The creator seeks fellow-creators, those who inscribe new values on new tables” (Zarathustra’s Prologue, No. 9). The creator cannot and must not have the final say on their creation. That is why Zarathustra famously proclaimed, “I should believe only in a God who understood how to dance” (Of Reading and Writing). While Nietzsche sought dance, Bakhtin sought a dialogue with the creator. The crux of aesthetics lies in this evolving dialogue between the artist, the art and the audience.

Aesthetics is not a given, but achieved and even this achievement cannot be identified at specific nodal points in a dialogue or a conversation. It is a certain way of relating to others and other abstract entities. A mere existence of multiple voices in a fragmented

form in a conversation does not constitute an aesthetic relationship. One has to consider extra-linguistic features and the positionality of various parties and entities and their shifting relationship with ample loopholes and leaving them open-ended. The unfinalizability that is essential for aesthetics does not mean that it is devoid of any anchoring points or periodic closures. Bakhtin sets the free flow of experience and dialogue to what he calls as the “rhythm”, which provides some systematization and channels the flow. Morson and Emerson (1990) explain, “rhythm expresses closure in the present moment, as the loophole expresses openness” (p. 193). In many ways it is a meta-experience, which makes the distant past, the immediate present and the potential future ubiquitous. Bakhtin explains:

Rhythm is the axiological ordering of what is inwardly given or present-on-hand. Rhythm is not expressive in the strict sense of the term; that is it does not express a lived experience, is not founded from within that experience; it is not an emotional-volitional reaction to an object and to meaning, but a reaction *to* that reaction (AHAA, p. 117).

For the activity to become creative one cannot get too complacent enjoying the cadences of the experience “present-on-hand”, – the rhythm must transit into the “extrarhythmic” mode – the necessary dissonance must occur so that “what-is-given” mutates into “what-ought-to-be” (AHAA, p. 118). In Indian aesthetics, rhythm is considered the science and melody the art of music; thus aesthetics integrates rules, laws, structure and the free-flowing, open-ended melody taking music to great heights keeping the potential for creativity intact and ever alive. By insisting on the rhythm and the loophole in activities and relationships, Bakhtin makes sure that laws are not compromised in the free and open world. He is also making sure that there is unity in the diverse elements necessary for aesthetic vision to emerge. There is wholesomeness to aesthetics even as it leaves the ‘window open’ for the birth of new ideas.

How does the relationship between the artist and the art develop? What does it look like in the nascent stage, when the head must create what the heart has conceived? We are dealing with groping consciousness of the creator struggling with a nebulous idea and even after achieving some clarity, the craftsman must search for suitable materials for the craft – an author for words and utterances, a painter for colors and so forth. At this stage we are certainly dealing with only one consciousness, for there can’t be any face-to-face meeting with the creation. The hero’s stable image is yet to be formed and achieving this image, according to Bakhtin is to a considerable extent author’s struggle with himself. The author at this stage does enjoy the benefit of “surplus of *meaning*” (PDP, p. 73); after all he is the creator and the hero is not yet voiced. During this phase, the author is at liberty to play with the hero’s “grimaces, masks, actions, gestures, responses” (AHAA, p. 6) and so forth at his whims to shape the countenance of the hero. This process of building the image of a hero cannot be traced back accurately and the attempt itself according for Bakhtin is flawed. One can only arrive at some plausible explanations because we have to deal with “meaning-related laws” (AHAA, p. 6) governing this process. To assume that the steps can be traced back implies that the process is systematic and sequential. Furthermore, once the image of the hero some stability, the very way we look at the formative moment changes; in other words, its “history on the plane of meanings” (AHAA, p. 6) changes, and furthermore in Bakhtin’s view a microscopic examination of the temporal causes and sequence of this process is not relevant to our concerns about aesthetics. This point is highly instructive for psychologists, developmental psychologists in particular, who are more than eager to draw a flow chart of the creative processes. They design fancy experiments with some literal and figurative “magnifying lens” and “precise timers” to accurately record the sequence of artistic activity. What concerns Bakhtin with respect to aesthetics is the nature of the relationship between the author and the hero where neither party is in possession of the other. The “surplus of meaning” that

the author naturally possesses is slowly relinquished to allow the hero to find meanings in culture and history. Aesthetics emerges at the meeting point of these multiple voices.

Aesthetic contemplation then involves a certain way of relating to objects, individuals and our creation – as equals in a dialogue, a certain way of positioning the other – on a horizontal plane, a certain relationship *to* meaning –making sure that there is no finality or exclusive ownership, a certain manner of questioning – to invite the other into a dialogue so that the response generates another question. In this kind of give and take, human sensibilities are heightened and human sensitivities are strengthened, subtleties and nuances are grasped and responsible choices are made possible and ethical freedom is guaranteed.

Bakhtin found the realization of such an aesthetic vision in Dostoevsky's polyphonic novels and in Goethe's works. Both were able to give life to their creation – to the characters, to the world around them – natural and cultural, and both were so skillful in temporalizing all aspects of reality. While Goethe possessed the "*art of eye*" (SG, p. 27), Dostoevsky we could very well say was endowed with the "art of ear" and both were capable of going beyond what their senses perceived. The aesthetic eye and ear sees and hears what others fail to see and hear. The *seeing eye* of Goethe was just as capable as the *hearing ear* of Dostoevsky to grasp the complex configurations in the society and the historical forces that reconfigure the cultural landscape.

The sharp visual and auditory perceptiveness that contribute to the aesthetic vision of Goethe of Dostoevsky is not necessarily restricted to literary and other forms of fine art. Similar features can be found in creative works in the field of hardcore science too and exemplary scientists also have unusual type of relationship with the topic of their study. The noted philosopher of science, Evelyn Fox Keller (1983) who studied the life and work of Barbara McClintock, a geneticist who won the Nobel Prize observes that this extraordinary scientist had a rare ability to "feel for the organism" and "hear what the organism" has to say and see the "organization and behavior of DNA" (p. 200), and this ability not only set her apart from other scientists, but also enabled her to study movements and pattern formation of biological cells. This creative approach contributed to the amazing discoveries she made in the field of biological science. When Fox Keller asked McClintock on how she was able to uncover the mysteries of genetics, McClintock's responses were, "hear what the material has to say", and have a great deal of patience to wait for the organisms to "come to you", and above all McClintock insists that one must have "a feeling for the organism" (p. 198). McClintock goes on to explain, "No two plants are exactly alike. They're all different, and as a consequence, you have to know the difference" (p. 198). It is interesting to note how she relates to a plant over a period of time, "I start with the seedling and I don't want to leave it. I don't really feel I really know the story if I don't watch the plant all the way along. So I know every plant in the field. I know them intimately, and I find it a great pleasure to know them." (p. 198).

These brief snippets carry all the features of aesthetic activity that Bakhtin emphasized. First and foremost the biological organisms are not some dead cellular structures for McClintock, but living entities with their eccentric behaviors, interesting forms and distinctive voices having their peculiar interaction with the surrounding environment and above all they have their exclusiveness in undergoing change. Like Goethe who was able to see changing shades in the cultural landscape, McClintock was able to recognize differences between plants and variations in the corn cob. Just as Dostoevsky renounces his "surplus" vision to allow his created hero to speak with him, McClintock also allows the biological cells to speak and reveal themselves to her. The same approach that enabled Dostoevsky to uncover the dialogic sphere of human consciousness also facilitated McClintock to discover the dialogic sphere of the natural world.

Bakhtin explains how and why an aesthetic activity is distinct from cognitive processes and performed actions. In basic cognitive act there can be a division between the knower and the known, for the later is simply available for comprehension. Aesthetic

activity is not an opposite of cognitive activity, but rather it “enriches and completes” what has been understood through cognition. This completion and ornamentation is achieved by a whole new way of relating to the object in hand and in turn with this new relationship, further discovery of new laws governing the scientific or cultural phenomena are potentially possible. Aesthetic activity is marked by its receptivity to the aesthetic object and in this process the subject and the object of the activity may momentarily merge or temporarily switch places. The difference between the art and the artist is not so visible or in Bakhtin’s (1990) words, “*it creates the concrete intuitive unity of these two worlds*. It places man in nature, understood as his aesthetic environment, it humanizes nature and naturalizes man.” (CMFVA, p. 279) It is precisely this humanizing of nature and naturalization of individual’s relationship with the natural world that we see in McClintock’s approach to science.

## Creative composition of self and life

Creativity need not be restricted to works of art alone. The processes that apply to creating a work of art may very well apply to the ways in which we compose our lives, the manner in which we relate to others, understand our past, learn from other cultures to find solutions to our sticky problems. We are fundamentally social animals. It is a given and hence cannot afford to be too aloof. We cannot be lost in the crowd either. Types of relationships are as varied as human beings themselves. Just as there are no ideal marriages, there are no ideal relationships. If we take this as a given, how then do we ensure that a relationship is not exploitative or manipulative? When is an individual’s action charmingly innocent and when is it foolishly naïve? When does the individual’s inability or unwillingness to abide by the written and unwritten rules of culture become a sign of mental disorder? When is it an admirable act of non-conformity? After all, adapting to an inherently sick society is no sign of sound mental health.

We are not only cultural subjects but also bearers of history, even the past that was created long before we were born. History may facilitate and/or burden human interactions. How, when and why do we invoke history selectively to our advantage? How, when and why should we unburden ourselves with the baggage of history? Globalism has pushed human relations into a new phase. Nothing is far away and exotic. New patterns are continually forming – some break free from provincialism, while others create local tribes in the global village. Globalism has brought cultures very close; in big cosmopolitan cities inter-racial, inter-ethnic, and inter-cultural marriages are all too common. The same Globalism also has re-opened old wounds and cultural heterogeneity also has produced anxiety among many and hence we also see a “return to the roots” phenomenon giving birth to the most virulent form of cultural chauvinism. Whether these ever-changing patterns in culture lead to what pundits have called “The End of History” (Francis Fukuyama, 1989) or “The Clash of Civilizations” (Samuel P. Huntington, 1993) or both is an open question. Bakhtin did not live to see this new global reality. He died in 1975 and naturally he didn’t have much to say about it. But when we examine Bakhtin’s works from this new reality, we discover that we have much to learn that might be apropos to our times.

Bakhtin constructs human relations based on a triadic equation – I-for-myself, I-for-others, and Others-for-me. These are the parameters within which Bakhtin says we can pose questions about self and other operating in the world. None of these categories are static for Bakhtin; individuals are always developing in an ever-changing world. Bakhtin had no patience for a mechanical “interactionist” approach. The essential categories are to be understood as a unit; they are interdependent and cannot be separated. The interdependence between self and other is not necessarily viewed by Bakhtin as a virtue or as a sign of tolerance or a way to build a harmonious society, rather he points out that it is inevitable because we cannot transcend our solipsism. At a fundamental level we are invisible



to ourselves – I cannot see my own face – I need the other as a mirror. Our view of the world is partial; hence I need the other to fill-in. The filling-in by the other may not be complete, but at the least, it shows clearly that my view is limited.

