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# Manifesting Identity in Cultural and Academic Discourses

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

**Iga Maria Lehman**, *Manifesting Identity in Cultural and Academic Discourses* ..... 5

CHAPTER ONE

**Halina Chodkiewicz**, *English Philology Students’ Practice and Perceptions of Generating Own Questions on Lecture Content: An Empirical Study* ..... 9

CHAPTER TWO

**Emilia Królak, Anna Wiechecka**, *Podejście typu „Jestem tego warta” ‘I’m-Worth-It’ Attitude – Selected Pragmatic Functions of Nominal Constructions Involving Direct Speech in Polish* ..... 27

CHAPTER THREE

**Kamila Ciepiela**, *‘Speaking’ Revisited* ..... 41

CHAPTER FOUR

**Janusz Semrau**, *Towards De-Troubling the Discourse of Sociality. Some Notes on Heidegger’s Early Thought and Diction* ..... 55

CHAPTER FIVE

**Katarzyna Ostalska**, *Revisiting Multiculturalism in the Context of Communication Politics in the United Kingdom of the Twenty First Century* ..... 67

CHAPTER SIX

**Agnieszka Łowczanin**, *A Damsel in Distress in Search of Identity: Ann Radcliffe’s The Mysteries of Udolpho* ..... 79



**CHAPTER SEVEN**

**Katarzyna Ostalska**, *‘Open to Negotiations, Long, Generous’: Literary Expressions of Interculturalism: Irish Women Poets in an Intercultural Dialogue with the American Poetry* ..... 91

# INTRODUCTION

## MANIFESTING IDENTITY IN CULTURAL AND ACADEMIC DISCOURSES

This volume presents reflections on the use of language in a variety of social contexts and shows that each discourse community is a space in which participants' *discoursal identity* constitutes itself and is constituted. This is evidenced in linguistic expressions which are not only the products of human cognition, personalities and life histories but are largely determined by our alignment with the conventions of dominant practices and discourses located in a particular institutional and cultural context. Stated otherwise, people aim to define themselves in two fundamental ways: (1) in terms of their unique individual qualities/features and (2) in terms of social membership, notions which are elaborated in two contrasting approaches to identity construction: poststructuralist and sociolinguistic, and social constructionist.

The first view includes anti-essentialist frameworks such as, Butler's (1990) and Bersani's (1995) *queer theory*, S. Hall's (1995) *diaspora*, Bhabha's (1994) *hybridity*, Rampton's (1995) *crossing* as well as the theories of Bakhtin (1986), Parker (1989) and Giddens (1991) which have liberated the concept of discoursal identity by acknowledging the agentive power of the actual writer/speaker's voice. The other perspective is realized through the works of such social theorists as Althusser (1971), Foucault (1979) or van Dijk (1991) and points to the pervasive power of institutions in social systems and consequently, their determining role in the process of identity construction. In this, identity is approached as a purely social creation constituted by socio-cultural and institutional influences, which make discourse participants conform to the pre-established rhetorical conventions of their discourse communities.

In my view, however, this dichotomy is an oversimplification, as language use is affected by aspects of both individual and societal factors, and individuals are often required to call upon a range of communicative skills depending on the socio-cultural context in which they find themselves. How discourse is internalized in the social practices of a particular community and how this

shapes the identities of people who participate in this discourse is discussed in the chapters which constitute this volume.

In the first section of the monograph the contributors show how individuals create and demonstrate their linguistic individuality in specific socio-cultural contexts. The first paper by Halina Chodkiewicz examines how students build the linguistic strategy of own-generated questions in order to provide a scaffolding for the development of their discipline-related content knowledge. The second article in this section penned by Anna Wiechecka and Emilia Królak analyses over 1,000 examples of a communication strategy employed by Polish speakers to signal a negative attitude to the following propositional content of an utterance. The third contribution by Kamila Ciepiela asks whether our conceptualisation of language, identity and communication, little changed since the seminal work of Hymes in the early 70s, needs to be extended to include “intersecting material bodies, objects and senses”.

Following the premise that variation in communication behaviour is culturally determined, the second group of articles deals with a philosophical perspective of how society creates a discourse in order to describe the individual and her/his position in society. Janusz Semrau’s article, following Heidegger, challenges to what extent society does create discourses and therefore calls for a conceptualisation of social discourse between people as more varied and divergent. This theme is developed in Katarzyna Ostalska’s reflections on the successes or otherwise of the notion of ‘interculturalism’, and to what extent social discourse has been a positive or negative influence on multi-cultural integration, with a specific focus on the UK. The research analyses some of the discourses surrounding Brexit in order to argue that notions of inclusivity have largely been superseded by discourses around exclusion and notions of a mono-ethnicity as opposed to multi-ethnicity.

The theme of identity in society is approached by Agnieszka Łowczanin’s contribution from a historical perspective, in her article on the 18<sup>th</sup> century Gothic novel, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, by Anne Radcliffe. Łowczanin points out that the novel is a seminal work on the social influences on the development of identity, with specific focus on normalised concepts of gender which are challenged in the novel, leading us to a greater understanding of the notion of self today.

Katarzyna Ostalska’s second article in the volume argues that Bourdieu’s notion of cultural capital, is a concept which can be applied effectively when considering aspects of intercultural communication. The author looks at the phenomenon of interculturalism as an objective that can be achieved when cultures are placed in a dialogic relationship with one another and the cultural capital of each culture is transformed and realised via this intercultural contact. Her arguments are supported by literary examples of such intercultural transmissions.

It is my strong belief that the contributions in this volume will inspire further research in the area of identity studies across a variety of socio-cultural contexts.

*Iga Maria Lehman*  
*Warsaw, October 2019*

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## CHAPTER ONE

# ENGLISH PHILOLOGY STUDENTS' PRACTICE AND PERCEPTIONS OF GENERATING OWN QUESTIONS ON LECTURE CONTENT: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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**Abstract:** Implementing a variety of strategies, including student-generated questioning, can be a perfect tool for supporting students' academic goals directed at the acquisition of content-area knowledge. This chapter aims to report a study which demonstrated how a group of English Philology students coped with asking their own questions based on the content of a sequence of academic lectures. Question types generated by the subjects and their perceptions of some essential aspects of the use of the questioning strategy are thoroughly investigated.

**Key words:** processing lecture discourse, lecture delivery, student-generated questioning strategy, question categories.

## INTRODUCTION

Recent years have evidently proved that one of the key roles of worldwide education is to support the development of students' literacy skills both in native and non-native languages indispensable for their participation in educational and professional environments. The critical value of attainment of students' literacy skills with regard to oral and written performance has been particularly appreci-

ated in internationalized universities. As for the recent conceptualization of literacy skills, it has had a much wider scope than the previously established definitions. Frankel, Becker, Rowe & Pearson (2016, p. 7), for example, have defined literacy as “the process of using reading, writing, and oral language to extract, construct, integrate, and critique meaning through interaction and involvement with multimodal texts in the context of socially situated practices”. The researchers have acknowledged the constructive nature of literacy processes, their cultural and social context, differences across disciplinary settings, as well as the complexity resulting from diverse multimodal forms of texts. Such a universal view of literacy is also of significance for understanding the nature of academic lectures, many of which have departed from their traditional form, where students gathered in an auditorium, listened to the lecturer and just made notes. The recent tendency is to make lectures more interactive and technology-based, especially when used in Content-Based Instruction, English for Academic Purposes, or in English for Special Purposes.

The primary goal of this chapter is to report on a classroom-based empirical study which aimed to explore English Philology students' performance on a sequence of question-generating tasks accompanying academic lectures, with special emphasis put on the examination of their perceptions and awareness of vital aspects of this strategy use. The undertaken study is innovative and the problem of the implementation of student-generated questioning practices in FL contexts has been greatly underresearched.

## LECTURE DELIVERY AND LECTURE PROCESSING

The process of learning from academic lectures, so extensively relied on at the tertiary level of education, both in L1 and L2/FL settings, has been variously approached and interpreted by educationists and teachers. Given a psycholinguistic perspective, lecture comprehension is conceptualized as a combination of integrated bottom-up and top-down processing. The bottom level of input processing operates on decoding phonemes, syllables, syntactic information and intonation, as well as on accent, prosodic features, speech rate, or even hesitations characterising the lecturer's speech (e.g., Buck, 2001). Simultaneously occurring top-down processes trigger listeners' prior and contextual knowledge in response to the listeners' anticipations and with the purpose of knowledge integration (e.g., Dakowska, 2015; Rost, 2002; Field, 2008; Flowerdew & Miller, 2005).

Focus on lecture discourse processing, on the other hand, brings about the issues of building the overall argument of discourse structure and recognizing its communicative purpose. Involved in selecting and integrating elements of information at the microlevel, listeners construct the macrostructure of the lecture

(Gernsbacher, 1990; Kintsch, 1998). Constructing the hierarchy of lecture argumentation also requires that they cope with redundancy and identify logical connectors, which is possible due to the availability of formal schemata in their prior knowledge (Field, 2008; Rost, 2002; Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). The lecturer, on the other hand, can enhance students' processing of lecture content by using metalinguistic signals, which can explicitly state the relationships between ideas, mark their importance, or even suggest their evaluation (Jung, 2003). If, however, no clear signs of lecture discourse organization are received by listeners, they resort to their individually developed prediction strategies to monitor lecture comprehension (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012).

Individual learner differences in approaching lecture learning are a critical factor in students' achievement. Ryan (2001), for instance, identified six individual conceptual models of lectures adopted by listeners (described as metaphors), which impact their notetaking practices. Adopting different strategies, some students absorb, store, or record the lecture material, others treat a lecture as a code-breaking task, and still others tend to focus on organizing the information throughout the lecture, or on integrating different sources of topic-specific knowledge. As a consequence, students will face different lecture learning problems (Ryan, 2001).

As for lecture delivery, it is obvious that lecturers control lecture content, select delivery style, and the rate of speech, which is of special concern in the case of L2/FL learners. Morrell (2004) suggests classifying lectures into 'reading lecturing style' (non-interactive) and 'conversational lecture' (interactive), with less formal student participation, which shows similarity to a more universal distinction between 'one-way listening', that is monologic lectures with students listening and taking down notes vs. 'two-way listening', with some reciprocal response (Lynch, 2011). As can be seen then, an underlying problem in giving academic lectures is the degree of their interactivity, that is listeners' participation. In fact, attempts have been made to supplement lectures with a variety of tasks, such as brainstorming, problem-solving, or answering questions (Lynch, 2011). To better conceptualize the problem, Ellis (2018) suggests that a reciprocity element be added to inherently receptive lectures and interpreted either as a task reciprocity continuum or varying degrees of task reciprocity. So far, many forms of interactive activities which aimed to prevent students from being merely passive recipients of lectures have been associated with 'active learning', that is deeper learning (Huerta, 2007; Exley & Dennick, 2009).

As already mentioned, contemporary literacy experience, including academic lectures is to a large extent based on multimodal texts. In 1997, Flowerdew and Miller drew attention to the fact that slides, illustrations, videos or PowerPoint presentations became a relevant source of information for understanding verbal lecture input (Flowerdew & Miller, 1997). This does not mean, however, that



processing of visual information accompanying spoken monologue always facilitates understanding lecture content. On the contrary, students may find it harder to select most relevant points from competing oral and visual information, and feel disturbed by spoken information when taking down the notes (King, 1994; Vandergrift, 2007). Hence, it is indispensable for individual listeners to embark on some efficient strategies that can help them reach their lecture learning goals.

## QUESTIONING PRACTICES AND LECTURE DISCOURSE: GENERATING STUDENTS' OWN QUESTIONS

Questioning strategies have well been recognized as a effective tool in developing students' learning and thinking skills in all educational contexts. As noted by Davoudi & Sadeghi (2015, p. 77), "in the field of language learning and teaching, questioning, as a teaching and learning strategy, is of immense importance and is well documented". Indeed, students' engagement in the classroom learning environment is highly dependent on both teachers' questions guiding students' thinking processes and student-generated questions (Davoudi & Sadeghi, 2015). That is the reason why researchers have sought to find out whether questions asked by teachers and students during or after reading or listening could support comprehension of the target content. One of the suggestions has been to modify lectures with 'question-based outlines' – questions answered by students on the basis of restructured lecture material, 'discussion question prompts' – students answering lecturers' questions on some issues beyond basic lecture material, and 'small group discussions' – students answering questions and commenting on them during lecture time (Huerta, 2007). Getting answers to some adjunct questions from a large lecture class has become possible by using the so-called technology-based personal response system (PRS), with students pressing a button on a remote control device in response to multiple-choice questions (Campbell & Mayer, 2009).

A number of researchers have also taken interest in the inquiry into students generating their own questions as part of listening and reading-based tasks (e.g., King, 1989, 1991, 1994; Rosenshine, Meister & Chapman, 1996). Whereas, in her seminal article, King (1991) found that high-school learners who used a self-questioning strategy improved their comprehension of classroom lectures, Rosenshine et al. (1996), in their most-cited publication on questioning strategy, confirmed its effect on students' comprehension gains. Despite being applied in many different contexts, the strategy of student-generated questions has been found to operate in a similar way both cognitively and metacognitively in listening and reading, that is in checking and organizing comprehension (King, 1991).

As for the efficiency of student-generated questions, Rosenshine et al. (1996) claim that the strategy supports monitoring and fostering comprehension, which ensures active processing of oral or written input. Self-generated questioning also increases students' engagement in comprehension processes and, as a consequence, contributes indirectly to successful content processing, with special attention paid to identifying main ideas. Involvement in deep cognitive processing of written or oral texts helps students intensify inference processing, offer more explanations and justifications, and produce more elaborations of the target input (e.g., King, 1989, 1992; King & Rosenshine, 1993; Rosenshine, Meister & Chapman, 1996; Rothstein & Santana, 2013). Referring to the study of disciplinary texts, Buehl (2011, pp. 166–167) advocates that reading should be interpreted as inquiry, which means that readers “take an inquiring mindset into their reading”.

In order to encourage students to adopt this beneficial strategy of generating their own questions in listening tasks, according to King's (1994) widely followed expertise, some guidelines, the so-called procedural prompts for constructing such questions, have to be introduced in classroom contexts. Hence students are to be instructed to formulate questions based on commonly used question words: *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how*, as well as applying generic question stems, such as: *How are ... and ... alike? What are the strengths and weaknesses of... ? How is ... related to ... ? What is a new example of... ? Why is it important that ... ?* They are also reminded to ask questions about the main ideas of the text or deliberately choose particular question types. The questions generated by students constitute the basis for the discussion of the target content in reciprocal questioning tasks. If any questions prove not to be comprehensible enough, students use restatements, paraphrasing or self-explanations (King, 1994; Rosenshine et al., 1996; Chodkiewicz & Kiszczak, 2017).

The study to be reported in this chapter, based on the theoretical background presented above, examines an array of question types generated by English Philology students based on a lecture sequence, with a focus on how they perceived selected aspects of the use of the student questioning strategy in post-lecture tasks. This study is a continuation of the author's initiative into research on students generating own questions in lecture-based learning (cf. Chodkiewicz & Kiszczak, 2017).

## THE CURRENT STUDY

The focal point of a small-scale empirical study reported in this chapter is English Philology students' efficiency own questions regarding the lecture material, that is a strategy which has been found beneficial comprehension monitoring and

learning from oral discourse. This is the case, as described by Ellis (2018), when one-way lecturing with no inherent communicative reciprocity is enriched with an interactive activity aimed to enhance lecture processing and learning.

## THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The goal of the study was two-fold. First, it was to investigate the use of a student-generated questioning strategy by a group of English Philology students, who were asked to formulate a number of questions regarding the content of lectures that they attended over the period of one term. Second, the study aimed to explore the subjects' perceptions and views concerning their performance in lecture-based question generating tasks. While the purpose of the analysis of the types of student-generated questions was their assessment in terms of content relevance and the depth of cognitive processing, the questionnaire data made it possible to compile the students' reflections on the efficiency of the question generating strategy and evaluate their awareness of some pertinent issues concerning its implementation. Thus the data obtained in the study are both of quantitative and qualitative nature.

The following research questions were posed:

1. What is the spectrum (distribution) of the types of lecture-based questions generated by the subjects in terms of their cognitive depth?
2. What are the subjects' perceptions with regard to selected aspects of the student-generated questioning strategy and its implementation in post-lecture tasks?

## METHOD

### Participants

Twenty-five extramural Polish students of the English Department at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin took part in this study. The group included 7 male and 18 female students, aged 22–31 years. The participants were an intact group of 2<sup>nd</sup> year graduate students, obliged to take EFL Didactics lectures as part of their M.A. programme, which prepared them for the final exam to be taken at the end of the winter term. Holding their B.A. degrees, twenty of the students were employed as EFL teachers in primary, lower secondary, or private language schools, and the remaining 5 students were not employed as language professionals.

## Research instruments

Two research instruments were adopted in this study, namely: a taxonomy of questions developed by Chodkiewicz & Kiszczak (2017) and a questionnaire designed specifically for the purpose of this study.

The taxonomy used to classify the students' lecture-based questions makes it possible to distinguish between a number of question categories and subcategories depending on the level of their cognitive depth (see Chodkiewicz & Kiszczak, 2017 for more discussion on this research instrument). The questions formulated by the subjects were divided into the following three major categories and subcategories:

- shallow questions (verification, disjunctive, concept, completion, and example) – based on simple reasoning, addressing factual information;
- intermediate questions (feature specification, quantification, definition, and comparison) – fostering text comprehension (e.g., by explanation processes);
- deep questions (interpretation, casual antecedent, casual consequence, goal orientation, instrumental/procedural, enablement, expectation, and judgmental) – requiring higher-order thinking and integrating the information (Graesser & Person, 1994).

The questionnaire used in the current study was designed by the researcher on the basis of her previous empirical research into student-generated questioning and the relevant literature on the subject; to ensure its validity it was critically examined by two EFL academic teachers. In order to elicit the subjects' reflections and opinions on the use of student-generated questions as part of academic lectures as well as to obtain information on the students' experience of implementing the strategy in question, nine questionnaire items were designed, including seven open-ended questions and two closed-ended questions (5-point Likert scale).

## Procedure and data collection

The twenty-five English Philology students who participated in the study attended seven sessions of 4 hour-lectures in EFL Didactics delivered over one term. The lectures were accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation, which had approximately 20–30 mainly summative, bullet-point slides. Each time after the students had listened to the lecture, they performed a 15-minute post-lecture task, in which they were to formulate three questions of their own choice on the lecture content to be discussed with their partners in pairs. In other words, the activity was to provide the students with some training in the use of the student-generated questioning strategy. The lecturer monitored the students' performance and collected the sets of the students' questions, written down on sheets of paper, for further examination (the procedure was adopted from Chodkiewicz & Kiszczak, 2017). In order to motivate the students to participate in the lectures



(even though the lectures were compulsory, some students occasionally missed them), the students were to be awarded with 5 extra points during the final exam in EFL Didactics (60 pts being the maximum number, with 40 pts required for a pass), if they provided 5 or 6 complete sets of self-generated lecture-based questions.

Before the study proper, the students were informed about the main purpose of performing lecture-based question-generating tasks, as well as about the importance of using – in a meaningful way – different signal words for starting one's own questions (*who, what, where, when, why, and how*). The lecturer also discussed a number of useful procedural prompts and provided some exemplary generic questions based on King (1994) and Rosenshine, Meister, and Chapman (1996). As in Chodkiewicz and Kiszczak (2017), all the students' questions were evaluated by two academic teachers (specialists in the field of EFL Didactics) in terms of their content relevance and assigned to proper categories on the basis of the aforementioned taxonomy. This is how the distribution of the particular question types could be determined.

The students' responses to the questionnaire, which the students took anonymously and on a voluntary basis after the EFL Didactics exam was administered, were obtained from only 20 students. The students could take as much time as they needed to provide their responses.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The table below, based on Chodkiewicz & Kiszczak (2017, p. 253), displays the list of question categories and subcategories analyzed for the purpose of the current study, their short specifications, the number of the uses of the particular question types, and examples of questions asked by 25 subjects. As many as 326 lecture-based questions, identified as content relevant by the judges, were carefully classified according to the accepted question specifications.

The analysis of the subjects' lecture-based questions provided the evidence of how efficient the students were in formulating different question types representative of the three cognitive levels. A positive finding is that the numbers of intermediate and deep questions, 138 (42%) and 117 (36%) respectively, considerably exceeded the amount of shallow questions – 71 (22%). As generally acknowledged, the increasing depth of cognitive processing through questioning strategies activates learners' higher-order thinking and learning processes (e.g., King, 1989, 1992; Rosenshine, Meister & Chapman, 1996; Rothstein & Santana, 2013).

**Table 1. Number of uses of particular question categories and subcategories with their specifications and sample questions (n = 326)**

Question category/subcategory	Question specification	Number of uses	Sample questions asked by subjects
<b>Shallow questions</b>			
Verification	Is X true or false?	12	Is context important while teaching a second language?
Disjunctive	Is X, Y, or Z the case?	0	
Concept Completion	What? Who? When? Where?	38	What are the key principles of the Lexical Approach?
Example	What is an example or instance of a category?	21	What types of syllabuses do you know?
<b>Total number</b>		<b>71</b>	
<b>Intermediate questions</b>			
Feature specification	What qualitative properties does entity X have?	20	What are the features of formal and functional syllabuses?
Quantification	What is the value of a quantitative variable? How much? How many?	1	To what extent a teacher should rely only on materials presented in a textbook?
Definition	What does X mean?	28	What is the word availability?
Comparison	How is X similar to Y?	89	What is the difference between declarative and procedural knowledge?
<b>Total number</b>		<b>138</b>	
<b>Deep questions</b>			
Interpretation	What concept can be inferred from a static or active pattern of data?	15	Why did M. Lewis say that speech/speaking is more important than writing?
Casual antecedent	How did a state come to exist?	3	Why is recycling in practice a problem in the Lexical Approach?
Casual consequence	What are the consequences of an event or state?	5	How does age affect learning?
Goal orientation	Why did an agent do some action?	14	Why is concordance a useful tool for learners?
Instrumental/procedural	How did an agent do some action?	10	How do learners cope with limitations in their knowledge and skills to maintain communication (spoken or written)?
Enablement	What object allows an agent to accomplish a goal?	12	How can empathy facilitate communicating with others?
Expectation	Why did some expected event not occur?	7	What do you think would happen if textbooks disappeared in teaching children?
Judgemental	How would you rate X?	51	Which of the personality factors is the most important in your opinion?
<b>Total number</b>		<b>117</b>	

Source: (Chodkiewicz &amp; Kiszczak, 2017, p. 253).

Interestingly, the distribution of the main question types in the current study proved to be a close replication of the data concerning the distribution of those categories as compared with the results obtained by Chodkiewicz & Kiszczak (2017), that is respectively 23% shallow, 36% intermediate, and 41% deep questions. It may be concluded that the both groups of the subjects, second year students of English Philology pursuing the same EFL Didactics course during their MA programme at the same university, attained a similar level of cognitive and linguistic competences. When involved in performing question generating tasks based on the same course material presented through a sequence of lectures by the same lecturer, they demonstrated a similar level of their efficiency in the use of the question generating strategy.

As for the question types whose numbers proved to be relatively high, as many as 38 out of 71 shallow questions posed by the subjects were concept completion questions, and 89 out of 138 intermediate questions were comparison questions. Indeed, comparison questions might have specifically drawn the students' attention as they were discussed at in the pre-study introduction. Interestingly, a relatively high number of judgmental questions, 51 out of 117 deep questions were identified, with somewhat lower numbers of difficult questions of interpretation, goal orientation, and enablement. All in all, the analysis of the questions generated by the subjects revealed that they were able to delve into a wide repertoire of questions, although some question types were employed rather infrequently.

In order to look more closely at how the students approached the task of generating own questions on lecture content, the data obtained from 20 study participants who filled in the questionnaire were carefully analyzed. As for the frequency of asking own questions on the texts they read or listened to in English, only 2 out of 20 students declared doing it frequently when reading difficult texts or listening to podcasts. Whereas 5 students never asked questions, claiming that the procedure was time-consuming, difficult, or not a preferred strategy, the remaining 13 students did it rarely or sometimes, mainly when preparing for their lessons, testing themselves, reading longer or difficult texts, or when attempting to overcome some problems with reading. The questionnaire responses revealed that the study participants did not exploit text-based questions as part of their reading or listening practices in a deliberate way, even though this would seem to be naturally suitable for advanced EFL learners and trainee teachers of English Philology.

The second question the subjects answered concerned the problem of structuring the questions asked. More than half of the group declared that they aimed to make their questions understandable, coherent, and unambiguous, and that it was the key terms found in the lecture content that helped them convey and highlight the targeted information. When asked to characterize a 'good question', the subjects once again underlined the importance of the question being answerable, as

well as helpful in understanding essential concepts, and analyzing relevant information in a logical way. The students also mentioned bad questions, which, on the other hand, were associated with guessing, being too general, demanding, complicated, and not involving thinking. This proved that the students intuitively found it important to distinguish between good and bad questions, which has, in fact, been done by some specialists (e.g., King, 1989; Graesser & Person, 1994). The students were also fully aware of keeping their questions within the limits of the cognitive capability of the interlocutor.