The necessity of the other, Bakhtin asserts, can be recognized by addressing the fundamental manner in which we experience our “outward appearance”, the “outward boundaries of the body”, and the “outward physical action, both in relation to oneself (in one’s self consciousness) and in relation to another being.” (AHAA, p. 47). The face is the index of our outward appearance and this elementary indicator is not available to our vision. Hence we need a mirror and the expression we see in our reflection, according to Bakhtin is made up of several other expressions. They include the actual emotion or attitude of the moment, let us say we react to a wrinkle or a pigmentation or grey hair and so on that automatically produces a response. Additionally, on another plane we also see in our reflection, the evaluation of our expression by possible others – could be someone specific or a phantom character and the next plane is our response to the evaluation of our expression by the other. Bakhtin is careful to point out that looking at our reflection in the mirror is precisely that – a reflection and not ourselves – we are in front of the mirror, not in it. This act is neither pure perception nor is it psychologically speaking a solitary activity. Simultaneously, we ‘see’ our exterior and we ‘see’ what we think others see and we ‘see’ our response to what others see. This composite view of the outward appearance does not translate into the whole self; it only becomes important material for self-consciousness. The outer vision is important – contributing to the development of inner vision; but taken in isolation it becomes deficient. The pivotal point for Bakhtin is that we are never alone when we look at ourselves in the mirror even in the privacy of our home. The ‘eyes’ of the other is always there. Even in the simple act of seeing our reflection in the mirror encompasses the triadic relationship that Bakhtin stressed upon – the I-for-myself (how I see myself), I-for-others (how others see me) and Others-for-me (how I see others). The perception, the cognition, the evaluation and the response are in one inseparable unit.

Bakhtin takes the limitations of self at a perceptual level to build his case for the necessity of the other at an aesthetic level. The need, the respect and the love is not a prescription offered by Bakhtin for promoting harmony and peace in society; he was not interested in building utopias, he says the categories for seeing ourselves operating in the world are simply unavailable. We are equipped with the capacity too see the contours of the external body against the backdrop of the surrounding world of others, but the same view of ourselves is impossible. The panoramic view is available only to see others, not ourselves. This perceptual limitation is compensated by the cognitive awareness that the others are equally limited in their view. The same principle would apply for our actions also. Bakhtin asks us to consider how absurd it would be if we focus on our actions while we are acting; we must concentrate on the thing we are acting on, but not on the action itself. We can’t be actors and observers at the same time. Bakhtin says it would be fatal to watch the movements of our feet while we are running, jumping or driving. In sum, we simply do not have the analytical categories to ‘see’ our outward appearance, our actions or be able to draw our silhouette with the world as our background. Furthermore, the outer boundaries of the body are stretchable and unlimited. It is like entering into a hall of mirrors and every turn of the head offers only a partial view of the body. The bottom-line is we never get the complete picture of ourselves.

How does this perceptual limitedness set the stage for how we relate to each other? For Bakhtin, first and foremost is love – a revised version of Christian love – love the other not as you would love yourself, but love the other because they are the other. Loving the other as the other does not entail any self-sacrifice or self-denial. The self in no way is diminished because the self and other occupy a unique position in time and place, which cannot be transcended. To affirm self, one need not negate the other. Negation of the other only leads to false consciousness, for true consciousness needs the input

of the other without being dictated by the other. Bakhtin reiterates again and again that “Pure, solitary self-accounting is impossible” (AHAA, p. 144), because there simply is no vantage point for that kind of reflection. Besides, even a solitary self-accounting, in a literal sense implies a presence of a fictitious other or others who serve as interlocutors, Bakhtin explains, “In an absolute axiological void, no utterance is possible, nor is consciousness itself possible” (AHAA, p. 144). Recognizing the necessity of the ‘other’ does not mean that one must feel besieged by the cacophonous voices of the others. Nor is Bakhtin suggesting naively that social organization is fair and equal. To live mindfully, one must understand the cultural atmosphere to actively embrace and reject cultural codes, as Bakhtin asserts, “The life which has no knowledge of the air it breathes is a naïve life.” (AHAA, p. 144).

In Bakhtin’s worldview, love is neither absolute nor undifferentiated; he calls for that kind of love that honors outsiders, boundaries and non-merger. In his later works, recommends flexible boundaries between self and other and suggests, “The more demarcation the better, but benevolent demarcation, without border disputes. Cooperation.” (From Notes Made in 1970–1971, p. 137). The borders for Bakhtin must be open and shifting in order to play a meaningful role in the lives of each other and to enhance a deeper understanding of self and other. Above all, the porous border allows one to exercise ethical freedom amidst the historical necessities and material forces of the world.

Disregarding the borders would be counter-productive in human relationships. Let us say, a fellow human being is suffering and you are cognitively aware of the circumstances that cause the suffering; but the knowledge alone cannot heal the person – the counsel you want to offer will not be effective, because at this point there is no contact between the two consciousnesses. The first step, Bakhtin says is to project yourself into the other person and experience his life as he experiences it. The empathy or the co-experiencing is only the first step. But a meaningful counsel can be given only when the individual returns to his position, his life and his self and see it as an ‘outsider’, and having seen it as an ‘insider’ earlier is now able to see and feel the inner and outer dimensions of the problem. Bakhtin makes a clear distinction between empathy and sympathetic co-experience. Empathy involves complete merger and as a result creative solution cannot be found. Besides it lacks all the vantage points. Whereas the sympathetic co-experience operating on the border to two consciousnesses acquires the capacity to be creative and the sensitivities becomes soothing and effective. Bakhtin explains this transformative process:

From the very outset, sympathetic co-experiencing introduces values into the co-experienced life that are transgredient to this life; it transposes this life from the very outset into a new value-meaning context and can from the very outset rhythmicize this life temporally and give it form spatially (AHAA, p. 83).

The self/other relationship is not a simple mechanical interaction or a mechanical balancing act between two individuals. It raises a host of questions on the disjunction between experiences and the narrativising of those experiences and the value and history laden context that gives meaning to those experiences and the degree to which the self or the other exert authority over the range of meanings. The crucial factor for creative living and aestheticized consciousness is to selectively collect meanings scattered in the world of the present and the past to construct and reconstruct the Self and explore new vantage points to view the human world. In an attempt to construct a desirable selfhood, individuals often strive to be ‘good’ and do ‘noble acts’ and ‘help others’ and so forth. While Bakhtin insists on *love* as the foundation for human relations, he also warns about becoming too overbearing or mistaking ingratiating behavior for love. As detailed as Bakhtin is in explaining the distinctive features of aesthetic consciousness, he is equally detailed in explaining those modes of consciousness that may be mistaken for the former.

Bakhtin identifies two types of biographical consciousness – one the ‘Adventurous-heroic type’ and the other the “Social-quotidian type”. The individual in the adventurous-

heroic type is driven by the “will to be a hero” in the lives of others. He strives to “win fame and glory” and wants “to grow in and for others, and not in and for oneself.” (AHAA, p. 156). This individual selects heroes of the past and present, builds a shrine for them and seeks to “become a participant in such a pantheon.” (AHAA, p. 156). The individual here loves only to quench his “thirst to be loved”, to achieve significance in the life of others. In this mode of consciousness it is the I-for-others that dominate at the expense of I-for-myself and Others-for-me. The individual thrives only in the state of being possessed in other’s love. Bakhtin argues that this mode, while being infused with warmth and perhaps to some degree even sincere feelings is still immature. He calls this as “naïve individualism” – a belief that one has all the necessary traits and sincere intent to perform the noble deeds. Bakhtin emphatically says that you are never your own hero, nor can you feel entitled to be another person’s hero by performing the deeds that you think is worthy of merit. Heroism is bestowed upon you as a gift by the other because what the self cannot see, the other sees and offers it back as a libation. Bakhtin had a strong distaste for self-aggrandizement. In his view this search for glory boils down to “unmediated parasitism” (AHAA, p. 156), because “everything inward and everything outward strives here to coincide in the other’s axiological consciousness” (AHAA, p. 160). More importantly, the individual perceives the world around him to be static, as if it is established and the heroes of the present and the past he wants to emulate possess a set of given traits. Bakhtin cautions that once this individual feels thrown out of this imaginary world or slighted by the other, the individual wilts and his heroism collapses and desperation sets in. An amorphous identity is not a mark of maturity and development.

The second type of biographical consciousness is the ‘Social-quotidian type’, which in contrast to the adventurous-heroic type lives in a humanity that is socially given. In other words it only deals with values that are given at the present living conditions and does not draw inspiration from the heroes of the past who are dead and long gone. The social-quotidian type strives to be *with* the world – abiding by the familial and social values, but not *in* the world. While the adventurous-heroic type submits to the consciousness of the other to achieve the heroic status, the social-quotidian is a distant observer who always outside, taking note of social expectations and sanctions and lives accordingly.

It must be noted that Bakhtin’s characterization of the ‘adventurous-heroic’ and ‘social-quotidian’ must not be treated as equivalent to what is termed in psychology as ‘histrionic’ and ‘conformist’ type of personalities respectively. They certainly share some resemblances, but the explanatory domains are different. Bakhtin certainly was not the first one to point out the limitations of an individual whose motto is “do good to feel good” or “play by the rules”. Lawrence Kohlberg identified three levels of moral reasoning – the first pre-conventional level is that of a young child whose orientation to rules is to obey them to avoid punishment or receive something in return, followed by the next conventional level in which the individual plays by the rules or is duty bound. For Kohlberg these levels are developmental trajectories and all individuals follow this upward path to eventually reach the highest level or moral reasoning where your actions are guided by universal principles of justice and morality. According to Kohlberg, only a few reach the highest level. Bakhtin neither entertained a sequence in the development of consciousness, or an abstract universal value. Everything for Bakhtin was bound to the concrete specifics of life. He was also not interested in identifying traits purely as psychological constructs, as if they had independent existence.

Bakhtin’s approach was not prescriptive either and as such was not dealing with individual psychology in inane terms like ‘selfish’, ‘selfless’, ‘sacrifice’ and so forth. His main concerns were with ‘outsideness’, shifting axiological points, uniqueness of the individual (because of the place we occupy at a given moment) and the unsystematizability of culture. What he finds problematic about individuals trying to fashion themselves to become heroes or simply play by the social rules is that they fail to recognize change in

every realm. Striving to gain importance in the lives of the others entails a firm positioning of self and other in an equally immobile world. Whereas the fluid self freely moves in a changing world with the recognition that the genesis of self-awareness is in the other and yet is able to negotiate relationships without overpowering or being overpowered. Bakhtin shuns standard formulas and fixed timetables and his theory of aesthetics and by extension aesthetic love offers no prescriptives or particulars. What we understand from his account on Author/Hero relationship is that the healthy self welcomes and rejoices in the plenitude of differences in the world only to discover its image in the eyes of the other, leading to an ongoing dialogue with periodic closures.