The next issue for the subjects to tackle in the questionnaire were factors affecting the quality of questions. Among others, the students pointed at the difficulty of the material, the internal structure of the body of knowledge covered, familiarity with the topic and the use of basic terminology. One of the students expressed an opinion that the quality of a generated question is determined by the amount of attention and time devoted to it, but also by the level of one's interest, motivation and engagement in the comprehension process. Another student believed that how efficient the question is depends on "whether the students understand the lecture or just rewrite the visual material". Also, a complaint about the lack of training and proper practice in asking questions was voiced. Clearly, the students recognized both the learner- and text-related factors to be determinants of question quality.

Describing the reasons for revising their questions, the subjects indicated their dissatisfaction with finding errors in them, including grammar errors, and inadequately expressed content. In other words, what their questions needed was mainly eradicating language errors and getting rid of content inadequacies. One of the students stated the following: "I changed two of my questions, reformulated completely together with the information they contained, I found them illogical, not specific". Other reasons for changing questions were to make them objective and relevant to the topic. The subjects' comments clearly showed their awareness of the linguistic problems they could face in generating questions of their own.

The two closed-ended questions used as part of the questionnaire were based on a 5-point Likert scale. They concerned the subjects' perceptions of the importance of selected aspects of lecture delivery for generating students' own questions (Table 2), and the influence of practice in question generation on lecture processing (Table 3).

As displayed in the table 2 below, the subjects assigned the greatest role to the items of lecture content stressed by the lecturer. They also placed value on the acquisition of relevant concepts and their definitions, which overlaps with the data presented in Table 1. It is interesting to note that the students' views match their question generation performance since concept completion questions were

the most often selected subcategory among shallow questions. Despite being a subcategory of shallow questions, concept completion questions are assumed to play a significant role in building mental models of texts (Davoudi & Sadeghi, 2015). Apart from this, the students generally tended to follow the organization of the lecture and integrate the knowledge gained with their prior subject-specific knowledge.

**Table 2. The importance of selected aspects of lecture delivery for generating student questions as perceived by the subjects (n = 20)**

Aspects of lecture delivery	Importance scale 1= not important 5 = very important (n=20)				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Organization of the lecture content on the slides	1	1	4	5	9
2. Items emphasised by the lecturer	0	0	2	9	9
3. Focus on definitions, important concepts and ideas	0	0	3	7	10
4. Holistic representation of the lecture content	0	2	7	6	5
5. Referring to students' prior knowledge on the topic and of area taught	1	0	6	7	8

Source: own elaboration.

Subsequently, the subjects were to describe the perceived influence of their involvement in question-generating tasks on lecture processing.

**Table 3. The subjects' perception of the influence of their involvement in question-generating tasks on selected aspects of lecture processing (n = 19)**

Aspects of lecture processing	Perception of influence 1 = not at all 5 = to a large extent (n = 19)				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Listening to the lecture more attentively	3	0	4	5	7
2. Better understanding of the main ideas of the lecture	0	1	5	5	8
3. Deeper reflection on the lecture content in search of key concepts and integration of ideas	0	0	4	11	4
4. Retention of the content presented	0	2	6	6	5
5. Reflecting on the material from the exam perspective	2	2	6	3	6

Source: own elaboration.

As shown above, the students thought that their involvement in question generating practice made them not only listen to a lecture more attentively, but also concentrate on understanding its main ideas, identifying key concepts and integrating information. They expressed a slightly more pessimistic view as to the impact of the post-lecture tasks they performed on the retention of the lecture material for the final course exam. It follows then that the subjects valued short-, rather than long-term effects of question generation practice for their academic study.

Some interesting data emerged from the analysis of the students' opinions concerning the degree of improvement of their questioning strategy throughout the one term period of the study. Their answers ranged from "I do not think so", "a little, a little bit" to "I am sure that it has changed". One of the students, for example, observed: "I don't think that the structure has changed, but I have paid attention to the question being more interesting", and another student noted: "I may have improved the skill of top-down analysis and seeing the connections between simple facts". Still another opinion sounded like this: "with time my questions were more demanding, more complex, I required more time devoted to thinking about the question". It can be concluded that with the passage of time the students took on more responsibility and became more critical of the procedure of formulating their own questions. Some students expressed the need of asking more cognitively advanced questions, as illustrated by the following statement: "I realized the importance of how and why questions, I try to be more specific and use key terms".

Some additional insights into the subjects' views on enhancing the efficiency of generating students' own questions were elicited by asking them to give advice on improving questioning performance. The students, among others, recommended taking down notes during the lecture and generating questions while they were still in one's memory ("forming questions on the spot if possible"). They suggested paying attention to all the information provided by the lecturer apart from what appeared on the slides and warned against copying their contents slavishly. The students either opted for focusing on particular parts of the lecture to form their questions or alternatively advocated rethinking all the information before embarking on the procedure. Apart from this, they underlined the advantage of formulating more elaborate questions, including 'why' and 'how', or comparison questions drawing on "more than one part of the lecture", or "on an involving, comprehensible part of the lecture", which showed their awareness of the role of creating mental linkages between different portions of lecture material in comprehension and learning processes.

On balance, deliberate practice in generating students' own questions seems to have made the participants of the study more thoughtful processors of lecture discourse, conscious of numerous aspects concerning maximizing the benefits of the use of the questioning strategy. This corroborates the stance of many specialists in the area (e.g., King, 1989, 1992; Graessr & Person, 1994; Rosenshine, Meister & Chapman, 1996; Rothstein & Santana, 2013).

## MAJOR FINDINGS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Even though the students of English Philology who participated in the current study admitted that they did not apply the strategy of generating own questions while studying oral or written material in a systematic way, they were able to formulate a wide range of question types at different levels of cognitive depth (a high percentage of questions at the intermediate and deep cognitive levels). It is also worth noting that the quantitative results concerning the students' choice of question types demonstrated above replicate the findings of an earlier study by Chodkiewicz & Kiszczak (2017).

The analysis of all the quantitative and qualitative data compiled for the current study makes it possible to conclude that the participants:

- showed preference for using some question types, in particular, concept completion and comparison questions; in fact, they indicated the importance of understanding basic concepts, terms and ideas in lecture processing and formulating their own questions on a number of occasions;
- demonstrated a high awareness of the potential benefits of the implementation of a student-generated questioning strategy;
- developed valuable self-reflective thoughts regarding the procedures adopted while generating own questions on the basis of lecture content;
- found 'how' and 'why' questions to be especially helpful in the deeper processing of the target lecture material;
- arrived at a better understanding of the relationships between processing lecture content and the types and quality of questions asked.

Some of the limitations of the study are connected with the adopted methodology, that is investigating the strategy under consideration in a typical large class lecture context. That is the reason why the students' responses to each other's questions in pairs could not be researched. Another aspect not covered in this study, yet deserving further examination, concerns assessing lecture comprehension and learning gains from the lectures as influenced by student-generated questioning practice. Yet, it needs to be pointed out that investigating causal relationships in educational settings is particularly difficult. As recently observed by Vandergrift & Cross (2017), the research concerning the benefits of

listening strategy instruction, despite extensive interest in it, has generally been inconclusive and many problems still lack proper empirical study.

## CONCLUSION

Student-generated questioning constitutes a powerful strategy to be implemented in enhancing the processing of academic discourse, that is spoken lectures, written expository texts, or a variety of multimodal texts exploited in tertiary settings. Indeed, achieving a high level of mastery of broadly understood literacy skills, including students' expertise in the use of learning and study strategies, is assumed to be a foundation of a contemporary educational system at all the levels. Exposed to vast amounts of input of content area knowledge through the medium of oral or written language, both L1 and L2/FL students should be able to approach their learning experience in a most effective strategic way. Implementing an array of learning and study strategies, including student-generated questioning, creates conducive grounds for reflecting on and processing the target disciplinary knowledge, identifying points of relevance, as well as approaching the information presented critically so as to link it with the knowledge acquired so far. As evidenced in the current study, students' practice in generating their own lecture-based questions can help them gain expertise in the application of the strategy, as well as better understanding of how good quality questions can be created and why their potential for content area learning needs to be fully reached. In particular, with L2/FL students in mind, the linguistic aspects of generating text-based questions should be given thorough consideration.

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## CHAPTER TWO

# PODEJŚCIE TYPU „JESTEM TEGO WARTA” (‘I’M-WORTH-IT’ ATTITUDE) – SELECTED PRAGMATIC FUNCTIONS OF NOMINAL CONSTRUCTIONS INVOLVING DIRECT SPEECH IN POLISH

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**Abstract:** Basing on an extensive database of over 1000 examples, the article studies a Polish construction in which direct speech constituents (interpreted here as instantiations of fictive interaction) act as nominal modifiers (e.g. *podejście typu „Jestem Tego Warta”* (‘I’m-Worth-It’ attitude). In particular, it tries to account for the fact that the overwhelming majority of these pseudoquotations convey some degree of negative evaluation of the concepts coded by the nouns modified, ranging from distancing oneself from some proposition to expressing the speaker’s harsh and damaging criticism of a person or idea.

**Key words:** direct speech, fictive interaction, pseudoquotation, negative evaluation, impoliteness.

## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this article is to study a selected pragmatic function of a Polish nominal construction involving direct speech, namely its capacity to convey the negative attitude of the speaker towards the concepts coded by the head nouns. This construction represented by the example *podejście typu „Jestem tego warta”* (‘I’m worth it’ attitude), is quite common in many types of Polish spo-

ken and written discourse and it has the following characteristic structure: noun + (quotative marker) + direct speech constituent. Nouns which occur in the construction studied belong to diverse semantic categories: they can refer to types of discourse, people, body language, attitudes or mental states as well as events, places or time (for more details, see Królak, 2016). They are typically followed by one of the distinctive quotative markers, which are, however, optional and often skipped in more formal (and written) types of discourse. The most common markers are: *typu / w typie* (‘of the type’); *w stylu* (‘in/of the style’); *w rodzaju* (‘of the kind’); *z cyklu* (‘of the series’); *pod tytułem* (‘entitled’); *pod hasłem* (‘under the heading’); *w klimacie* (‘creating the atmosphere’); *na zasadzie* (‘according to the rule’). The last element of the construction are direct speech constituents, which range from formulaic expressions, e.g. *mentalność pod tytułem „chcę mieć ciastko i zjeść ciastko”* (‘have your cake and eat it’ mentality) to highly specific and context-dependent ones, like *zasada typu „niwelujemy fonetykę gwarową, zwłaszcza gdyby utrudniała poprawny zapis”* (the ‘we standardise the dialectal phonetics, especially if it was to render the correct transcript difficult’ rule). Interestingly, however, a great majority of direct speech constituents modifying nouns express propositions which are easily recognisable in a given speaking community as they exemplify typical attitudes, ways of thinking, typical behaviour etc., e.g. *Masz podejście w typie „może i drań, ale moja miłość sprawi że się usatkuje”* (You have the ‘He may be a bastard, but my love will make him settle down’ attitude). Crucially, direct speech which occurs in these constructions does not have the function of quoting a person’s words verbatim. In most cases the utterance did not take place in reality but it was deliberately created by the ‘quoting’ author so as to achieve particular effects in the ongoing discourse – for instance to amuse or otherwise catch the attention of the interlocutor, to make a particular idea more transparent or comprehensible, or, most importantly for us here, to express his or her negative evaluation of a particular concept. This non-prototypical use of direct speech is referred to in linguistic literature by different names: constructed dialogue (Tannen, 1986, 1989), (pseudo)quotation (Clark & Gerrig, 1990) and fictive interaction (see e.g., Pascual, 2006, 2014, Pascual & Sandler, 2018). Fictive interaction embedded in different syntactic constructions has been recognised in a great variety of languages, for example, English, Dutch, German, Spanish, Catalan, Portuguese, Russian, ancient Chinese or Biblical Hebrew (for references see: Pascual, 2014, pp. 11–12). In Polish, the phenomenon was studied by Królak (2008, 2016) and Pascual and Królak (2018).

## METHODOLOGY OF DATA COLLECTING

The data gathered come from Internet sources, i.e. discussion forums, blogs, popular press, academic articles, interviews or novels and refer to a vast variety of topics: gaming, psychology, self-help, good manners, relationships, parenthood, pastimes (hunting, fishing, driving, gym), IT, housework, business, education, religion, health and cosmetics or pets. Overall, the sources were divided into six major categories: discussion forums, blogs, articles, interviews, books and ‘other’. The last category included book, film, play and computer game reviews, minutes from meetings, stories, training materials, information booklets concerning e.g. local projects, bulletins and movie scripts. On the whole, 1046 examples were collected, around 51% of which (i.e. 535 examples) come from discussion forums, 22% (232 examples) come from articles, 12% (129 examples) from blogs, 7% (76 examples) from interviews, 4% (45 examples) represent the category labelled as ‘other’ and 3% (29 examples) were found in books.

The method involved conducting Google searches with the use of the combinations of nouns followed by quotative markers. In total, seven key nouns, deemed the most frequent and representative, were used in the searches: *ludzie* (people), *mentalność* (mentality), *myślenie* (way of thinking), *podejście* (approach), *postawa* (attitude), *zachowanie* (behaviour), *zasada* (rule). Importantly, in the case of one noun, *ludzie* (people), its subtypes (hyponyms), such as: *kobieta* (woman), *facet* (bloke/dude), *klient* (client) were included as well, which resulted in a greater variety of examples. The head nouns were combined in turn with each of the distinctive quotative markers listed in the Introduction (i.e. *typu*, *w stylu*, *w rodzaju* etc.), which gave rise to combinations such as: “*ludzie w stylu*” (*people of ... type*) “*zachowanie w stylu*”, (*type of behaviour*), “*zasada typu*” (*type of rule*) etc. No restrictions were applied on the topics and types of discourse, which made it possible to observe how widespread the construction is. The examples were gathered and classified into seven major categories which corresponded to the seven key nouns used in the searches. The spelling and punctuation of the original examples were preserved.

We have consciously chosen Google’s search engine to gather our data from the Internet rather than using an existing corpus of the Polish language, for example, Narodowy Korpus Języka Polskiego (National Corpus of Polish), mainly because this method was likely to guarantee access to the widest, in no way ‘censored’, range of discourse types – from serious publications by professional writers available online to highly colloquial exchanges of opinions in discussion forums. Nevertheless, a similar search conducted with the use of the National Corpus of Polish has resulted in 222 examples of the studied fictive interaction construction. A few of them (i.e. those which included fixed expressions and sayings) happened to overlap with the examples from our database, but most of

them turned out to be quite noteworthy and reaffirmed our beliefs concerning the popularity and functionality of these structures. Therefore, provided that some ongoing extension of the National Corpus of Polish is possible (it was compiled between 2008 and 2010), it can be considered a valuable and promising research tool.

The Polish examples were translated into English according to the format: direct speech constituent + head noun, usually without any quotative marker, as we believe this construction constitutes the closest equivalent to the studied Polish expressions.

## FUNCTIONS OF THE CONSTRUCTION IN DISCOURSE

Polish nominal constructions containing direct speech may fulfill a variety of (frequently overlapping) functions which depend on the kind of context in which they occur. A brief overview of these is given below along with examples taken from our database.

First of all, most instances of the construction are vivid, attention-grabbing and capable of producing various rhetorical effects such as humour, since they often contain rhetorical questions, interjections, hyperbole, emotionally-loaded words, colloquialisms and many other stylistic devices. The example below, a fragment of an interview with a Polish businessman, describes the attitude of Thai authorities towards the local entrepreneurs.

(1) Największą wartością, jaką przedsiębiorcom daje system, jest **podejście w rodzaju: „Chcesz prowadzić firmę? Jeśli tylko nie będziesz kradł, oszukiwał ani obrażał króla i rodziny królewskiej, nie będziemy ci w tym przeszkadzać”**.

(‘The biggest advantage given to entrepreneurs by the system is the **attitude of the kind: ‘Do you want to run a company? Unless you steal, cheat or offend the king or the royal family, we won’t disturb you’**).

The attention-grabbing effect illustrated in (1) arises partly from the properties of direct speech itself. It enables the readers to participate in a ‘live’ speech event; a particular attitude is not described but rather demonstrated or enacted by the fictive speaker before their eyes (for this function of direct speech see, for example, Clark & Gerrig, 1990; or Tannen, 1986, 1989).

Direct speech constituents are also frequently used to fulfill a non-trivial function of presenting complex (e.g. scientific) concepts in a transparent and personal way. The example in (2) comes from an article on stress published online and shows two contrasting psychological reactions expressed by means of fictive utterances in the imperative.

(2) Taylor i inni twierdzą, że kobiety nie doświadczają **reakcji „walcz lub uciekaj”**. Badacze ci dowodzą, że stresory wywołują u kobiet **reakcję typu „opiekuj się i bądź przyjazny”** (tend-and-befriend response).

(Taylor et al. claim that women don't experience the **'fight or run' reaction**. The researchers argue that the stressors provoke the **'tend and befriend' response** in women).

Fictive interaction embedded in text can also provide efficient, i.e. precise yet economical characterisations of concepts which are often highly culture-specific and relatively new in a given society. The example in (3), taken from an interview with a drama teacher, describes a typical Polish way of thinking and the expression in (4), widely used nowadays in a variety of texts concerning education, refers to a new generation of people unable to create an original text without copying it from the Internet. Note that these phenomena would be difficult to express by other linguistic means, for example, by employing descriptive adjectives.

(3) Polacy są generalnie wychowani na darmowych koncertach piwnych, wyrobili w sobie **mentalność na zasadzie „nam się należy”**.

(Poles are basically brought up on free beer concerts and they have developed the **'we are entitled to it' mentality**).

(4) pokolenie kopiuj-wklej  
(copy-paste generation)

Finally, we reach the function which is the focus of the present study. As confirmed by our data, direct speech constituents are frequently employed to convey a negative judgement of the phenomena they describe, as evidenced by (5), a fragment of an interview with a famous Polish director.

(5) Najbardziej mierz mi pewne zaciętrzewienie – **podejście w rodzaju: „Nie wysłucham, bo i tak mam rację”**.

(What disgusts me most is a kind of wrong-headedness – the **'I won't listen to you because I'm right anyway' attitude**).

## NEGATIVE EVALUATION

The study has revealed that a vast majority of the collected examples expresses a negative judgement of the people, situations or types of mentality that they refer to. Statistics show that it was prevalent in all seven categories formed on the basis of the respective key nouns: for *ludzie* (people) it was 96%, for *mentalność* (mentality) – 93%, for *zachowanie* (behaviour) – 84%, for *myślenie* (way of thinking) – 82%; for *zasada* (rule) – 77% and for *postawa* (attitude) and *podejście* (approach) – 75% and 73% respectively. On average, negative judgements in the pseudoquotations amounted to 83%.



The pseudoquotations in our database display quite a wide and impressive range of criticism and negativity itself; in fact, they vary from humorous and light-hearted sarcasm to distancing oneself from the proposition in the pseudoquotation to downright critical, spiteful and abrasive judgements. At times, it is the pseudoquotation itself that puts its ‘victim’ (i.e. the person or people it describes) in such a negative light that no explicit contextual clues, i.e. negative evaluations within the context surrounding the pseudoquotation, are necessary. However, the linguistic context itself was of utmost significance for the analysis, which is discussed in the next section.

## CONTEXT

When considering the importance of the context, attention needs to be paid both to the context preceding a pseudoquotation (i.e. pre-modification) and following it (post-modification).

Pre-modification usually takes the form of adjectives with unfavourable associations, e.g. *głośnie, ostentacyjne, roszczeniowe, obłąkany, marudny, aroganckie, dresiarские, tandetne, wyświechtana, lakoniczna, PRL-owska, niewolnicza, głupawa* (*loud, ostentatious, demanding, deranged, cranky, arrogant, thug-like, tacky, corny old, laconic, People’s-Poland-like, slave-like, silly*), which reinforce the implicature in the pseudoquote and thus make it more persuasive, as the following examples show, where (6) comes from a blog and (7) from a savoir-vivre textbook.

(6) Od zawsze irytowało mnie roszczeniowe zachowanie typu „**dej, bo mi się należy**”. (I’ve always found the demanding ‘**gimme that, I am entitled to it**’ **type of behaviour** annoying).

(7) Przepychanie się i głośnie, ostentacyjne zachowanie w stylu „**jaki to ja jestem buntownik z wyboru**” nie należą do rzadkości.

(Elbowing one’s way and a loud, ostentatious ‘**look at me, a true rebel just for kicks**’ **type of behaviour** are not uncommon).

Interestingly, in (6) we can observe that the blog writer is ascribing to the individuals whose behaviour is being criticised a specific pronunciation, commonly found in substandard varieties of Polish (*dej* vs. *daj*, whose closest English equivalent would be *gimme* vs. *give me*). This might suggest that the author believes that they represent a lower social class and hence a lower intellectual level. Additionally, here we might be dealing with identity attribution and possibly identity construction.

Post-modification usually manifests itself as a subject complement, i.e. it appears right after the pseudoquotation followed by the verb *to be*, *to become* or *to get*, as illustrated in example (8), found in an interview with Robert Gliński, a Polish filmmaker:

(8) **Postawa typu „forsa i kariera nade wszystko”** była zrozumiała, ale nieco prymitywna. Wyglądało na to, że młodzież jest zarażona konsumpcją ...

(The **‘money and career above all’ type of attitude** was understandable, but also a bit crude. It seemed that the youth was infected with consumerism...).

Moreover, in big chunks of text, evaluation might appear later in the discourse or can be inferred from a broad context, as can be seen in (9) and (10). (9) comes from an article devoted to the emancipation of nuns in Poland. The pseudoquote refers to an approach to women that is later judged (albeit indirectly) as rather old-fashioned and rigid:

(9) S. Pudelko spotkała się z **postawą typu „czego też kobieta może mnie nauczyć?”** Ale jeśli konferencje są dobrze przygotowane, przemodlone, nawet jeśli na początku nastawienie księdza jest sceptyczne, jego postawa się zmienia. Od kilku lat tego doświadczam – aprobaty dla faktu, że kobieta ma coś istotnego do powiedzenia. (Sister Pudelko has encountered the **‘and what could a woman possibly teach me?’ kind of attitude**. However, if the conferences are well-prepared and there is a lot of prayer, then, even if the priest’s attitude is initially sceptical, it changes. I have been experiencing it for a few years – the approval of the fact that a woman has something meaningful to say).

In (10), which comes from an article about losing weight, the broad context (both preceding and following the pseudoquote) allows us to see the negative evaluation of the idea described:

(10) Specyfiki odchudzające świetnie wpasowały się w mode obecnego świata. Żyjemy bowiem w szybkim tempie. Dlatego więc producenci owych specyfików wymyślili cudowne „szybkie odchudzanie”. Niewiele osób, które zastanawiają się jak rzeczywiście działają te preparaty. Najzwyczajniej w świecie wyruszamy do apteki i kupujemy kierując się w pierwszej kolejności **zasadą typu „w tydzień do wymarzonej sylwetki”**. Tak naprawdę na półkach znajdziemy bardzo szeroki asortyment, aby każdy znalazł coś dla siebie. Należy jednak kierować się zdrowym rozsądkiem.

(Slimming products have very successfully fitted in with contemporary fashion. In fact, we live very fast. That is why the manufacturers of these products have come up with the miraculous ‘losing weight fast’ concept. There are few people who consider the problem how these supplements really work. We just head for the pharmacy and make our purchase going by the **‘attain the figure of your dreams in just a week’ rule**. We will indeed find a wide range of products so everybody can choose something for themselves. Nevertheless, we should rely on common sense).

## CLASSIFICATION OF SYNTACTIC STRUCTURES CONTAINING PSEUDOQUOTES

The examples from the data set have been grouped into four categories (A, B, C, D) as regards their structure and meaning and depending on how exactly they convey the negative evaluation in longer stretches of text. The first one (A) has been labelled ‘*me vs. the features attributed*’, the second one (B) ‘*I don’t mean X, I mean Y*’, the third one (C) comprises comparative constructions and the fourth one (D) has been named ‘*I prefer X to Y*’. In the first two categories, the speakers choose to distance themselves from the proposition included in the pseudoquotation in the form of a negated statement.

### A. *Me vs. the features attributed*

In this category, the pseudoquote belongs to a negated statement and acts as a subject complement in the sentence. The construction proves very useful if the speaker wishes to distance themselves or even show condescension and superiority, as can be seen in the following example found on an Internet discussion forum:

(11) nie jestem jakaś laska typu zerwałam z chłopem, po 5 dniach jestem z kolejnym w związku.

(I am not an ‘I broke up with my boyfriend and five days later I am in a relationship with another man’ kind of girl).

Here, the author of the message is very clear in stating her wish that she not be associated with the kind of behaviour portrayed in the pseudoquote.

### B. *I don’t mean X, I mean Y (juxtaposing two contrasting attitudes)*

Examples from this category also employ some form of negation in order to contrast two (or more) attitudes or ideas. At this point, two subcategories can be distinguished. In the first one, good or expected behaviour (described without the use of a pseudoquotation) is juxtaposed with bad behaviour (which is described with a pseudoquotation). Example (12), which is part of a discussion forum related to banking services and investments, illustrates it very well:

(12) No i ich zachowanie żadnej odpowiedzialności i skruchy, wręcz przeciwnie arogancja i bezczelność i **zachowanie typu sami jesteście winni bo sami je kupowaliście...**

(And on top of it all, their behaviour. No responsibility or regret, quite the opposite – arrogance, insolence and the ‘**you brought it all on yourselves by buying it’ type of behaviour...**).