In our lives, right from the birth, everything about self – from appearances to primal self-awareness comes from the external world through others. In fact, in the early years it is the other that dominates. Bakhtin says, “Just as the body is formed initially in the mother’s womb (body), a person’s consciousness awakens wrapped in another’s consciousness.” (From Notes Made in 1970–1971, p. 138). What is given does not automatically translate into self-consciousness. Like a painter who chooses from the infinite array of colors and mixes them in desired measure to produce a work of art, the self must also select the images of herself she sees in others to compose her selfhood and life. It is the selective and transformative process that makes self-other relationship into an art form.

There are only two points in life that the self has no role or awareness and they are the terminal points – birth and death. Bakhtin argues that they do not belong in the realm of self-consciousness. For that matter they are not even events in our lives that we are capable of experiencing. When a child is born, the parents and others celebrate – it is an event in their lives – the child is incapable of experiencing it. The same holds good for death. The one who is being born cannot have any awareness of its own birthing process. There is no outsidership. Similarly, there is no external vantage point to see one’s own death. Those things belong only in the realm of imagination and curiosity and the material for this activity can be supplied only by the other. Moreover to imagine the significance of our entry into and exit from the world we need to see it through the eyes of the other as Bakhtin writes, “My birth, my axiological abiding in the world, and finally, my death are events that occur neither *in me* nor *for me*” (AHAA, p. 105).

What then is the ethical and aesthetic potential of this awareness that the beginning and the end of one’s life are really events for others? What meaning does it have for the interval between life and death? Interestingly, Bakhtin sets up a dialogue between life and death leaving it open-ended and unfinalized. Grappling with our death in life is not morbid for Bakhtin; it neither has finality nor any pathological overtones. It is the knowledge about the inevitability of death that allows one to compose their lives creatively and meaningfully as Bakhtin recommends, “The demand is: live in such a way that every given moment of your life would be both consummating, final moment and, at the same time, the initial moment of a new life.” (AHAA P.122) It is precisely because I know that death is inevitable and that it has significance in the lives of others – the loved and the loving survivors – that I hold myself answerable to them. Answerability is not the same as the desire to be a hero for others; the former is a gift that is durable and the later is a demand that could crumble in no time. How is it that death renews life on another plane? Caryl Emerson (1989) explains that in Bakhtin’s view death itself is an ‘ultimate aesthetic act’ in which all authority over your life has been relinquished and handed over to the other as a gift and the other begins the work of bringing wholesomeness to the life that has been received. Among many things that Bakhtin admired in Dostoevsky’s artistic world is that death has no finality. Of course the person dies but the “Personality does not die.” (PDP, p. 300), because the departed person’s words remain available for an open-ended dialogue. We must bear in mind, particularly from a psychological perspective that we not referring only to noble and heroic words. Bakhtin was not talking about martyrdom. He is insisting on the unfinalizability of life even after death, and the closure, the rhythm and organization of the plot structure is done by the other. Furthermore, Bakhtin

is pointing to the longer life of words in comparison to the body. It is that awareness that words outlive us that enable us to compose our lives creatively.

The outsidersness that is crucial for our understanding of self and our lives applies even in the realm of culture. Bakhtin does not subscribe to the idea that “deep down people are pretty much the same” and that cultural practices are only surface manifestations. One side of this doctrine is utopian and the other side is imperialistic. To a great extent and for a very long time, psychology has been the most vociferous proponent of this doctrine. It operates on the assumption that psychology is the scientific study of human behavior or the human mind and with carefully designed experiments we should be able to uncover the laws governing every realm of human activity. By erasing differences we view the other through our lens without recognizing that the categories through which we interpret have grown out of specific cultural soil. Thus, unproblematically, the subjective assessment becomes an objective truth.

Another way of approaching culture is to assume that each one is so different and so unique that the only way to understand a foreign culture is to become a participant in that culture – mimic their mannerisms, follow their rules, consume their food and don their costumes. Bakhtin warns that this is a “one-sided view”. He does acknowledge that entry into the other’s world is crucial and in fact it is the first step. But to blindly put on the cultural garb would amount to participating in a fancy-dress party. Forgetting “one’s own culture” results in an imposter syndrome. Like the exterior body, particularly the face that we are incapable of seeing, the cultural codes that we imbibe during the course of our life also are invisible to us. It is an unwritten script that we simply acquire and enact. These deep aspects of culture reveal themselves in encounters with a foreign culture. Bakhtin explains:

*Creative understanding* does not renounce itself, its own place in time, its own culture; and it forgets nothing. In order to understand, it is immensely important for the person who understand to be *located outside* the object of his or her creative understanding – in time, in space, in culture. (Response to a Question from *Novy Mir*, p. 7)

Thus, Bakhtin’s argument is clear. By virtue of being a member of a cultural group does not give one a special access to the inner workings of that culture. You don’t get the *inside scoop* because you are an insider. You may be privy to the specifics of events, but creative understanding requires outsidersness. By the same token, one cannot be a distant observer either; remaining untouched by the other cannot provide any insight.

It is important to keep in mind how Bakhtin postulates creative understanding of cultures in our discussion of identity politics with respect to immigrants. On one side is the demand for complete assimilation – that the immigrants must suspend their cultural baggage to become Americans, as if the cultural baggage is an external thing and that the contents of that baggage (dress code, eating habits, mannerisms, ways of thinking etc.) could be grouped together for disposal. The other extreme, which has become rather fashionable these days is that each culture is different – so unique, so beautiful – and hence worthy of celebration; and so we have “Asian Heritage Month”, “African Pride” and so forth to build a “multi-cultural” America. My objection is not with the multi-culturalism as such, but with the way it is conceived. When cultures are turned into products to be showcased, then we are essentially freezing them and converting them into empty signs for display, resulting in ugly chauvinism. It does not necessarily promote deeper understanding. Creative understanding entails an awareness of our cultured self that has hitherto been unavailable to us till we have had an encounter with another culture. With the new awareness of one’s own culture and other foreign cultures, a deeper understanding of self and other emerges and that would be a meaningful developmental achievement.

In sum, creativity is through and through dialogic – to hold us answerable through our lives to what has been learnt in great works of art, and to answer our past with the present

and the yet-to-be-achieved future. It means establishing a certain relationship even with our own creation – be it works of art or our children, in a way that facilitates full play of each other ideas and intermingling of voices to leave everything open-ended for future meanings to emerge. It also means being aware of our unique position vis-à-vis others so that we may mutually fill each other's insurmountable lacunae.

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# With the Risk of Simplifying...

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The invitation to this conference says that the work of Bakhtin is a great inspiration to scholars today, and that the core of his theory is dialogicality. I rather feel that inspirational value is too modest words for Bakhtin, but not because of his contribution of the today much-cherished term *dialogicality* which might not be that important<sup>1</sup>. This paper will argue that Bakhtin would be more valuable if put to the task of **simplifying** the humanities and social sciences.

Wertsch (1991) has already stressed the need for translating between the many (sub) disciplines of the humanities and the social sciences. *Mediation* is the umbrella concept he offers. Taking the unfortunate, but nevertheless real benefits of fragmentation for academic life into account, this paper argues the need to go further: Bakhtin is called upon to empty the stock of questions that in every introductory chapter makes heavy *boundary work* (Derksen 1997). We need to be aware that Bakhtin either answers or makes irrelevant the alienating questions about subject, truth, structure/agency and reality arising from some long-lived, but ill-advised appreciations of social constructionism.

The Bakhtin I will employ, is the early Bakhtin as expressed (or elaborated on – the authorship is somewhat contended (Wertsch 1991:49)) in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (Vološinov 1986). What's called dialogicality by the later Bakhtin is here named the social, and what's called voice, is here called consciousness. The core is otherwise much the same only more eloquently defended and explained than in later writings.

In the first section I will explain what I take to be Bakhtin/Vološinov's (hereafter only Vološinov) view of language. I will thereafter go on to examine how this view accord with commonly held beliefs within the humanities today. Lastly I will point out some of the consequences for research of these views of language.

## Founding human science on the sign

Semiotics and social semiotics remain humanistic sub-disciplines, and the research objects of other fields are seldom cast as sign-activity or semiosis. Norms, values, institutions, identities, roles, subjects, relations, motives, discourses, practises, structures – with or without the social- or cultural-prefix – are the usual explanatory tools when it comes to human phenomena. All these objects or concepts (the difference is seldom clear) are in further need of explanation, and using them often only entails dressing the original question up as answer. They would all do greater service if they were firmly built into an ontology of the human world as proper middle-range theories. What is most striking with *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* is the way it scraps anything but signs as basis for such an ontology.

This is however not what admirers of Vološinov appreciate. Hodge and Kress single out Vološinov as an “essentially” sound basis for social semiotics, but still note that he fail to account for “the constraints and determinations acting on participants in a semiotic

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<sup>1</sup> Bazerman (2004) points out that the concept of dialogicality first and foremost reflects Bakhtin's moral concerns, and might not be essential for his theory of language use. This might of course also explain his appeal today.

act (Hodge/Kress 1988:19). Theo van Leeuwen (2005), likewise, points to the uneasy relationship between a sign perspective and a user perspective when he explains why social semiotics in stead of signs prefers the term “resources”. Wertsch(1991:49) even makes a point of the fact that Bakhtin very seldom mentions signs as opposed to Vološinov, without mentioning that they both more than often prefer to talk about the word which they both define as the sign par excellence. A very thorough reader of Vološinov, William F. Hanks, claims that “he pushes this line of reasoning to an extreme, pretty much denying the existence of individual subjectivity”(1996:143). In other words, it seems to be some opposition against at least some of Vološinov’s ideas.

### *The Vološinovian signs*

Usually the master concept of a theory is enlarged and elaborated to accomplish its tasks. Not so with Vološinov who defines the sign with peculiar easiness. There is nothing of the tripartite complexities of Peirce or even of the duality of Saussure in Vološinov’s version of signs. It is simply stated that the world is a world of things only of which some make us think of other things. The signs are the things we experience as connected in this way.<sup>2</sup> Words are such sign-things and for humans all-important. Our bodies are, or have become, especially well-equipped to manipulate words which of all things are feather light and easily handled by our brain, tongue and hand. Nothing is so effortlessly recognized as being the same whether appearing as sound, letters or inner picture and is therefore better suited to make us think of *other* things than it selves. They are *transparent* precisely because they are non-motivated.<sup>3</sup> These other things are the earlier contexts or experiences associated with the word, and the word brings these prior experiences into the situation at hand. The word is a focal event (Duranti/Goodwin 1992) whose contexts equal its meaning.

Vološinov is here, importantly, adamant on the concrete and individual existence of *all* signs. This has important consequences among others for the usual type/token-distinction (Hanks 1996) which most often allot type-status to language or to the knowledge of language and tokens-status to the reality that language orders and describes or to the individual instances of such ordering. Vološinov of course has no problems with taxonomies, but the difference between types and tokens is for him always relative, and types never loose their token-status simply because there is no possible existence for them outside some individual material form. A general concept is a thing that might be experienced as extending to a wide range of other things, but it still remains a thing among them. For Vološinov “there is no such thing as society” – except for the word, that is, and the multifarious events it might cover.