The other subcategory features a very interesting way of juxtaposing two contrasting ideas or mentalities. Although, generally, it could be said that pseudo-

quotations are used less frequently to describe attitudes we fully accept and support, sometimes they are employed to juxtapose a more acceptable attitude with a less acceptable one. Therefore, in examples from this subcategory, good or expected behaviour described in the first pseudoquotation is contrasted with bad behaviour referred to in the second pseudoquotation, as can be seen in (13), which was found on a discussion forum for roller skaters:

(13) Bardzo często spotykam **podejście na zasadzie: „nie dam rady”, „będę ostatni/a”, „jestem gorszy/a”, „ja tak nie umiem”, „wyglupię się”, „będą się śmiali”, „nie będę się wychylać”...** Taki obraz rywalizacji czy oceny poprzez negatywne porów[n]ywnanie wynosimy głównie ze szkoły, gdzie akcentowane były praktycznie wyłącznie błędy. Czy to służy nabywaniu nowych doświadczeń? **Wolę podejście na zasadzie: jadę na nową trasę, zamkniętą dla wszystkich innych na czas trwania imprezy, poznaję nowych ludzi, miejsca, zdobywam doświadczenie.**

(Quite often I encounter the ‘I can’t do it’, ‘I’m going to be the last’, ‘I’m worse’, ‘I can’t do it like that’, ‘I’m going to embarrass myself’, ‘they’re going to laugh at me’, ‘I’d better not attract attention’ type of attitude. This perception of competition or being evaluated understood as negative comparison is a product of our school education, in which only mistakes were emphasized. Does it allow us to gain new experiences? I prefer the ‘I am testing a new road, closed to everyone for the time of the event, I meet new people, see new places, I am gaining new experience’ type of attitude).

### C. comparative constructions

This category comprises structures that use a comparative form of an adjective, or a noun phrase including a comparative form of an adjective, followed by *than* and by a pseudoquotation, as can be seen in (14), which comes from a discussion forum devoted to sailing:

(14) To większy p[r]oblem niż zasada typu „na łodzi się nie gwizdże”. (It’s a bigger problem than just ‘you don’t whistle when sailing on a boat’ kind of rule).

In this case, the message is meant to instruct the reader and thanks to the pseudoquotation it could be interpreted as patronizing or even slightly ridiculing, as if the author wanted to show superiority and larger experience.

### D. *I prefer X to Y*

In constructions of this type, pseudoquotations are employed to describe the option which is dispreferred and thus criticized. Example (15), taken from a discussion forum, is a case in point:

(15) Można to ująć tak, że wolę działanie systemu społecznego nastawionego na ochronę społeczeństwa, którego jestem częścią, niż indywidualne albo systemowe **podejście typu ukarać i sprawy nie było, radź sobie człowieku sam.**

(We could put it like this: I prefer a social system aiming at protecting the society that I am a part of to an individual or systemic **‘let’s punish them and forget about the problem, and you manage by yourself’ type of approach**).

## MOTIVATIONS

The analysis of pseudoquotations in discourse poses a few questions regarding why their authors use them in the first place and devote so much time and effort (all the while expecting the recipient to do a considerable amount of processing) to employ these often longish and complex descriptions. There are a few possible reasons why fictive interaction is so effective when the author wishes to express a negative judgement.

First of all, there is the spontaneity aspect. It could be suggested that these expressions often come across as written or uttered on the spur of the moment and under the influence of some strong negative emotions, as if the writer wanted to vent their frustration, and in such cases, sometimes no specific word comes to mind, which is why they resort to using pseudoquotations. This explains why a great number of our data (51%) was found on online discussion forums, whose purpose is a spontaneous expression of the Internet users’ opinions about any subject. This brings us to the second reason, i.e. the huge expressive potential that fictive interaction displays. It is helpful in conveying a wide range of strong negative emotions such as outrage, disgust or irritation, better than a single descriptive noun or adjective. Here, the author has at their disposal not single evaluative expressions but a longer piece of text. It can abound in colloquialisms, hyperbolic expressions or elements typical of spoken language (e.g. interjections) – all of which contribute to a very expressive picture. Moreover, using direct speech instead of evaluative labels can be very effective in ridiculing and mocking and, therefore, more persuasive. The third reason is the lack of a lexical item, or items, that could ‘nail’ or pinpoint a particular attitude that is being attributed (at times very subtle and strongly context-dependent) combined with the willingness to speak one’s mind and be as honest as possible. Here, fictive interaction is often a good solution, as the phenomena criticised may simply escape traditional descriptions. Next, fictive interaction is quite unambiguous; along with the context, pseudoquotations leave the reader with no doubt about what kind of person (*client, girl, boy, dude*), way of thinking or life philosophy is being presented. Importantly, they are very picturesque and evoke vivid images that speak to the recipients’ imagination; hearers or readers feel that they can relate to that. In fact, it is very likely that they themselves have seen or met the types of people described in fictive interaction. Drawing on their experience, shared knowledge, frames of expectations (Tannen, 1993) and past interactions, they can interpret a pseudoquotation easily and with no misunderstandings. Last

but not least, fictive interaction constructions can express even strong criticism in a more indirect and ‘safe’ way. It is possible since the prototypical function of a quote as such is obviously to express a proposition which is not ours. Thanks to this, a pseudoquotation enables the speaker to show their distance, as they can always resort to the argument that they are only quoting somebody else’s proposition and not conveying their own feelings. However, this also creates an opportunity to express a negative judgement in a way which is astute and, at times, very convenient; at face value, it is not the speakers’ opinion, but it could be interpreted as such.

## LINGUISTIC IMPOLITENESS

Since negative evaluation lies at the core of expressing beliefs that are impolite, a strong link between negative evaluation and linguistic impoliteness might be suggested; therefore, a brief discussion of where two problems could possibly intersect seems relevant and justified at this point.

In brief, according to Culpeper (1996), the main objectives of linguistic impoliteness are attacking the interlocutor’s face and promoting social disharmony and disequilibrium in cooperation and conversation. In performing face attacks, language users resort to various strategies labelled positive or negative impoliteness strategies, as Culpeper’s model is designed as a mirror reflection of Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness framework. Later models of impoliteness [e.g., Locher & Watts, 2005; Bousfield, 2008] shift from the level of speech acts to a more discursive approach, but strategies themselves are not renounced and still play a crucial role in interpreting an utterance as impolite.

Interestingly, many impoliteness models (Lachenicht, 1980; Culpeper, 1996; Bousfield, 2008) list strategies containing direct speech acts that affect the addressee (e.g., *snub other*, *threaten other*, *insult other*), while pseudoquotations offend the person to whom the features, ideas or mindsets are attributed, not the addressee (i.e. the reader), and still are able to express very impolite beliefs. Another perspective worth adopting when analysing fictive interaction is that of Chen’s (2001) self-politeness, which has been seen to co-occur, and combine very well, with other-impoliteness (Wiechecka, 2010, 2012). Such a correlation is also observable in the data, as speakers do indeed defend themselves (or justify their actions or ways of thinking) and simultaneously distance themselves from, i.e. express impolite beliefs about, the ideas described with the use of a pseudoquotation (cf. example 11). The end product here is a very negative portrayal and identity construction, which is a very promising topic for future research.

## CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

The article was meant to show that the overriding function of the Polish nominal construction involving direct speech is to convey at least some degree of negative evaluation of the concepts coded by the head nouns. Interestingly, this function is fulfilled by expressions which come from a wide variety of sources, from online discussion forums to recorded interviews to serious press articles published online. The most important reasons why fictive interaction modifiers are readily chosen by speakers for this purpose are: their great expressive potential and ability to produce some additional rhetorical effects, such as humour (an individual might not only be criticised but, additionally, mocked and ridiculed); the fact that they allow for spontaneous expression of negative emotions, especially when an appropriate descriptive designation is not readily available or simply does not exist. Finally, these fictive interaction expressions convey ‘safer’ or more indirect criticism – by choosing direct speech, the actual speaker purports to be quoting, i.e. presenting the objective state of affairs, which might, at least apparently, diminish his or her responsibility for the criticism expressed.

The construction in question can be analysed further. One of the possible lines of research is exploring the remaining functions it frequently fulfills in different types of discourse, like its potential to clarify some complex phenomena by presenting them in the form of a fictive utterance (or dialogue). Additionally, pseudoquotes can be a valuable source of data for exploring characteristic Polish cultural values, attitudes or ways of thinking. The data for this kind of study could be gathered by carrying out a Google search of the combinations such as *polska mentalność* (‘Polish mentality’), followed by one of the quotative markers (e.g. *w stylu / w rodzaju*).

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#### DATA SOURCES

- (1) <https://akademia-internetu.pl>
- (2) <http://centrumrozwoju.nl/pl>
- (3) <http://kutno.net.pl>
- (4) [nowewyrazy.uw.edu.pl/](http://nowewyrazy.uw.edu.pl/)
- (5) <https://kultura.onet.pl>
- (6) <http://piekielni.pl>
- (7) <https://books.google.pl>
- (8) [polishdirectors.com](http://polishdirectors.com)
- (9) [ekai.pl](http://ekai.pl)
- (10) [zdrowy-poradnik.pl](http://zdrowy-poradnik.pl)
- (11) <https://steemit.com>



(12) <https://www.bankier.pl>

(13) <http://narolkach.pl>

(14) <https://forumturystyczne24.pl>

(15) <http://forum.gazeta.pl>

## CHAPTER THREE

### 'SPEAKING' REVISITED

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**Abstract:** The paper presents a review of the mainstream sociolinguistic understanding of the issues of language, identity and communication in the context of an on-going process of mixing people, cultures, and languages. It argues for a reconsideration and an update of Hymes' (1972) 'SPEAKING' model of communication to broaden the spectrum of semiotic analysis of communication to include not only times and places but also intersecting material bodies, objects and senses.

**Key words:** academic context, assemblage, communication, Hymes' model, materiality.

#### GLOCALIZATION, POSTMODERNISM AND CONCEPTUAL RECONSIDERATION

Globalization has been one of the most frequently discussed topics of the past three decades, which is evident in the multitude of definitions of globalization provided by scholars of varied scientific backgrounds. Giddens (1990, p. 64), for instance, sees globalization as the "intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa", Tomlinson (1999, p. 2) highlights "the rapid developing and ever densening network of interconnections and interdependencies that characterize modern life" while Scholte (1999, p. 12) takes note of "circumstances where territorial space is substantially transcended".

In communication and language studies, globalization is believed to bring both homogeneity and heterogeneity. On the one hand, homogeneity can be observed in the spread of a single language, English, that has pushed other indigenous and local languages almost into non-existence. On the other hand, globalization has enabled heterogeneity by widening access to technology, with which indigenous communities can engage in protecting and presenting their linguistic heritage. Furthermore, English, a global *lingua franca*, is seen as “the natural choice for progress” (Crystal, 1997, p. 75), academic achievement and professional development. Therefore, growing numbers of people choose to learn it in order to fulfil their dreams of a ‘better life’. Multilingualism, however, can help us live not only in a more connected world but also an interdependent one. Children born in a multilingual society adjust to a heterogeneous environment. They socialize from a very early stage and are more tolerant and respectful towards differences. A multilingual and multicultural setup gives rise to a meaningful pluralism, tolerance and acceptance of difference. Multilingualism and multiculturalism widen, deepen and speed up worldwide interconnectedness and “the growing extensity, intensity and velocity of global interactions” (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt & Perraton, 1999, p. 2). Homogeneity is also expressed as a *McDonaldization* (Ritzer, 1993, as cited in Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 132), that levels and smooths the cultural landscape of the world. At the same time, as Giddens (2000) observes, the opposite process, i.e. cultural heterogenization, is taking place. Migrants from non-Western countries influence developments in the West while ethnic identities are strengthened mainly as a response to the threat posed by globalization.

The constant interactions between homogeneity and heterogeneity “plunge the world in a creative as well as chaotic tension that results in what Robertson (1992) has called *glocalization* where the global is localized and the local is globalized” (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 134). Not only do the new *glocalized* environments enable a redefinition of fundamental ideas about human existence and identity, as well as about forms, purposes and means of communication, they also necessitate it. Because “[w]hat used to be considered deviant and abnormal – complexity, hybridity and other forms of ‘impurity’ in language use – has become, in this perspective, normal” (Blommaert, 2016, p. 256), scholars need to tackle what is fluid, nonlinear, and unpredictable, and this requires a paradigmatic shift, as well as the development of new methods for sociolinguistic research. In a similar vein, Pennycook (2007, p. 37) claims that a new conception of research must entail a shift in spaces of intellectual inquiry, by which he suggests not merely interdisciplinary pluralism, but rather “transgressing the boundaries of disciplinarity in scholarly thought and action”. Scholars need to rethink the methods of sociolinguistic inquiry and respond to the fluidity of the terminology they use, since hitherto taken for granted categories such as ethnicity, nation, gender, identity and language have lost their ontological status

(Foucault, 1984) in favor of being transient, shifting and situationally performed. In particular, what has to be reconsidered are the categories of sociolinguistic study that used to be considered ‘normal’, such as “the boundedness of speech communities, the stability, linearity and even predictable nature of sociolinguistic variation; the linear nature of linguistic and sociolinguistic evolution; the autonomy and boundedness of language itself” (Blommaert, 2016, p. 257). Such reified analytical approach is a corollary of the changes that took place in social and cultural discourses, and therefore, should be applied to all the various forms and modes of communication that have occurred in recent times, because “any form of human communication is set in a real social environment and draws on real and actual bodies of knowledge and experience of participants operating as ‘context’ in social encounters” (Blommaert, 2016, p. 242).

### HYMES’ ‘SPEAKING’ MODEL RECONSIDERATION

In the early 1970s, Dell Hymes (1972) developed a model of communication that was argued by structuralists to be productive and powerful in analyzing many different kinds of discourse and communicative context. Ever since then, the acronym ‘SPEAKING’, derived from the initial letters of its components, has been used to label the model. Admittedly, the model was ground-breaking in 1970s, since in contrast to other researchers who treated the speech event as a phenomenon removed from the times and places in which people talked, Hymes considered “a speech event to be something achieved in interaction” (Ochs, Schegloff & Thompson, 1996, p. 7). He argued that by looking at how people actually use language, patterns could be discovered that otherwise would not be revealed by just looking at the surface or even deep structures themselves.

In the model, ‘S’ stands for ‘Setting and Scene’ which is defined as “the time and place of a speech act and, in general, to the physical circumstances” as well as the “psychological setting” or “cultural definition”, including characteristics such as range of formality and sense of play or seriousness (Hymes, 1974, pp. 55–56). ‘P’ stands for ‘Participants’, and includes the speaker and audience. ‘E’ refers to ‘Ends’, or rather the purposes, goals and outcomes of the interaction (Hymes, 1974, pp. 56–57). The ‘Act’ sequence embraces the form and order of the event while ‘Key’ holds for cues that establish the “tone, manner, or spirit” of the speech act indicated by choice of language or language variety, gestures and paralinguistic cues such as intonation, laughter or crying. ‘I’ stands for ‘Instrumentalities’, i.e. both the channel and the medium of communication. On a larger scale, this term relates to language varieties, registers and media of transmission such as written, spoken or gestural. ‘N’ signifies ‘Norms’, i.e. the social rules governing the event and the participants’ actions and reaction. Finally, ‘G’ meaning ‘Genre’ refers to the kind of speech act or event.

For Hymes (1974, p. 9), “the starting point [was] the ethnographic analysis of the communication conduct of a community”. Therefore, assuming that human communication is patterned, he set out to show that there were linguistic tools that researchers could use to study talk systematically. The model was intended to provide researchers with flexibility in determining which points of communication were salient and hence worth studying in a given context, as well as in creating language-specific methods of analysis. Recent studies (cf. Small, 2008), however, have shown that Hymes underestimated the difficulties scholars could encounter when attempting to fully describe all the ways of speaking in any language. The model was to enable researchers to “detail the structures of ritualized and predictable events alone” (Coulthard, 1985, p. 59), while those who analyzed spoken spontaneous interaction, reported difficulties in giving an exhaustive description (cf. Small, 2008).

Another limitation of the model pinpointed by scholars (Gumperz & Levinson, 1996; Roger & Bull, 1989; Small, 2008) has been the generalizability of the findings obtained through the systemic analysis of specific samples. Frequently, findings could not be generalized beyond the samples of the study, which seems to contradict Hymes’ assumption that his model, by being systematic and thorough, is “heuristically important” (Coulthard, 1985, p. 59). The impaired generalizability is also reflected in the lack of complete, systematic descriptions of data which should allow for statistical analysis (Roger & Bull, 1989).

Leech (1976), in turn, criticized the model for its lack of integration with other branches of linguistics or academic fields. However, Small (2008) went further and questioned any possibility that results could be compared between different researchers within the same discipline, arguing that labeling aspects of the conversation such as ‘Key’ and ‘Ends’ is based on subjectivity.

Finally, in recent decades, scholars have recognized the incompatibility between the components of Hymes’ model and postmodern reality (Blommaert, 2016; Pennycook, 2007, 2017). First of all, the basis on which ‘Setting and Scene’ were conceived in the 1970s is seen in need of adjustment to the conditions of our present era which is frequently characterized by relativism, a merging of the public and private spheres, faster and closer connections across geographical space, and an increase in the mediation of experience by media. Pennycook (2007, p. 44) contests viewing ‘Setting’ as an aggregate of objects and people amassed in advance, and following Clifford (1997), he employs the image of *travel* “with its emphasis on movement, encounter and change” and future orientation as a timely portrayal of ‘Setting’. Every object and person in a given setting becomes a sign that does not mirror its referent or points to the world in a transparent or uniform way. Signs are not only embodied and embedded contextually but they also point to their prior and *posttextual* uses as well as their *subtextual* meanings and interpretations (Pennycook, 2007, p. 54). ‘Setting’ does

not contain inherent meaning but rather it is given meaning by people in particular times and in particular places. This does not mean that ‘Setting’ is not situated prior to interaction; on the contrary, its functionality depends on and is guaranteed by its recurrence, its *history of repetition* (Culler, 2000) and the feature of *iterability* (Derrida, 1982).

Efficient and meaningful interaction easily ensues in contexts of certain familiarity to the participants while the process can be hindered and impeded by contextual novelty. As in travel, where immediate surroundings can either benefit or impair or even obliterate the comfort of the travelers, the course of verbal and non-verbal interaction is subject to contextual exigencies. In contemporary globalized and digitalized contexts, mobile phones, laptops or other digital resources, as well as the practices of their use, have become part and parcel of our daily encounters, yet their configuration and salience can vary from one situational and cultural space to another, which, in turn, fosters heterogeneity that may disable successful communication. Thus semiotic landscapes where *adaptable artefacts* (Pennycook, 2017, p. 274), behaviors and practices of different values for different participants intersect, generate effects that are distinct from those caused by each single artefact or a human actor. In such contexts, meaning making is relocated to the dynamic relations among objects, places and linguistic resources, and ‘Setting’ gains agency that was vested exclusively in the human center. Consequently, ‘Setting’ is conceived differently from the way it was understood in Hymes’ model as it employs movement, difference and change.

In line with this different understanding of ‘Setting’ comes a change in the conception of ‘Participants’. What is observed here is a move towards embodied subjects whose bodies, alongside minds actively engaged in communication, connect with other people and materialities in various ways, yet their agency is in part transferred to the material surroundings. The identity of the participants is derived from the interaction between forces arriving from three directions. One of them – a world-to-subject direction of fit – (Bamberg, 2010) derives from social, cultural, historical and linguistic discourses that position the subject and determine its action potential. In contrast, the opposite force (a subject-to-world direction of fit) enables the human subject to create itself; it is based on consciousness and free will and capability of making decisions. Hence in identity construction, as Bamberg, De Fina & Schiffrin (2011, p. 189) argue, subjects navigate “the two directions of fit – one in which the person constructs the world and the other in which the world constructs the person – in order to display a sense of who-I-am in terms of agency”. Recently, however, scholars have highlighted the third force located in the materialities of the situation. Kell (as cited in Pennycook, 2017, p. 277) suggests that “objects, in and of themselves, have consequences” for the identity of interactants, i.e. “things make people happen”, in other words, the identity of a participant is both performative and

performed. On the one hand, it can be ascribed and/or recognized because it has a history of recurrence or *iterability* (Derrida, 1982) and thus by virtue of accumulation of experience, subjects can take up a version of identity made available to them in particular discourse and exercise it for the time being. This implies a degree of freedom, as subjects can actively choose from a pool of discursively-possible identities. On the other hand, the participants' identity is actively performed, i.e. produced in the doing. This does not suggest, however, that identity is composed of acts that participants freely choose. On the contrary, in their identity-making, speakers momentarily encounter and experience *adaptable artefacts* (Pennycook, 2007) that yield a particular feeling of the self in that particular space. Identity then, is not only discursively constructed, but also "imbri-cated in complex arrangements that include nonhuman as well as human participants, whether animals, epidemics, objects, or technologies" (Bucholtz & Hall, 2016, p. 186).

If materialities and interaction are ubiquitous and central to the enactment and performance of identity, so is language. In an attempt to understand how language may be a tool of identity making, one needs to go beyond Hymes' idea of *communicative competence*, and see language as "a distributed effect of a range of interacting objects, people and places" (Pennycook, 2017, p. 278). Hence, the identity of the participant arises as an outcome of the dialectics of the residual history of their actions, of how they speak and of how they interact with the surroundings. Language then, is not only a marker of identity, as it was for structuralists, but also a tool of identity performance, as well as a phenomenal property of an individual whose signifying and identifying powers emerge in interaction.

Another component of Hymes' framework that has been hotly debated recently is 'Norms'. They have often been understood as tacit agreements in society that determine and regulate the behaviors of community members in various walks of life. In Linguistics, norms are frequently related to a standard language, its development and maintenance, and to the power structures which influence the conditions of minority languages. In Hymes' model, norms refer to what Cameron (2012) calls *verbal hygiene*, i.e. prescribed standards of verbal and non-verbal behavior by interactants. Hymes (1974) recognized that societies differ in their eagerness to influence norms and linguistic usage, as some of them rigidly enforce and regulate norms, institutions, organizations and individuals, while others accept linguistic and dialectal heterogeneity more readily. Nonetheless, Hymes failed to recognize two important aspects of norms highlighted by contemporary scholars, namely:

- the potential for their negotiation, challenge and/or acceptance in verbal interaction;
- their impact on power relations in society (Hymes, 1974).

Scholars of gender studies of language use have extensively discussed the issues since the publication of Robin Lakoff's seminal work in 1975 (Lakoff, 1975). They tend to show that norms are set and applied in an unequal and biased way, namely that one group (usually males) is posited as the norm and the other (females) is evaluated against this framework. Moreover, "behaviors that are consistent with the gender stereotypic expectations of social roles are considered as more desirable for the congruent sex (i.e., agentic behaviors for men and communal behaviors for women)" (Menegatti & Rubini, 2017). Hence, in light of the above mentioned discussions, viewing norms from the perspective of macro discourses seems to be too narrow to suffice for a total description of a spontaneous multimodal and inter-discursive interaction.

The narrowness of the conceptualization of norms further manifests in the way genres are conceived by Hymes (1974), namely as stable units with rigid boundaries. In postmodernism, writers employ such techniques as fragmentation, intertextuality, and appropriation to fundamentally alter the way language represents the meaning of texts. In many texts, the 'past' and contemporaneity intersect, continually indicating that representations of previous events and histories are put to work in various ways as a comment on the present. This emphasis on fluidity, transience and ephemerality incapacitates any categorical definition of genre or text taxonomy.

A good example of the shift in the conceptualization of genre are *small stories*, i.e. "discourse engagements that engender specific social moments and integrally connect with what gets done on particular occasions and in particular settings" (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012, p. 117). Contrary to *big stories*, small stories are actions that are performed in interactional contexts to construct meanings and create characters in space and time, which, in turn, can be instrumental for the creation of positions vis-à-vis co-conversationalists. Small stories, because of their *petite* size, cannot be neatly organized on a chronology and cause-effect axis; rather, they present accounts of life events that have immediate relevance for an on-going interaction. Thus, they do not meet the criteria of temporally or causally-structured big stories taken to be prototypical narratives.

Another genre whose normative hybridity can be easily observed is computer-mediated communication (CMC). On one level, CMC is deemed hybrid since it incorporates the characteristics of both oral and written language. Further, on the dimension of synchronicity, CMC does not neatly fit any 'traditional' genre since some of its instances display characteristics of both synchronous and asynchronous communication. A personal blog, for example, may contain postings fitting into several genres, including diary-like entries, quick updates about one's life or about current public events, poetry and other creative writings which can be either posted in synchrony or delayed in time.