Vološinov’s talk about “things” might resemble some simplistic nominalistic denial of universals. However, he builds on the philosophy of Ernst Cassirer, and Vološinov’s somewhat offhand use of the thing-word rests on the more complex explanation of Cassirer who here prefers to talk about *forms*: From the original “chaos of immediate impressions” [...] certain types of “form” tend to detach themselves” as he (1953:87–88,110) puts it, due to what he calls the “universal functions of separation and association.”<sup>4</sup> In the “articulation” process that ensues it is important for us to notice that these forms connect to each other, not to their own material content which they were never separated from in the first place. The exclamation marks of Cassirer are no coincidence, but indicate that though undifferentiated reality is delicately parcelled out into different forms in many ways, these forms remain material, that is, they are still things. A thing is

<sup>2</sup> This in a way makes the indexical or natural sign the model for all signs.

<sup>3</sup> Hodge/Kress (1988:23) thinks otherwise about transparency and opaqueness.

<sup>4</sup> The world is to follow Berge (1990:33–34) which will be introduced later on, already qualified as forms or things by some “principle” possibly “outside the cultural or historical”.



always a fusion of form and material, the material making it discrete, the form making it different or similar.

There is no crossing of thresholds between different spheres of reality here. Forms cannot point to anything formless, things never to anything but things. Vološinov might seem a token-man, but his things are always also types in this respect. They are types because they resemble other things. What words and other signs connect to is never raw reality, but already formed, recognizable signs-things and so part of what Vološinov calls the sign world and what Cassirer calls the subjective. It is very important to recognize that this subjective sign world is not any other world. It is simply *the* World as it appears to our consciousness. The sign- or form-aspect of matter has, Cassirer points out, autonomy and its own laws or functions, but so, we might say, does life and heavenly bodies as recorded by biology and astronomy.

This word-dependent handling of on-coming situations with the help of prior experiences (the usual definition of learning), is considered by Vološinov a wholly physical and outer process, and therein lies, I believe, his lack of appeal. He is easily considered an anti-individualistic deterministic anti-humanist, and his style does nothing to lessen this rather stern first-impression. Today it is more popular to cast language as something that is to some degree “freely” employed by “agents” pursuing their “own” goals (discourse psychology would be one example (Jørgensen/Phillips 2002)). To break down reality into quite unmanageable chains of signs passing through us and demanding little more than our “participation” (Vološinov 1986:25) is hardly a popular tune. Add to this the humanistic dislike of “mechanistic” causality that these chains easily entail, and the lack of love for Vološinov is predictable.

Moreover Vološinov defines the sign as a relation between things, and it should be noted that this relation is *symmetrical*. What we often call referents, are just as easily regarded as signs pointing to words. The world presents itself to us as so many already written texts. Structuralism is widely viewed as having underscored the human capability to change our lives and communities, and scholars have since the eighties tried to distance themselves from allegedly deterministic views. Vološinov’s symmetric definition apparently does nothing to restore agency to us, but instead lends credibility to a common manner of speaking: “something comes to mind.” Vološinov’s world is a material world where causality is taken for granted, and although things as signs function as signs, this functioning is not any less determined than other physical processes. Everything *comes* to mind. We don’t have command of inner words which we subsequently employ in the outer world. The world consists of words and other things, and these are usually not neatly ordered side by side, but are thoroughly mixed, and we have an active relationship to both.

This view of the sign might actually approach Garfinkel’s (Garfinkel 2008) sociological information theory which with its distinction between eidetic and material information goes beyond the so called correspondence theory of truth and accords with the complexity of thinking. Significantly he has been accused of conservatism for allegedly not caring enough for change (Rawls 2008).

### *Thinking about the world*

It is exactly this outwardly material view of thinking that still holds the greatest promise for the humanities. Consciousness or mind or spirit have always been very hard to get at as such, but our strong experience of inner life has tempted us toward introspection, and still our efforts as scholars are spent on relating outer reality to this inner sphere that is regarded as something quite different from the rest of the world.

Vološinov’s model of the world does not treat language as a system connected to thought and world. As just mentioned, we instead have one world where words are continuously connected indiscriminately to words and other signs (and all thinkable things

are signs). This concrete model has only one sphere of reality, and this has as consequence that every phenomenon must be treated as composites of words and other sign/things, and that goes for both realism and social constructionism. In this Vološinov is in line with Laclau and Mouffe's (2001) inclusive concept of discourse, but he does not encounter their problems of accounting for change.<sup>5</sup>

For Vološinov consciousness is simply just a matter of being and acting in this world of signs, being able to bring words closely together with our bodily apparatus, words that we all have somewhat different experiences with. Thinking with words is as mysterious for Vološinov as seeing things with our eyes or making things with our hands. Vološinov does quite simply not regard consciousness as such a special place. To twist the well-known Geertz-quote, we could say that Vološinov regards thinking as something "never behind the skin". Thoughts are for him inside us in the same way as a clasped object.

Instead of relating the outer world *to* an inner consciousness, we should regard consciousness as just the handling of outer world signs. This promises a substantial description of what we regard as consciousness exactly because it keeps explanandum separate from explanans, as Vološinov points out. He can't emphasise this point strong enough. It's of "extreme" importance, and he talks of the "sorry" role of consciousness as "asylum ignorantia" for all the things psychology can't explain. His dismissal or reduction of consciousness is in other words exactly what secures a thorough investigation of it. For consciousness is nothing in itself, but always consciousness *of*. The realism of this outwardly view is obvious. We have a direct experience of the form-aspect of the world, that is, the things of the world. To investigate them is to investigate consciousness.

Vološinov of course does not deny that we "have" things on our mind. Well are we, if not dissolved in, at least flouting in the sign world that he often refers to as a river. He even allows for an inner "reservoir". Garfinkel (2008:159) here actually goes further and confronts this container-metaphor of consciousness when he says that he prefer to think of memory as a "describable set of operations by which a previous meaningful experience is reproduced or re-presented". He also asks what "conditions of social structure give us the probabilities of a certain kind of "re-creation". Not only, then, should we view consciousness as a handling of outer things, but also the handling itself should at least partly be regarded as not done by the individual herself.

What consciousness does is include and rearrange things. In Scandinavia Berge (1990) has argued convincingly for calling these preliminary arrangements or semiotic systems *norms*, and I will follow him here also because of the useful ambiguity of a term that stretches from how the world "normally" is to often highly contested opinions as to how it should be, and so helps dissolve the distinction between mind and world. Norms, as Berge points out, can be both written and institutional or silent. They can be, following speech-act theory, both instructional and qualifying, the last ones deserving most attention. Norms are "socially constituted, meaning structuring and behaviour generating

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<sup>5</sup> It's evident from the complexity of their theory that regarding signs as material can lead in other directions than Vološinov's. This might be because they construct a hypothetical state were all identities are fixed in a closed, complete system, and then proceed to explain how change nevertheless is possible. Vološinov starts out with and sticks to the reality of the ever-changing sign-world where absolute stability is impossible. A factor here is the special relationship to "the necessity/contingency dualism" LM as Marxists entertain. Necessity is not primarily the principle of everything being locked in causal chains. Instead there is an effort to identify what is and what is not necessary, and this seems to hinge more on the possibility of thinking necessity or creating necessity, than on things actually being necessary: "Necessity, therefore, exist not under the form of an underlying principle, of a ground, but as an effort of literalization which fixes the differences of a relational system"(2001:114).What can this literalization be other than the theme of V's concrete utterances? It's the always new themes that constantly form meaning systems. The necessity of the use of these is evidently treated as problematic and something that can be escaped by the happy fact that there are many different competing systems to shift between. In Vološinov's world there would be change even if there were only one discourse!

systems that make it possible to predict the behaviour of agents in given situations” (1990:30). This might sound a bit chilling, but Berge points out that norms are concrete experiences that make things easier for us. As Vološinov he with Bordieu warns against abstract objectivism/cognitivism that would give scientific constructs any independent reality.

These norms are then the signs that react to other signs in Vološinov’s unbroken chains of understanding. They are the “technical apparatus” (his words for acknowledging some relatively stable dictionary “meaning”) for dealing with on-coming situations. But they are always changed by its use. Berge proposes a socio-textological investigation of such norm-change based on the fact that we are unable to employ norms in identical ways. These slight alterations mostly go undetected, but accumulate and eventually put more felt pressure on the norm system. Where else than in texts should we look for these slight alterations?

Unfortunately it isn’t the slight alterations which today capture the interests of researchers. Either one find a place of obvious social change, and studies related texts, or one analyses texts to get at their world or their versions of the world. Quite a lot of energy is used to cross the thresholds between world and cognition and texts. With Vološinov texts are world and cognition, and all the effort can be put into using them as the most “sensitive indicators of social change”.

Instead of relativizing texts as being “contingent” versions of social phenomena, instead of weakening them, slighting them, and then paradoxically criticizing them for having some impact on the world, Vološinov invites us to treat texts not as effecting change, but treat them as *being* change.

As for individuality, it is exactly the outwardly and material view of meaning that best account for this. The individual, far from having access to some totality of common social structures where relations of meaning sort of instantly beam between elements, is left to experience only parts – her part – of the sign world, and every relation of meaning must be noticed or worked out by her. This materiality of signs thus makes irrelevant the infinite play of meaning so cherished by post structuralism: You might ask endlessly what something means, but the fact is that in Vološinov’s real world no one does or indeed could. To sum up this section and the previous one: What makes text and cognition social is not the fact that we communicate with one another. We are perfectly capable of thinking in seclusion. What makes thinking social is that we anyway employ and make changes to things of our common shared world.

With Vološinov we have individuals in a completely social reality, not the social in individuals<sup>6</sup>.

### *Determined (to) change*

If agency strikes a tedious note, it might be because it is so often put forward as the new focus of scholars that still feel the need to distance themselves from the project of explaining people’s thoughts, feelings and utterances commonly associated with the structuralism of the 70’s. Both agency and structure are either poorly understood or seldom explained. What we can agree on, I believe, is (1) that there is a widespread belief in the human sciences that the structure-agency question is importantly touching on real dilemmas that need to be solved, (2) that the solution usually put forward takes the form of a compromise allotting some sway to both of these *powers*, and (3) that what’s at stake is the inner freedom of both people and scientists, and thus also the possibility for political change.

A popular textbook on discourse analysis (Jørgensen/Phillips 2002:27) sums up the conventional compromise(d) solution:

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<sup>6</sup> The fact that social ideologies put a premium on individuality is another question and quite secondary to the basic individuality thus explained.

...folk bruger diskurserne som ressourcer, hvor de skaber nye sammensætninger af ord [...] Men selv i de tilgange, hvor subjektets agency og rolle i social forandring stilles i forgrunden, ses de eksisterende diskurser som rammer som begrænser rækkevidden af subjektets handlinger og muligheder for nyskabelse.