In addition, instances of CMC are frequently multimodal, which disables the application of the 'SPEAKING' model to analyzing interaction in terms of 'Instrumentalities' and their employment. In CMC and other contemporary forms of communication, messages can be produced on various *canvases* (Bateman, 2008, p. 16), that is, types of medium adopted to carry the substrate for the artefact, be it paper or billboard or computer screen. The substrate and the medium selected for the artefact's *canvas* not only bring their own constraints regarding possible forms and meaning-making processes, but also open up possibilities for more divergent interpretations of messages. Moreover, a range of symbols, images, videos and texts assembled in one message with the application of different media and modalities can yield varied, often unexpected, original interpretations in audiences, while the opportunities of an on-going explanation or disambiguation are lower when compared to face-to-face communication. Hence, instrumentalities available in modern forms of communication call for a change in viewing the roles, or rather the positions, of interactants and the actions that can be deployed in meaning-making processes.

The above critical analysis of the 'SPEAKING' model justifies its revision and elaboration. To be currently valid, a model should include both an expanded view of language as a system of communication that crosses the boundaries of individual languages and semiotic codes, and a view of context as an open-ended process that constantly develops in addition to being conditioned by a wide range of semiotic resources that happen to concur at a particular time in a particular space. An illustration of an amended model will be presented in the subsequent section accompanied by an analysis of a sample of a structured interaction in an academic context.

## UPDATING 'SPEAKING'

The analysis that ensues below is conducted based on data reconstructed from the author's own experience in academic settings. This particular interaction was not recorded, but similar instances tend recur in academic contexts in Poland. In this particular exchange, a female supervisor (SP) is helping a female graduate student (ST) of Ukrainian background to correct her MA thesis passage when an interaction ensues between a male university professor (RP) who shares the office with SP, another male university professor (UP) who has entered the room, and the supervisor (SP).

The key: English – plain, Polish – italic, author's comments – [ ].

1. SP: Did you manage to implement all the suggestions?
2. ST: Well, not all of them because I couldn't understand some of your comments [Opens her rucksack and takes out a notebook].
3. SP: Which are unclear?
4. ST: The ones about conceptual metaphor, I don't get it because we did not do that when I studied in Ukraine.
5. SP: But you did that with professor LXYZ.
6. ST: In fact, I did not understand the idea of target and source domain.
7. SP: Ok. So let's have a look at your chapter [Opens a file on her laptop].  
[Knocking]
8. SP: *Proszę* (Come in).
9. UP: *Cześć. Sorki, nie chciałem przeszkadzać. Ja tylko z krótkim pytaniem do JXYZ* (Hi. Sorry to disturb, I have a short question to JXYZ).
10. RP: *No, co tam?* (What's up?) [simultaneously with 11].
11. SP: Getting back to your chapter, which comment is unclear?
12. UP: *Śluchaj, miałeś jakieś wiadomości o publikacji po tej konferencji XYZ?* (Listen, have you heard anything about that XYZ post-conference publication?)  
[Simultaneously with 13].
13. ST: That comment of yours, number 64 [Pointing to the screen] what exactly is the target domain of this metaphor?
14. RP: [Holding a mug of freshly made coffee] *Ja nie, ale może KXYZ miała?* (No, I haven't but KXYZ might have heard).
15. SP to ST: Sorry to interrupt.
16. SP to UP: *Nie. Ja nic nie wiem* (I know nothing).
17. UP: *Dobra, to ja chyba do nich zadzwonię* (Right, I'll call them then).
18. UP: See you!
19. SP: Well, back to our analysis.

One 'Hymesian' focus in the analysis of the excerpt would be on the various combinations of linguistic resources that play a role here: the conversation over the MA thesis with its semi-formal characteristics and stiff, clumsy structures that indicate English to be a *lingua franca* for the interactants. In addition, both the linguistic resources and the content of the interaction disclose an asymmetry in the relationship between the participants. While the exchange between SP and ST (turns 1–7, 11, 13) reveals an asymmetry in their positioning, SP is an expert (empowered with the subject knowledge) and ST is an apprentice in need of the mentor's scaffolding to accomplish her goal; the delivery of the greeting and excuses in colloquial Polish (turns 9, 10, 12) reveal a shared linguistic back-

ground of the three academic interactants, SP, UP, RP as well as their closer and equal-level relationships. Noteworthy is the Polish-English code-switching by UP (turn 18), and the use of an Anglicism 'sorki' (turn 9) that is widely used in colloquial Polish. These might be signs of the shared professional language variety or jargon in which code-switching seems to be an unmarked social practice. Moreover, the topic of the interaction between SP, RP and UP (post-conference publication) reveals that they share professional, academic experiences and identities. Of importance to the traditional linguistic analysis would also be forms of address that are indicative of the participants' identities as 'sluchaj' (listen, turn 12) signifying closeness and rapport between the interactants, as well as pronoun reciprocity (turn 9–12, 16–19) that denote not only transitions in turn sequence but also relationships between participants and their (dis)engagement from the conversation.

Of importance to the expanded analysis here are not only the linguistic resources available, i.e. the conversations in English and Polish that function as the means of interactional inclusion and exclusion, but also the situated conditions (assemblages of the material objects, people, the spatial layout, sitting arrangement, the smell of the coffee, the sound of knocking), as well as the individual material artefacts (the MA thesis, the laptop, the desks, chairs, the door, the mug), and the people present in as well as moving in and out of the room. The local prominence of individual real-life objects changes along the temporal dimension. Some of them (a bag, a notebook, a pen) are only momentarily prominent while others (MA thesis displayed on the screen) retain their threshold prominence throughout the interaction, and therefore their role in the evolution of verbal interaction is crucial as each participant's attention shifts from one element of the physical context to another, which in turn brings forth a change in both the language resources employed and the content of the interaction. Likewise, the non-verbal actions and noises (knocking on the door, entering the room) exert influence on the sequential organization of the communicative activities. Knocking makes SP withdraw from her interaction with ST and react to the behavior of the person behind the door. Noteworthy is her code-switching to Polish, which indicates that the context of Polish institution foregrounds certain behaviors and suppresses others. Not knowing who is behind the door, SP conforms to the dominant discourse of one official language operating in Polish institutions.

Remarkable also is the fact that it is SP who responds to the knocking and not RP, who is not busy at that moment: he is just drinking coffee. It shows that the sitting arrangement (SP sitting closer to the door) directly translates into the behavior of the participants. Again, the material, i.e. the sound of the knocking and the sitting arrangement are consequential for the behavior of the interactants. Pennycook (2017, p. 274) argues that *adaptable artefacts* have the potential of becoming "mobile ideas, things or practices". A range of factors, such as arte-

facts (thesis, laptop, notebook), places (university classroom, office, country), events (tutorial, conference), actions (instructing, correcting, commenting, knocking, greeting, apologizing), and people (professors, student) come together in a unique *assemblage* that produces a particular set of interactions and meanings that “make people happen” (Kell, 2015, as cited in Pennycook, 2017, p. 277)..

Such understanding of the material world emphasizes its fluidity, volatility and mutability. Objects have consequences for people by virtue of coming together in particular configurations (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, as cited in Pennycook, 2017) in a particular situation. These situationally-variable configurations necessitate certain operations or behaviors and thus enforce change in human activity. On the other hand, the material setting is stable, and it neither transforms by itself nor makes people change. On the contrary, it fosters fixity of the liminal behaviors of people. In the situation above, for instance, the digital mode of display of the MA thesis requires an appropriate device – a computer; using the computer is much more convenient in a sitting position. If two people are to read from the screen, they must sit close to each other and to the computer. Sitting proximity, in turn, has impact on the manner of language use, namely they can talk at a fairly low volume, as well as on the gesture (they can manually point or not to the relevant fragment of the text under scrutiny – turn 13), and the use of other instrumentalities: they can open different files, either stop the cursor at a relevant point or highlight the text on the screen.

Finally, if things are assumed to have the power of change since agency, language or cognition are “a distributed effect of a range of interacting objects, people and places” (Pennycook, 2017, p. 278), language practice and its on-site use is not simply an individual characteristic or the result of human agency but that which emerges within spatially-ordered social interactions. Individuals do not only ‘bring’ linguistic resources to the communicative situation, but also draw on the local emergent resources that become available because of a particular activity taking place among particular people. In the example above, the knock on the door causes SP’s withdrawal from her interaction with ST in English and her allocation of cognitive resources (attention, language) to that stimulus. Hence “a *repertoire* is not exclusively owned and controlled by a person (...) but rather is a product of the multitasking interactions (...) and the dynamic movement of people, objects, and activities” (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015, p. 83).

Viewing repertoire as a dynamic process developing in interaction has consequences for the identification of participants that is not only socially or discursively constituted but also emerging in the nexus of material artefacts, behaviors and practices. It does not entail, however, that participant’s identity is only re-fashioned or performed freely like a play. The acts of identity are repeated within a rigid social frame, and congeal over time because of their *iterability*

(Derrida, 1982) and thus acquire the appearance of substance. At the same time, identity is remade, called into being and open to future performance along lines that have been laid out. In the situation above, it is not so much that the participants act out their roles, as their identities are called into being in the interaction of people, artefacts, space and time. This takes us beyond the macro/micro identity dichotomy and opens up a more dynamic view on identity as a dynamic relationship between *glocalized* discourses, transcultural flows and local materialities.

## CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper has been to reconsider the view of communication as a patterned behavior controlled by a human agent functioning within the regulatory frames of social-cultural norms of conduct and activity. The focus has been moved to understanding communication as fleeting language practices and “moments of action” (Scollon & Scollon, 2004, p. 159) where “historical trajectories of people, places, discourse, ideas, and objects come together” (Scollon & Scollon, 2007, p. 620). Therefore, rather than conceive communication as the process of fitting to culturally and situationally-imposed patterns, as is the case with Hymesian model, the paper advocates for an expanded model which holds that the material, the mental, the affective and the social interact to yield momentary, situationally-relevant meanings that sediment over time and thus have the potential of refashioning futurity.

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## CHARTER FOUR

### TOWARDS DE-TROUBLING THE DISCOURSE OF SOCIALITY. SOME NOTES ON HEIDEGGER'S EARLY THOUGHT AND DICTION

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**Abstract:** Martin Heidegger's foundational notion of being-in-the-world (*in-der-Welt-sein*) circumvents not only much of what he saw as a long tradition of philosophical muddling, but it also bypasses much of the often confused and over-specialized discourse of sociality. Heidegger's appreciation of life and reality does not depend on any particular conceptualization of society, community or culture. It can, therefore, help simplify and integrate not only varied but also divergent ways of thinking about human distributions and relationships in space and time.

**Key words:** (a)sociality, overdiscursivity, Ockham, Heidegger, Dasein.

*Can't ye see the world where you stand?*

(Melville, [1851] 1994, p. 86)

It is broadly recognized as a failure of collective rationality that particular human individuals hardly ever perceive their particular individual interests as coinciding with those of other members of their species. Echoing such earlier astute international social critics as Machiavelli and Mandeville, Adam Smith ([1776] 2003) teaches classically that at all times we are primarily motivated by our immediate security and the prospect of both short- and long-term (material) gain.



Economics and political science are prepared to acknowledge reciprocity, but not altruism in its nominal meaning of unselfish attention to the needs of others. Altruistic punishment enjoys a far better currency than the notions of delight in kindness, dispositional empathy, and empathy specific reward.

The wider logic of the social and cultural contract appears to be that we are all “conspirators” who willy-nilly participate in a game of mutual “deceit” (cf. Cavell, 1974, p. 86). It might be euphemistically called taking initiative and exercising individual talent, but it is a common enough appreciation (going back for instance to St. Augustine’s *super omnia tua dominatus est homo*) that the strongest is always right, the only dilemma being how to prove the strongest oneself (cf. e.g., Rousseau, [1762] 1985, p. 53). The messianic prophecy that the wolf shall live amicably with the sheep, Pythagorean commendation of friendship of all with all, Kant’s idealistic vision of everlasting peace, or Shaftesbury’s belief in a universal social order all loom as impossibly feeble and remote prospects. This whole issue is summed up by the widely known Hobbesian view of life as solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short, a state of affairs fuelled by at least three apparently inexhaustible fountainheads: competition, exercise of superiority, and administration of power (cf. e.g., Douglass, 2015). All social situations not only beget tension but entail not infrequently strict discursive and behavioural constraints. We are being constantly instructed, invigilated, censored, rated, ranked, put in their place. Transcribed variously by various thinkers, the logical conclusion seems to be that the less one is tempted to come into contact with others, the better off one should turn out in any event. It is considered, in fact, a healthy “gravity” that when one human indicates that he/she needs an other (regardless whether the need or intent be slight or grave, soft or boisterously spoken), the involuntary first reaction should be the so-called bystander reserve: “We do nothing if we have not first drawn back” (Weil, [1952] 2002, p. 117).