What's important here is the use of frames, whether constraining or enabling, as a metaphor for dealing with the question. Structures have since their invention been conceived of as something that is imposed on people from without penetrating to control their minds – they are internalized, that. Both the contents of our minds and the ways of thinking these contents, norms that is, were provided by society. Now we feel uncomfortable with this view and choose to insert an element of personal choice in this picture. The norms which previously functioned as a description and explanation of our thoughts and feelings, is now being pushed away from our innermost beings leaving some space, some room between structural walls.

This personal room is very important. One can leave an individual within it with a degree of freedom; one can let this individual climb or tear down these inner walls; one can even consider the individual to be not surrounded by constraining walls, but abundant *resources*. What's common for all the ways of securing inner agency by the pushing away of structures, is the self-imposed ban on investigating this innermost agent.

It is important to understand that structures still include inner structures in the form of imposed (or offered) thoughts. The insight that society is inscribed in us is still making valuable boundary work for the humanities. In the framework that is presented here, there is really no need to relate the outer to the inner in this manner, and I suspect that internalization is often not a very impressive theory for common people that might as well regard it as stating nothing more than the very obvious fact that we think on what surrounds us.

The shift away from structuralism doesn't deny internalization. It only views the internalized thoughts as potentially useful, often leaving the question for whom aside, and – as explained above – as not completely filling the mind. We must here consider the different meanings of agency. What I have spoken of here is agency as a counterpart of structure. We of course also have the quite unproblematic meaning of agency within law and medicine as some measurable capacity of an individual to take informed decisions. Here one does not usually consider the question whether we all are really free or not. But these meanings can be intertwined or confused. Many scholars investigate agency in this restricted meaning when they document or even encourages different forms of resistance. There can be no doubts that what scholars find out can be made part of decision processes. What is plainly wrong is regarding these processes as being more closed or structurally determined before the intervention of the researcher than after. The right way put it, would be to say that an agent employs a certain range of meditational means or norms in a certain setting. The norms can be added to, and the setting can change, but that does not make the thinking, the actions or the results any less “determined”.

On the discomfort with structuralism and determinism the philosophers Smith and Jones (1986:266–267) pour considerable scorn: “Why on earth should it be thought that Jill's relative degree of freedom compared with Jack involves or requires a capacity to leap outside the physical course of nature? [...] why should we suppose that the predictability of an action nullifies its freedom?” The belief that it does, is of course very real, but it should be studied as a cultural belief and not be let to guide research. Structural determinations should in other words never have been treated as running counter with agency.

Vološinov has of course a lot to offer on structures, nothing on agency or freedom. The reason is that Vološinov had no reason to view his own teachings as an attack on agency or even freedom. Both as a Jew and a pre-revolutionary Russian, Vološinov must have been (Lock 1991) familiar with the Old Testament-solutions to structure-agency-dilemmas that, as we all know, confirm both human freedom *and* the all-power of God. It is today we somehow feel that determination is a problem. Some see determination as

incompatible with change. Many more see determination as opposed to freedom. The humanities more than often think of description and explanation in terms of grasping how things *are*. Change is in the best case accounted for as a possibility in a world where reproduction is the rule. Vološinov in his Heraclital wisdom here rules out reproduction as even a possibility. Norms are always changed by its use. To put it short: With Vološinov the only thing we need to account for change, is time.

For the many who see determination as problematic to freedom and/or change, it is not usual to confront the problem head on, probably because this doesn't yield satisfactory results, but the felt problems with determination nevertheless guide research as we will look into in the next section.

Determination is not an important issue in it self. It is simply self-evident within our frame (or indeed within any frame) that everything has its causes, that every decision has its reasons. Cognition is as every physical process (and there are no other processes) determined by all the factors that go into the process. It is likewise true that so many reasons go into cognition that we have no hope of predicting it with any large degree of certainty. In physics prediction is dependent on the possibility of isolating a system and controlling its elements. The situation is the same within the humanities.

As for the point of acting if everything is decided beforehand, as some would put it, the trick here is to regard the agent not as determined from without, but as doing the determination herself. Already Sophocles understood this, and it is puzzling why researchers go to such lengths to escape this fact. After all, all research is determining factors in subsequent decisions. Research, right or wrong, works.

## Non-Vološinovian solutions

We will here look into whether common assumptions within human science comply with these simple premises.

### *Contingency*

The questions about agency and freedom are, as mentioned above, very rarely explicitly discussed in introductory books in responsible terms. They are most often clothed in highly ambiguous<sup>7</sup> terms and depend heavily on some structuralist straw man of the 70', Gramsci or Althusser for instance. The most popular term for countering causality is *contingency*. A proposition is said to be contingent within logic if it is not necessarily true or false, but dependent on circumstances. This of course does not imply that what the proposition is dependent on for its truth value is somehow excused from the causality of things. Contingency thus understood has nothing to do with the necessity of the world, but simply states that a proposition is empirical. And more important, that a proposition is contingent does not touch on the conditions of its utterance.

To mix up reality with descriptions of reality is of course quite common, and it is not very surprising that "contingent" today is used about things that are unpredictable, accidental or possible. This mix up is even more understandable given that what are considered contingent within the humanities are utterances. It is indeed not the truth of these utterances that are said to be contingent, but rather the utterances themselves. Whether contingent means that the utterances simply are dependent upon other factors (in which case they might still be necessary, that is caused by these other factors) or whether contingent more radically means subject to chance, is very rarely clear.

If we take a look on the very popular introduction to discourse analysis by Jørgensen and Philips, we might get some guidance by seeing what they oppose to contingency: The

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<sup>7</sup> Ambiguity is perhaps one of the most important agents of change as explained by Burke (1969). Under its cloak the misinterpretations that in Berge's theory puts pressure on the systems of norms, can go undetected.

term surfaces in their discussion of discourse theory, and what's interesting is the *kind* of necessity it is an alternative to: "Vores handlinger er kontingente artikulationer, altså midlertidige fastlåsnings af betydning..." (2002:47). Contingency here simply means that action and thoughts are provisional. This is a meaningful statement only in the face of a brand of structuralism that treats discourse as a system (whether fishnet or drum skin) determining thought and actions in a way that seemingly precludes change. This kind of contingency is however quite compatible with causality. Also when commenting upon social constructionism (2002:14) they invoke contingency in the sense of changeability when they state that even though knowledge in principle is contingent, it is always relatively deadlocked in concrete situations. Here they nevertheless say something that might tell us more about how they understand this changeability:

Derfor er de måder, hvorpå vi forstår og repræsenterer verden, historisk og kulturelt specifikke og *kontingente*: Vores verdensbilleder og identiteter kunne have været anderledes, og de kan forandres over tid.

That things change does of course not entail that they could have changed in any other way than they did, and so we get a glimpse of how necessity or causality is identified with the quite impossible position that the world is unchanging.

Contingency also gives an entrance to the way possibilities or the heterogeneity of discourses is understood to nullify necessity. Necessity as a lack of possibilities would be a ridiculous position at least in today's society, but the fact that necessity instead can be located in the process of choice among the different possibilities is not allowed to enter a discussion that implicitly pretty much identifies change with freedom and permanence with necessity. In the lengthier discussions of contingency it is made relatively clear that contingency is the possibilities that can be created by questioning things hitherto regarded as objective facts, but it is also acknowledged that not everyone can choose from these newly discovered possibilities. People are regarded as more or less constrained (2002:164):

I konkrete diskursanalyser forsøger man at besvare sådanne spørgsmål om, hvordan betydningerne er fikserede og naturaliserede på bestemte måder i givne sammenhænge

It is perhaps not evident that this perspective is ill-advised. But what we see is a muddled understanding of the relation between agency and structure that effectively make agency a privilege of the few who are able to discover "contingencies". The rest dwell in a naturalized reality and are not able to use the surrounding structures as resources for creating new types of discourses (2002:27).

It is refreshing to return to Vološinov where no such problems are encountered. Vološinov is in effect quite a romantic for whom "nought may endure but mutability". He is on the contrary unable or unwilling to accept any instance of permanence as is evident also in his quite consistent use of liquid metaphors. It is perhaps fitting here to consider the self-proclaimed materialism of Vološinov. He has from time to time been accused of idealism (ref X). This might be because his materialism is somewhat too consequent: Conventional materialism usually sets up a relation between material reality and mind and lets the former have the upper hand. In Vološinov's version material reality has no other to dominate, and a materialism where thought itself is material is hardly separable from pantheism. Cassirer here acknowledged that primitive thought had "kernel of justification" (1953:89).

When it comes to contingencies, there is some room for this word in his teachings. Webster acknowledges the ambiguity of the term and has it that contingent are things that are "happening by chance or unforeseen causes" or are "subject to chance or unseen effects". For Vološinov nothing happens by chance, of course, but the chains of signs are so many and crossing that research will never be able to predict actions that are then determined by unforeseen or unseen effects.

These reflections on the use or perception of the term contingency might seem irrelevant for research. One might contend, and rightly so, that even if one hasn't realized the necessity of all change or the freedom of every action, one still has managed to analyze text as to what they achieve in their contexts. However, the consequences of an ill-advised view might rather be felt in the choice of research objects than in research itself. Furthermore, accepting determinism as ultimately out of reach instead of trying to escape it, should have consequences for the ambitions of research. Investigations will always be local and limited, and projects trying to descriptively control the whole of social reality (CDA would here be the best example) would have to be abandoned.

### *Reservation of conjunctures*

A child of the contingency-term is conjunctures, as conceived by Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999). Conjunctures is "the domain of the contingent" (1999:126). More precisely they are assemblies of practices around specific social projects (1999:22). In this tradition of thinking one seldom explicitly distinguishes between abstracts and reality, but the prolific coinage of new terms qualify a much multilayered and dialectically entwined reality, so one should probably take them at their word when they state that a term *is* this or that part of reality. In this multilayered reality one interestingly enough finds a level – practise – corresponding also metaphorically to Vološinov's type-level or our norms: "what has hardened into a relative permanency". Unlike Vološinov Chouliaraki and Fairclough of course defines a structural level above this level, a level there's no place for in our frame, but which we can ignore for the moment. They further assert a dialectical relation between practise and events, and believes that this secures some "space for agency" and so alleviates the threat from structural determinism.

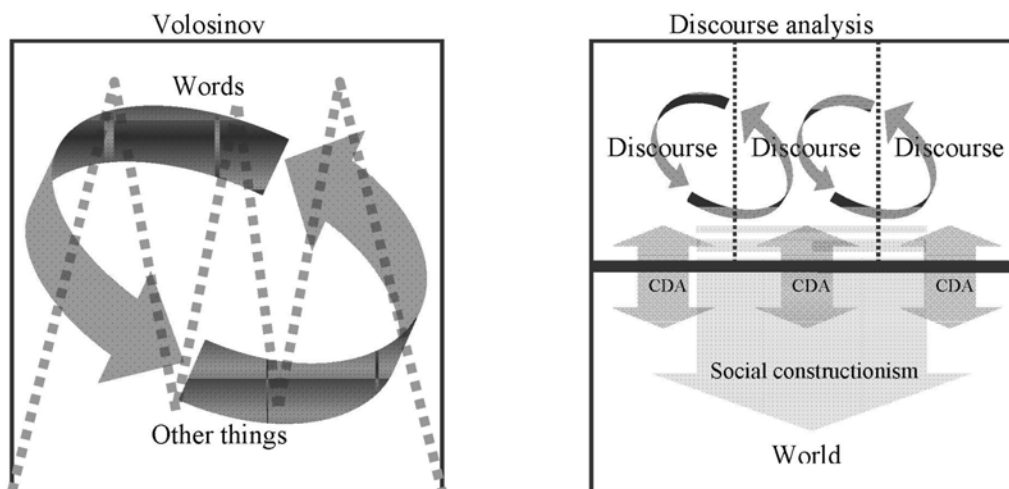
This makes them an illustrative example of what it means to view determinism as a problematic assailer of agency. In Vološinov's universe every event is determined by the more or less typified tokens that go into them. Here events is said to be constrained *and* enabled by these type-tokens, but this might just be reckoned as a euphemism or denial of determinism. For where is agency to be found? Not in the events or actions, but in the change of practises or norms effected by the still determined actions or events. Dialectics has never broken with determinism, and this creation of agency rests solely on the previously mentioned identification – or rather mix-up – of agency with (determined) change. By the same token change is identified with *openness*. The same dialectics of course exists between structures and action, but the mid-level of practice seems to have the advantage of changing more rapidly. And change is what one is after here.

Curiously Vološinov is called upon to support this rescuing of agency by means of dialectics (1999:48). A more careful reading of the passage of Vološinov which they refer to doesn't reveal any dialectics, quite the opposite: This is the most orthodox marxistic passage of his book, and he repeatedly stresses the one way determination of word (utterances and norms) by basis, sociopolitical order or conditions of the social. The "social life of the verbal sign" is laid out as a passive life by Vološinov, who gives it the agentive power only of registering, indexing, reflecting and refracting reality. The "causal shaping of sign by existence" is his main concern (1986:21). His strategy for nevertheless giving importance to the word is actually totally opposite of Chouliaraki and Fairclough's whose separation of discourse from the rest of social reality is the prerequisite of the dialectics between them, a separation they share with social constructionism. Vološinov instead meshes the two. He apparently means to fit the communist orthodoxy of his day by inserting word (or discourse) right into the basis. Vološinov simply takes away the outside of basis: "Communication and the forms of communication may not be divorced from the material basis." Word and text simply changes *with* the rest of reality. This is what makes them so "sensitive". This might be misunderstood as simply stating a connection between the two, but connection is not at all the same as unity. In Vološinov's world all the things

in it are separate and interconnected, but no word- or discourse-sphere are separated from the rest of social reality. Furthermore, even if one separates the two, there is nothing to support any claim that verbal action is somehow less determined than non-verbal action.

So, in the end the free agentic powers of people wishing to change society cannot be found in action, pure and simple. Action, though slowly changing practices and structures (which ultimately are a reflection of actions), are themselves nevertheless determined by these too slow-moving norms. They are to some extent predictable. There is though one refuge from repetitive reality: Social reality is not conceived of as one large system, where one all embracing discourse is seen interacting with all the non-verbal activities of society. Reality is subdivided into several partly overlapping discourses or practises. Determinism and prediction is the rule only within sub systems. Contingency, randomness, possibilities, change, choice, freedom and agency result from conjunctures or meetings between subsystems. The fact that such meetings might (or must) be determined by second order norms governing such combinations are under-communicated. One is instead relieved to find this sanctuary from structural determinism between systems.

For Vološinov change is what happens where words and other parts of reality meet. Change is not an exception, not an advent, and it is most worthy of study where it is inconspicuous and miniscule. In such instances one is looking at changes about to happen. In different sorts of discourse analysis, more or less influenced by social constructionism, change is on the contrary looked for in the meeting between discourses.



This obviously guides the election of research object. The inability to come to agreeable terms with determinism and be satisfied with the change and agency it offers, lead researchers towards texts from social areas of quite obvious change. All kinds of clashes between groups and their discourses or genres take priority. It would not, I believe, be unreasonable to explain along these lines the immense interest for hybridisation of all kinds. The distribution of agency is of course also a distribution of interest. It guides the choice of research objects.

### *Objects of study*

All this hinges on the perception of what it is we are studying. The greatest difference between current thought and Vološinov's is probably the latter's reluctance to delineate an object of study. Any such object, be it a text or a norm, is only admitted an analytical existence as a focal event. For all it's formal and socially acknowledged unity the text is not autonomous, but completely integrated with its context. And context, though seldom acknowledged, challenges any attempts to subdivide social reality into different discourses, genres or practises. Context follows the individual and comprises all within her



reach of new and condensed experience, including norms for identifying or creating different situations. Texts are always produced and responded to by individuals within more or less overlapping contexts always including also the genres which apparently are not used on that particular occasion.

The very real fact that the social world is ordered into different practises or genres does then not imply a partitioning of understanding into likewise categories. The ordering is done *by* understanding. Understanding is not severed into different types of situation-specific knowledge. Consciousness/context is always a mixture of genres. It is not dependent on meetings between genres or practises to survey different possibilities, and otherwise left to repeat itself. This is nevertheless what is often tacitly assumed by discourse analysts – Fairclough (2003) would be an apt example – that siphons structural determinism into different genres (ways of acting) or discourses (ways of representing) disregarding Miller's (1984) critique of understandings of genres as merely self-repeating patterns. With structural constraints thus explained and contained, agency and change can easily be found where discourses and genres mix and meet (Fairclough 2003:69). The consequence of such an ordering of structure and agency might be a disregard for texts that doesn't exhibit any overt mixture of genre, but by that very token might be useful as sensitive indexes of change about to happen.

The belief that it's possible to study the verbal level of reality and somehow bracket the rest of reality does not only precipitate the above mentioned solution. It has also consequences for our view of what it is that changes and how. It is easy to stifle social reality and regard it as waiting for texts to change it. Social reality is indeed looked on as including texts, but very often of a naturalized kind, begging some textual intervention. Vološinov certainly has no problem with such intervention. But new ideas inserted into some local part of social reality will not give another overall meaning to that reality. It will simply add something that might interact with the rest of that reality. The fact that there are social practises like university life where one identifies and compares different ways of writing and speaking about what seemingly might be quite similar things, doesn't imply that manners of speaking and writing are replaceable in their original contexts. Vološinov is the best representative of what Holquist (1986) calls the Russian effort of "stitching whatever text they analyze into a deeply realized cultural context". People don't talk of think of non-existent or unimportant things. Verbal activity is a direct handling of one's surroundings. These surroundings are and can be added to, but the whole idea of there being (at least for some) different alternative ways of giving meaning to one's reality, have no resonance in Vološinov.

There are two fallacies often made within social constructionism in this regard. The first is seeing some phenomena as just constructed, and therefore not only capable of replacement, but even of removal by mere force of thought. The second is the tendency to view some phenomena that have a clear non-verbal component, as being the same, across time and space regardless of how it is constructed. These fallacies have been dealt with long ago (Woolgar/Pawluch 1985; Peters/Rothenbuhler 1989) but still dominates in introductory textbooks.

In Jørgensen/Phillips (2002:18) we have a flood serving as example of how the same material fact can be construed in three different ways by different discourses – religious, meteorological and environmental. The crucial point here is the stated difference between discourses which implies choice and even discursal fighting. In our cultural context a flood is of course a sign with quite many meanings, some drawing from religion and some from sciences and yet other from every day life or movie pictures or child hood play. But so it is with all things, and there should be no reason to invoke quasi-scientific concepts like "over-determination" to deal with this. A flood is furthermore not a simple sign, but consists of many signs: the previous rainfall, the water, the rising of the water, the relentlessness of the rising... These are different things calling for different verbalisations. That a phenomenon has more than one meaning, or that different aspects of the

phenomenon all have their meanings, should not be taken as evidence of a contingent relation between “fact” and discourse. How many aspects or meanings that are drawn into a text depend wholly on its context. The fact that ordinary people today don’t need more than a heavy rainfall to think of the climate speaks of a changed context where discourses furthermore are very poorly divided from each other.

Jørgensen and Phillips do not of course speak out against context, and neither do anybody else of course, though they do not hesitate to extend Saussurean arbitrariness to encompass the relation between language and reality. It remains a claim of mine that much research today fall short of a full immersion of texts in their contexts, and that this should be remedied by research being held accountable to a shared ontology of the type offered by Vološinov.

## Coda

Toril Moi (2006) in her latest work investigates why Ibsen has become increasingly unimportant to her fellow students of literature. She lashes out against the ideologues of modernism for failing to take interest in anything mimetic. These formalists are only interested in works of art as self referential explorations into the meaning of meaninglessness or the meaninglessness of meaning. But Moi doesn’t go easier on the “culturalists” who in here view only translates the categories of formalism into the sphere of social reality:

Culturalist critics of film, theatre, and literature are still obsessed with high modernist and postmodernist themes such as reflexivity, negativity, absence, the instability of boundaries, and the breakdown of language. The difference is that theoretical constructs such as the unsayable are relabelled as femininity, the abject, the marginal, or the subversive; and textual self-deconstruction is read as sign of revolutionary undoing of established norms. When it comes to aesthetic strategies, then, formalism and culturalism are not as different as they seem. In fact, they are barely different at all. For how long are formalists and culturalists going to go on tracking the same old fissures, breaks and boundaries of signification or losing themselves in the contemplation of the linguistic beyond? (2006:22).

As I interpret Moi’s Ibsen he is a writer who explore and experiment directly with a reality he understand the semiotic composure of. He doesn’t experiment with words, but with the other signs his words mimic.

This is exactly Vološinov’s point. Words have a direct and objective relation with the other forms of reality. Texts are not in his words “opinions”, though they can be treated as such. Vološinov not only theorizes how a social reality permeated with words change, but also acknowledges that our perception of the relationship between words and other forms change, that our metalanguage changes. He is not particularly optimistic in his finishing lines where he talks about the transformation of the word into a thing and the depression in the thematic value of the word. Vološinov wants a revival of “the word that really means and takes responsibility for what it means”. The question for us, then, is whether there are research strategies that fall short of this standard and in stead treat texts, quite redundantly, as indexical of their inner or outer worlds.

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# Two Faces of Originality: On the origins of the concept of dialogue

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## Introduction

Until the mid-1990s it was not uncommon to represent Mikhail Bakhtin as a highly original thinker without significant sources, whereas in recent years much critical and analytical research has been done to uncover the intellectual origins of the Bakhtin Circle. It demonstrates that Bakhtin's ideas are deeply rooted both in the Western and Russian philosophical traditions (see, e.g. Poole 1998, Tihanov 1998; Brandist 2004, Lähteenmäki 2002) in addition to which several studies have shown that the main ingredients of Bakhtin's dialogical conception of language were part of the 'climate of opinion' in the Soviet Union of the 1920–1930s (Brandist 2003). For instance, the idea of the social and ideological stratification of language which Bakhtin called *raznorechie* – translated into English as heteroglossia – bears a close resemblance to Lev Iakubinskii's writings of the early 1930s (see, e.g. Brandist 2004, Brandist & Lähteenmäki, forthcoming). Recent critical research has shed light on the intellectual and institutional contexts of the ideas discussed by the members of the Bakhtin Circle and shows that Bakhtin's theorising about language was rather sensitive to contemporary Soviet linguistics.

The present article investigates the development of the concept of dialogue in Bakhtin's thought and aims to analyse the nature of the potential influence Bakhtin's contemporaries in Soviet linguistics may have exerted on his thinking on the dialogical nature of language. At the same time, I try to demonstrate that questions of originality as well as the concept of influence are problematic from the point of view of the historiography of linguistics. The basic question is what counts as criteria for influence and how we can determine the nature as well as extent of potential influence. While there exist obvious parallels between the writings by Bakhtin and the representatives of the early Soviet sociology of language – which are supported by ample textual evidence – it seems that the Bakhtinian conception of language is qualitatively different and, therefore, cannot be reduced into its possible sources. It will be argued that this is also the case with the notion of dialogue which was discussed by Bakhtin's contemporaries in Soviet linguistics. Thus, the main argument is that although Bakhtin drew on versatile sources – which by no means makes his contribution less significant – he succeeded in producing a *Gestalt* that is more than the sum of its parts.

## Shcherba and Iakubinskii on dialogue

In his commentaries to the 1929 edition of Bakhtin's Dostoevsky book titled *Problems of Dostoevsky's Creativity*, Sergei Bocharov (2000) discusses the intellectual context in which Bakhtin was developing the idea of polyphony and dialogue. These commentaries were published in the 2nd volume of Bakhtin's *Collected Works* which appeared in 2000. While Bocharov gives a detailed account of the significance of the ideas discussed by Soviet and German literary scholars for the development of Bakhtin's theory of Dostoevsky's polyphonic novel, he sees the impact of the ideas discussed by Soviet linguists of that time as less prominent. For instance, Bocharov notes that the influence of Iakubinskii

– the author of the article *On Dialogic Speech* which appeared in 1923 – on Bakhtin's theory of the polyphonic novel and dialogue was 'stimulating, but not conceptual' (Bocharov 2000:466). As regards the concept of dialogue, Bocharov's position seems right, despite the fact that Iakubinskii's views on the social stratification of language were an important part of the intellectual context in which Bakhtin developed the notion of *raznorechie*. The significance of Iakubinskii's contribution for Bakhtin's views on the social stratification of language has been emphasised by several authors (Brandist, 2004b; Alpatov, 2005:46–50; Brandist & Lähteenmäki, forthcoming). Another Soviet linguist who has frequently been mentioned as one of the first theoreticians of dialogue is Lev Shcherba whose dialectological study has been considered as a potential source for the dialogical conception of language together with Iakubinskii's above-mentioned article. Both Shcherba and Iakubinskii had been students of the Polish-Russian linguist Jan Baudouin de Courtenay and were prominent figures among Leningrad linguists.

Shcherba touches upon the concept of dialogue in his dialectological work on the East-Lucanian dialects which was published in 1915. It should be emphasised that Shcherba (1915) does not discuss the concept of dialogue or analyse actual dialogical speech and its linguistic features as such, but briefly mentions dialogue in the appendix to the study. He points out that while collecting material for his dialectological study, he observed that peasants did not produce monologues at all, but all their stories were cast in the form of dialogue. According to Shcherba, monologue which is typical for written language was alien to illiterate peasants as a compositional form whose spoken language was dominated by dialogue. This led Shcherba (1915:4) to conclude that monologue is to be seen as an artificial form of language, because its emergence is clearly connected to the development of literacy, while the natural form of existence of all languages is dialogue. While Shcherba's observations were undoubtedly interesting and also theoretically important, he can hardly be characterised as one of the forerunners of the theory of dialogue on the basis of his brief remarks only without unjustly exaggerating the significance of his contribution to development of dialogism.

While Shcherba merely mentions dialogue as a compositional feature of the spoken vernacular of the peasants, Iakubinskii's 1923 article *On Dialogic Speech* contains a more detailed account of dialogue in which he analyses the linguistic and interactional characteristics of dialogic speech. He starts from the assumption that all languages – and even idiolects – are characterised by diversity which cannot be accounted for without reference to various extralinguistic factors to which the diversity is functionally related (Iakubinskii 1986:17). In addition to this, he holds that for different types of human interaction there exist corresponding forms of speech utterances: immediate face-to-face interaction typically takes place in form of dialogue (Iakubinskii 1986:25). In his discussion of the differences between the dialogue and monologue, Iakubinskii considers the functions of facial expressions, gestures and intonation in face-to-face communicative situations and compares them with situations in which the participants are not immediately present. He also pays attention to the channel or medium of communication: the structure of a spoken dialogue is different from that of written dialogue using notes. Iakubinskii (1986:31) refers to his colleague Shcherba, when he argues that dialogue is to be seen as the primary form of existence of language characterized by the immediate presence of the participants. He, however, does not subscribe to Shcherba's distinction between dialogue and monologue as natural versus artificial forms, but emphasises that both dialogues and monologues are to be seen as natural, because they both are products of a particular social structure. Nevertheless, Iakubinskii sees dialogical interaction as a theoretically interesting phenomenon which must be distinguished from both written and spoken monologues, despite the fact that also monologue triggers a need for response in the listener (Iakubinskii 1986:35). The idea of triggering can also be found in Voloshinov's and Bakhtin's discussion of the notion of utterance.

It is easy to see that Shcherba's and Iakubinskii's understanding of the notion of dialogue is very narrow in comparison with Bakhtin's understanding of the notion. While they emphasise the primary nature of dialogue as opposed to monologue, they still see it as a typical compositional form of spoken interaction without giving it a deeper ontological meaning. In this they differ from Bakhtin for whom dialogicality is a characteristic feature of all languages and social interaction deriving from an ontological principle governing the human existence. In fact, in the essay *Discourse in the Novel* Bakhtin (1981:279) criticized contemporary linguistic accounts of dialogue, because they study dialogue 'merely as a compositional form in the structuring of speech' ignoring 'the internal dialogism of the word'. Despite the fact that the published version of *Discourse in the Novel* does not contain references to Shcherba's or Iakubinskii's views on dialogue, it seems rather obvious that the expression 'contemporary linguistic accounts' refers to them. This hypothesis was confirmed Nikolai Pan'kov who had discovered a typed manuscript of the essay in the archive of Boris Zalesskii<sup>1</sup>, and the manuscript contained the reference to Iakubinskii. The reference was excised by the editors from the published version of the essay. That Bakhtin was aware of Iakubinskii's article on dialogic speech is further confirmed by the fact that the fifth volume of Bakhtin's *Collected Works* contains a text titled *Dialog II* from Bakhtin's notebooks, and the text includes a conspectus of *Discourse in the Novel* which also contains an explicit reference to Iakubinskii's article (Bakhtin 1996).

Thus, it has been established that Bakhtin knew of Iakubinskii's views on dialogue discussed in the 1923 article *On dialogic speech* (Iakubinskii 1986). He must also have acquainted with Shcherba's brief remark on the dialogical nature of spoken language, because Iakubinskii refers to it in his article. However, the question that remains is how and to what extent Shcherba's and Iakubinskii's views may have exerted influence on Bakhtin's concept of dialogue.

## Dialogue between unmerged subjects

In his architectonics – or philosophical anthropology – Bakhtin (2003a:105) makes the distinction between *I-for-myself*, *I-for-Other* and *Other-for-me* and assumes that various spatio-temporal and meaning relations as well as values of life and different domains of culture are based on these architectonic moments. The Bakhtinian notion of the self is not a self-sufficient autonomous construct, but a relational concept, for the consciousness of an individual only exists in relation to the above mentioned categories or architectonic moments. From the relational character of the self it follows that the consciousness of an individual is a social phenomenon, because it is created in the series of interactions between the individual and the environment. For Bakhtin, this makes the self as an essentially dynamic and unfinalizable phenomenon.

The thesis concerning the outsideness and non-alibi-in-being Bakhtin developed in his early philosophical texts underlies his analysis of Dostoevsky's verbal art presented in the two versions of the Dostoevsky book published in 1929 and 1963 (Bakhtin 2000, 1984). The first edition of the Dostoevsky book in which Bakhtin discusses the concept of dialogue in the context of the theory of the polyphonic novel must be seen as part of a wider research project on sociological poetics launched by two other members of the Bakhtin Circle Valentin Voloshinov and Pavel Medvedev. Both Voloshinov and Medvedev were affiliated to ILIaZV (Institute for the Study of Literatures and Languages of the West and East) in Leningrad where they worked as researchers in the Section of the Theory and Methodology of Literature. They both subscribed to the view that all ideological phenomena – including art – are internally and immanently sociological in their nature and, consequently, must be analysed by using sociological methodology. While

<sup>1</sup> E-mail from Nikolai Pan'kov (5.11.2003).

Voloshinov (1926) and Medvedev (1978) insisted on the sociological nature of art, they, nevertheless, criticised the ‘vulgar Marxist’ position represented, for instance, by Pavel Sakulin and Valerian Pereverzev according to whom literature and art in general belong to the superstructure, and their characteristics are causally determined by production relations and the characteristics of the socio-economic basis.

Bakhtin’s position towards sociological poetics is much more ambivalent, however. In the 1929 edition of the Dostoevsky book he argued for a full-blown sociological approach akin to that of Voloshinov and Medvedev and wrote that ‘every literary work is internally, immanently sociological [...] therefore, even a purely formal analysis must take every aspect of artistic structure as a point of refraction of living social forces’ (Bakhtin 2000:7). However, in a text written in 1924 he made the distinction between ‘aesthetic’ and ‘sociological’ maintaining that sociological considerations may go beyond the boundaries of a strictly aesthetic analysis (Bakhtin 2003b:298) effectively making a distinction between ‘aesthetic’ and ‘social’. It should also be pointed out that while the preface to the 1929 Dostoevsky book is abundant in Marxist phrases typical of that time emphasising the sociological nature of literature, Marxist terminology is absent in the chapters in which Dostoevsky’s novels are analysed. Thus, while Bakhtin argues for the importance of sociological poetics in the preface to the book, he does not follow his methodological guidelines elsewhere in the book. It is not a great surprise that many contemporary critics saw the use of Marxist terms as a mere window-dressing and Bakhtin was accused of smuggling his idealistic views under the disguise of Marxism (see, Bocharov 2000). The Marxist terminology and references to the importance of a sociological approach were removed from the 1963 edition of the book.

The idea of outsideness and unmerged positions of subjects which were recurrent themes in Bakhtin’s early texts were further elaborated in the two editions of the Dostoevsky book. For him, the characteristic feature of Dostoevsky’s novels is ‘the essential plurality of unmerged consciousnesses’ of the heroes which is intentionally deployed by the author (Bakhtin 2000:14). Referring to Otto Kaus Bakhtin argues that unmerged consciousnesses stand for specific ideological positions which are equally authoritative (Bakhtin 2000:25). Here, the uniqueness and unrepeatability of the self is seen not only in terms of its concrete historicity and spatio-temporality but identified with a particular ideological position thus emphasising the active interpretative role of the consciousness in the categorisation and evaluation of reality. In the Dostoevsky book, Bakhtin analyses the interaction between the author and characters in Dostoevsky’s novels of the novel as a special instance of the dialogical interaction between consciousnesses characterised by their unique unmerged positions. While he focuses on the various ways in which the interaction between unmerged subjects is manifested at the level of language in novelistic discourse, it should be emphasised that, for him, dialogue is not primarily a linguistic or even discursive concept.

In the first version of the Dostoevsky book Bakhtin emphasises that the dialogicality characteristic to Dostoevsky’s novel does not have to do with the familiar forms of dialogue only (Bakhtin 2000:25). This is made even more explicit in the second edition of the Dostoevsky book in which Bakhtin expands the meaning of ‘dialogue’ and sees it as a universal principle.

Indeed, the essential dialogicality of Dostoevsky is in no way exhausted by external, compositionally expressed dialogues carried out by the characters. [...] And this is so because dialogic relationships are a much broader phenomenon than mere rejoinders in a dialogue, laid out compositionally in the text; they are an almost universal phenomenon, permeating all human speech and all relationships and manifestations of human life – in general, everything that has meaning and significance. (Bakhtin 1984:40.)

Thus, for Bakhtin, the self is characterized by its ‘otherness’ which is a necessary constituent of the individual consciousness. The individual consciousness, in turn, can only

exist in a dialogue with other consciousnesses. In his working notes from 1961 titled as 'Toward a reworking of the Dostoevsky book' Bakhtin wrote that

[a] person has no internal sovereign territory, he is wholly and always on the boundary; looking inside himself, he looks *into the eyes of another* or *with the eyes of another* (Bakhtin 1984:287).

The central philosophical tenet of the book – which Bakhtin illustrates by analysing Dostoevsky's polyphonic technique – is the independence of unmerged subject-positions. In Dostoevsky's novels, this independence is reflected in the autonomy of the unmerged voices of the author and heroes. At the level of discourse, the unmergedness of individual voices is manifested, for instance, in various categories of double-voiced words in which two meaning-positions come into dialogical contact within one utterance. Bakhtin's analysis of the dialogical interaction between unmerged ideological positions of the characters and its discursive implications in Dostoevsky's novels can be seen as an elaboration of the idea of outsideness and non-alibi-in-being discussed by him in the early philosophical texts dealing with the relational and interactional nature of consciousness.

It seems obvious that the meaning Bakhtin gives to the concept of dialogue is deeper and broader than the meaning it has in the texts by his two predecessors who see dialogue as a compositional form only. What is more, for Bakhtin, dialogue is not primarily a linguistic notion, but a philosophical principle concerning the unmerged positions of the author and hero. It can be argued that in Bakhtin's philosophical conception dialogue is first and foremost an existential category, while the dialogical nature of language derives from the characteristics of this category. The dialogicality of language is both a necessary prerequisite for and a result of the relational character of the self and the interaction that takes place between unmerged subjects. This is because the conceptualization of reality presupposes dialogical interaction between the subjects which, in turn, is made possible by the existence of language or some other sign system.

## Dialogue between socio-ideological languages

Already in the 1929 edition of the Dostoevsky book Bakhtin identified the unique and unrepeatable self with a particular ideological position following Otto Kaus. In the essay *Discourse in the Novel*, which was written in 1934–1935, Bakhtin adopted a more socio-ideological approach and emphasized that particular socio-ideological positions of individuals are represented by different socio-ideological languages. In this text, Bakhtin emphasizes the social nature of language by arguing that 'verbal discourse is a social phenomenon – social throughout its entire range and in each and every of its factors, from the sound image to the furthest reaches of abstract meaning' (Bakhtin 1981:259). At the same time he criticizes 'the stylistics of genre' of that time which has been 'deprived of an authentic philosophical and sociological approach to its problems' (Bakhtin 1981:259). In this text, Bakhtin (1981:275) further elaborates the concept of dialogue approaching it from the point of view of the diversity and social stratification of language which he called *razno-rechie* (heteroglossia). While in the earlier texts the notion of dialogue was intimately connected to the relational nature of the self and the characteristics of the interaction between the self and other consciousnesses, in *Discourse in the Novel* Bakhtin is interested in how the interaction between consciousnesses is manifested in the complex interplay of different socio-ideological languages and how the sociolinguistic and stylistic diversity within a single language can be utilised in novelistic discourse.

The thematic content of the essay *Discourse in the Novel* reflects the characteristics of the intellectual climate of Soviet linguistics of the mid-1930s. The late 1920s and early 1930s was an important period in Soviet linguistics, because linguists working in various institutions both in Moscow and Leningrad were developing a new 'Marxist' to their discipline. The urge to revolutionise linguistics on the basis of Marxist theory of society



was reflected in the special emphasis on the questions of language and society. One of the most significant representatives of the early Soviet sociology of language was Iakubinskii who worked as a Professor at the University of Petrograd where Voloshinov, a friend and colleague of Bakhtin, studied in 1922–1924. Iakubinskii was interested in the social stratification and differentiation of language and also used the term *raznorechie* (heteroglossia) – which plays a central role in Bakhtin’s *Discourse in the Novel* – in his discussion of the development of literary languages in capitalist societies published in a series of articles already in 1930–1931 in the journal *Literaturnaia ucება* (Iakubinskii 1930, 1931).

The parallels between Bakhtin’s and Iakubinskii’s views on the social stratification of language have been well documented. The possibility that Bakhtin’s essay ‘Discourse in the Novel’ was influenced by Iakubinskii was briefly mentioned in Hirschkop (1999: 123), while the first detailed discussion of the significance of Iakubinskii’s articles from the 1930s to Bakhtin’s essays on the theory of the novel can be found in Brandist (2003, 2004). Most recent analysis of Iakubinskii’s potential influence on Bakhtin’s essays on the novel of the 1930–40s is Brandist & Lähteenmäki (forthcoming). Thus, recent critical research suggests that Bakhtin’s and Voloshinov’s dialogical conception of language was neither unique nor opposed to the views held by the representatives of ‘official’ linguistics, but sensitive to the contemporary developments in Soviet language studies and to Iakubinskii’s ideas in particular.

While there is little or no doubt that Bakhtin’s discussion of heteroglossia as a manifestation of social stratification of language in novelistic discourse benefited from Iakubinskii’s work, he nevertheless did not adopt Iakubinskii’s views on language diversity as such but rather recontextualised them into the dialogical conception of language. Thus, Bakhtin is not interested in the social stratification of language as a purely sociolinguistic fact, but approaches it from the point of view of the various ways in which different languages of heteroglossia representing specific socio-ideological positions can enter in dialogical relationships in novelistic discourse. He mentions three different types of dialogic orientation: 1) dialogic orientation between utterances within a single language, 2) between various social languages within a single language and 3) between different national languages within the same culture. In addition to these, Bakhtin offers a conceptualisation of the workings of the internal dialogism in utterances.

In Bakhtin’s view, words are characterized by internal dialogism. One aspect of the internal dialogism of the utterance is its orientation to the other. In this view, an utterance is a response to an earlier utterance and simultaneously oriented toward the listener and his potential response (Bakhtin 1981:280). Internal dialogism also has to do with the idea that words of a language do not refer to extra-discursive reality directly, because the world is ‘already spoken about’ and ‘verbally qualified’. Between the speaker, word and referent ‘there exists an elastic environment of other, alien words’ about the same topic (Bakhtin 1981:276). Thus, in addition to its referent an utterance also orients to alien words about the referent. For Bakhtin, a language represents a diversity of language forms, that is, *heteroglossia* [*raznorechie*] and the different language-forms of heteroglossia are connected with particular ideological positions and thus express particular world-views conceptualising extra-discursive reality in their unique way. Here, the concept of dialogue is explicitly sociologised, because the dialogical relationship is taking place between different socio-ideological interpretations of reality represented by different language-forms, while in the first edition of the Dostoevsky book Bakhtin was mainly interested in the dialogical interaction between the independent and unmerged positions of the author and characters in the novel.

## Conclusion

That Bakhtin explicitly criticised linguistic approaches in which dialogue is reduced into a mere form of composition strongly suggests that Bakhtin did not consider Shcherba's or Iakubinskii's accounts of dialogue particularly fruitful. Both Shcherba and Iakubinskii treat dialogue as a compositional form characteristic to spoken interaction, whereas Bakhtin gives it a much broader meaning. He does not deny the importance of dialogue as a compositional form, but insists that the dialogicality of language is not limited to the dialogue as a compositional form or even to the addressivity of utterance, but also includes the complex interplay between different voices (e.g. double-voiced discourse) and socio-ideological languages. What is more, unlike Shcherba and Iakubinskii Bakhtin does not discuss the notion of dialogue in the context of linguistics and he does not see it as a primarily linguistic category. While Bakhtin sees dialogicality as a fundamental feature of all natural languages, he still sees the dialogical nature of languages as deriving from the characteristics of the interaction between unmerged subjects. Thus, for Bakhtin dialogue is primarily an omnipresent existential principle governing the interaction between different consciousnesses, and the characteristics of this interaction are reflected at the level of language and discourse

It can be argued that Shcherba's, Iakubinskii's and Bakhtin's views on dialogue are qualitatively different. This is because Shcherba's and Iakubinskii's accounts neglect the philosophical implications of the concept which Bakhtin considered as the very essence of the phenomenon, as demonstrated by his analysis of Dostoevsky's polyphonic novels. Bakhtin also elaborated the concept of dialogue in different texts. While in the first editions of the Dostoevsky book Bakhtin conceived of dialogue mainly as interaction between unmerged ideological positions of the heroes, in *Discourse in the Novel* he attempted to sociologise the concept of dialogue and approached dialogue from the point of view of the interplay of unmerged socio-ideological purviews represented by different language-forms of heteroglossia. Finally, in the second edition of the Dostoevsky book 'dialogue' stood for a universal category underlying all human existence.

The present discussion also demonstrates that the notion of influence is highly problematic as a historiographical concept (see, Koerner 1987). Although it has been established that Bakhtin knew of Iakubinskii's and Shcherba's views on dialogue and that there are certain thematic and terminological parallels between their texts – which are confirmed by explicit references to Iakubinskii – it is extremely difficult to establish the exact nature and extent of potential influence. Even a brief comparison of the texts written by the three authors reveals that there is a qualitative leap between Bakhtin's concept of dialogue and that of Shcherba and Iakubinskii. Thus, even if Bakhtin benefited from their writings on dialogue, the concept of dialogue was so radically transformed due to its recontextualisation by Bakhtin that following Bocharov (2000) the potential influence by Shcherba and Iakubinskii can be characterized as 'stimulating', at best.

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