However, for all the opinions and arguments that could be quoted at much greater length in support of “asociality” thesis, people have always been anxious simply to be together. This holds true also of situations where there can be traced no biological, economic, ideological, or cultural motivation to speak of, i.e., no imposition, mutuality, or anticipative benefit of any kind. Across all age groups and across all social strata, people unabashedly as well as unself-consciously seek, expose themselves to, and will do whatever it takes to sustain in one manner or other live contact with other people. As Aristotle famously hypothesizes in *Politics*, one who accepts, and certainly one who chooses, to exist in isolation must be either super-human or sub-human, arch-superior or low-down in the scale of creation. (“[H]e who is unable to live in society or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god” – “if he have not [social] virtue, he is the most unholy and the most savage of animals” [Aristotle, 2008, pp. 29–30; for a contemporary com-

ment see Goodman/Talisse, 2012]). Classically as the market-place/town-square, the human environment *per se* turns out to be a formidable and irresistible magnet drawing to itself the young and the old, the rich and the poor, the hopeful and the hopeless alike. As Hannah Arendt ([1958] 1998, p. 195) has pithily observed, it was really Athenians and not Athens that constituted the *polis*.

Even if the random gaze remains as a rule unreciprocated, as we register and absorb others, we are co-incidentally registered and absorbed by (the same or some) others. The very prospect of being exposed to view may be intrinsically terrifying, nonetheless everybody exists as a self-projection to be perceived and remembered as much as possible. Even if we are indeed at all times *en route* to individual commitments and more often than not disparate destinies, it is quite obvious that we are quite intimately involved with one another. Our stance may be necessarily vigilant but from birth on our primary orientation, in fact our momentum, is outward. Given its centrifugal composition, the hand is an arch emblem as well as essential conduit of human navigation in space. Smith (2003, p. 17) highlights man's uniqueness among all the creatures of the world in most down-to-earth, or practical, terms: "Nobody ever saw one animal by its gesture and natural cries signify to another (...) I am willing to give you this for that". As noted in a variety of contexts, sustained simultaneous presence of any number of people within any circumscribed space makes contact among them inevitable, setting up at least the so-called minimal social situation, something involving eventually at least the so-called minimal conversation. It is by now a standard semiotic recognition that each sign is bi-facial, and that each word, each nod, each wink, and each smile is constitutionally and definitionally half someone else's.

In line, as it were, with Abelard's well-known provocative tenet *sic et non*, man's dissociative-associative disposition is probably best expressed by the quip that we cannot "bear" yet cannot "bear to leave" others (cf. Kant, [1784] 1991, p. 44). The individual and society presuppose and act upon each other in the sense of the Humean constant conjunction and necessary connection (cf. Johnson, 1990). Even if there is no universally recognized model of a "normal social bond" (Scheff, 1994, p. 5), sociality can be contemplated as a variant of the Newtonian *principia naturalis*, a sort of natural categorical imperative, or – to turn to use an even more abstract popular category – elementary proposition, something prior to and beyond considerations of culture, ethics, morality, justice, and truth. In the essay "How Is Society Possible?" ([1910] 1971, p. 7), Georg Simmel posits very simply (resignedly?) that the very fact of constituting it may be ultimately all there is to it.

However cursory and partial, the above survey indicates that sociality can easily provoke a proverbial one thousand and one responses, followed likely by just as many questions. It seems only sensible, therefore, to apply here the principle of ontological parsimony. Deriving from William of Ockham's well-known but never really accepted, let alone practiced, rejection of circumlocution, intermediacy, synonymy, hair splitting, as well as ever evolving new categories and new distinctions, the recommended approach is to use in any explanation the least possible number of factors (see, e.g., Keele, 2010; Sober, 2015). With his research on the performative meaning-as-use in his later, linguistically-focused phase, Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951) is duly acknowledged for his contribution to the liberation of modern thought. He argued for a release from what he saw as meretricious questing, from imbroglia of chop logic as well as from contractualism and conventionalism, most especially regarding predicative propositional statements (formulations whose order inevitably ends up greater by one than the order of the argument themselves). As a starting point, the message emerging from Wittgenstein's thought and praxis is to do away with prejudgements, intricate valuations, ongoing supplementations, and generally terminological quibbling. The ideal idea would be to take-in the world more directly. Which simply comes down to paying closer attention to and placing trust in the instantaneity, concreteness, invariabilities, and patience of everyday reality. (For a broader discussion see e.g., B.-C. Park's recent *Phenomenological Aspects of Wittgenstein's Philosophy*.)

It is Martin Heidegger (1889–1971), though, who really seems to have managed to deconstruct the ever-growing appetites, dictates, presumptions, volatility and contingencies of reason – by exposing some of man's basic ontic, epistemic, and dialogic limitations. (By “early” Heidegger I mean his formative pronounced phenomenological phase of the 1920s, culminating with the publication of *Sein und Zeit* [*Being and Time*] in 1927). To begin with, it is refreshing to realize with the Schwarzwald philosopher that:

*Keeping silent* is another essential possibility of discourse, and it has the same existential foundation. In talking with one another, the person who keeps silent can “make one understand” (that is, he can develop an understanding), and he can do so more authentically than the person who is never short of words. Speaking at length [*Viel-sprechen*] about something does not offer the slightest guarantee that thereby understanding is advanced.

(Heidegger, [1927] 1962, p. 208)

Against over-discursivity as such, as well as against both excessive solipsism and excessive decisionism, in his radical transcription of the question of being, or *Seinsfrage*, Heidegger advocates reuniting thought with ordinary existence in the world and with ordinary experience of that world. Even if it offers neither

a body of knowledge nor a value system, this approach is useful in overcoming misappreciation and misappropriation not only of the discourses of epistemology and ontology, but also of contextuality and of culture at large. Pseudo-metaphorically, Scott (2001, p. 3) explains that Heidegger's philosophy offers "a field" of training and "a site" of conditioning that make it possible to learn from "experimentation with language before a strange withdrawal of meaning in traditional intelligence and in ordinary cultural life". Most immediately or literally perceived, it all entails "push[ing] words to their extremity (...) recomposing and rehearsing them, often twisting them toward a new expression" (Scott, 2001, p. 8)<sup>1</sup>. I wish to promote here a couple of Heidegger's early concepts (cherry picking a few key words and terms as a quasi-aboriginal basic lexicon, so to speak) as first of all an antidote to the peculiarly contemporary condition of being overwhelmed: culturally overhyped and intellectually, certainly academically, overspecialized, and overreferred. My broader goal is to counter the troubled existential apprehension that reality spells resistance and otherness, and to oppose the concomitant sense of *Angst* associated with the very experience of being human<sup>2</sup>. In response to the familiar worry that no matter how many centuries of development mankind may have had to its credit each new generation is facing a new crisis, Heidegger offers a liberating potential of simplicity and of positive signification. Specifically, he makes it easier to appreciate that life is necessarily social, that it is foundationally temporal, spatial, and tactile, and that even in its quotidian mode it is inherently meaningful.

The German thinker claims that Western philosophy has fundamentally misinterpreted both the character of the world and our emplacement in it. As a challenge to the apparently bland and banal verb *to be*, he argues that a proper appreciation of human life is possible through a proper attendance to *be-ing*. Pre-conceptually, in a sense, Heidegger maintains that the philosophical scandal does not lie in the fact that a convincing proof for the reality of the world and the connectedness of life is yet to be given. The real scandal, he insists, lies in fact that such proofs should be at all requested and repeatedly as well as insistently attempted.

[M]any of Heidegger's groundbreaking texts begin with a "correction of course" consisting of (...) acknowledgment of the debt to the "first beginning", which in turn makes possible a "new beginning". In the light shed by this "correction", Heidegger is able to discover a heretofore un-disclosed possibility, where others might have seen simply an historical curiosity.

(Scula, 2008, p. 232)

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<sup>1</sup> As Gadamer (1994, p. 66) has observed: "It is certainly not the language of information". For a wider discussion of Heidegger's style see Weidler (2018).

<sup>2</sup> For a broader and more detailed promotional discussion of Heidegger's early thought and diction, in the context of cultural and especially literary studies, see Semrau (2012).

Heidegger posits that no matter how unpretentious and inconspicuous our physical posture may appear to be we never randomly simply take up a certain volume of space. Irrespective of both the predicates and quantifiers of form, shape, and action, we are always body-*ing* forth. In more ways than one, we are always out-standing and out-reaching. “When all epistemological assumptions are set aside, it becomes clear that comportment itself (...) quite apart from the question of its correctness or incorrectness – is in its very structure a directing-itself-toward” (Heidegger, 1985, p. 31). This is advocating the recognition of space-acting at-homeness in-the-world. All human bearing and *modus operandi* constitute a stance of connecting with, articulating, and confirming the real – as “when I open the door, for instance” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 96). Safranski (2002, p. 146) explains that against “mysterious profundity of any underworld of the subconscious or superworld of the spiritual”, what emerges here is the “self-transparency of life performances”. Even turning aside, avoiding, failing, erring, or leaving undone are appreciable as viable manifestations of *be-ing*. We are enveloped and involved in the world not only in the hustle and bustle, but also very much in “average everydayness” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 38). Furthermore, we are in the world always already in the primary and continuous sense of personal abiding: “[*I*]ch bin, du bist mean: I dwell, you dwell” – “the manner in which we humans *are* on the earth is dwelling” (Heidegger, 1971, p. 147). Central to this appreciation is the tenet of the world’s givenness.

It is not the case that on the one hand there are first individual subjects which at any given time have their own world; and that the task would then arise of putting together, by virtue of some sort of an arrangement, the various particular worlds of the individuals and of agreeing how one would have a common world. This is how philosophers imagine these things when they ask about the constitution of the intersubjective world. We say instead that the first thing that is given is the common world (...) which is there primarily.

(Heidegger, 1985, p. 246)

Critically, “the world under consideration [here] is *man’s world* and [it] is not be taken simply as a totality of all existence” (Raj Singh, 2013, p. 18, emphasis added). Actually, Heidegger differentiates between structures and properties pertinent to man, and structures and properties pertinent to things. In a kind of circular or reciprocal manner, though, through the notion of equipmentality, the latter realm offers a useful transcription of *human* bearings in the world. As Thonhauser (2016, p. 134) points out in this context, “the relevance of a piece of equipment, its *what-for*, can ultimately be traced back to the for-the-sake-of-which of [any human individual]”. Heidegger’s neo-Aristotelian equipmentality is a nonideological modality of amongness, exposedness, and availability. However distinctive the constitution and solid the materiality, a single, isolated (or, autonomous, to recall an especially overhyped adjective nowadays) thing, tool or

implement, is a self-invalidating premise. Taken strictly, there is no such thing as *an* equipment. The being of any piece of equipment is informed by the all-encompassing logic and, indeed, practical function of connecting, sustaining and enhancing<sup>3</sup>. Equipmentality is important in itself since it is within the externality that is worked out in and through things and objects that we encounter other persons. Not only is it about the ordering of things and objects and about a system of interconnectedness, but it is also about the way in which the social and cultural realm and our interactions within it are organized in concrete space, both right-here and somewhere/anywhere out-there (in the street, in the field, on the bridge, by the boat, in the shop, in the hall, at the door, and so on).

The dimension of inherent or organic belongingness that Heidegger pays particular attention to is the temporal. It is, in fact, one of his preliminary arguments that our misappreciation of time may to a large extent be responsible for our misappreciation of being. The obvious basic recognition here is that it is impossible to circumscribe, arrest or distance time. Also, no matter how neglectful we might individually be about it, it is impossible to opt out of time. Heidegger posits ultimately that not only are we always in time, that not only is time an innate quality of human being, but that we actually *are* our time – we are in effect embodied time. Comparable to a wave that cannot be severed from the expanse and incessant vibrations of the sea, time is never a separate, discrete *now* but is a continuous sequence of ecstatic *nows*, each *now* emerging out of what has been and inexorably providing for what is going to be. A refinement of the Husserlian notions of retention and protention, the final understanding of temporality is of “the unity of a future which makes present in the process of having been” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 374). Besides, although everybody experiences, i.e., existentializes, their own time, at a certain fundamental level time is public: It is always the same synchronizing *now*, of and for everyone (cf. Husserl, 1991; Dimitriu, 2013; Blaiklock, 2017).

Heidegger shows his dissatisfaction with the prevailing troubled thinking and troubled sense-making also by rejecting such socio-cultural buzzwords as ego, personality, self-fashioning, social skills, or social competence. In the Einsteinian mode, as it were, this is refusing to use in solving a problem the pedagogy and the poetics that may have created that very problem. Heidegger proposes to replace the modern disjunctive neo-narcissistic idiom with the integrative-constitutive as well as demonstrative concept of *Dasein*. Grammatically, it is a noun containing a verb, semantically it is (a) thing in being. This designation is naturalizable as a (fore)structure and a dynamic not just of the very taking place of being, but also of phenomenological

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<sup>3</sup> “Ein Zeug ‘ist’ strenggenommen nie. Zum Sein von Zeug gehört je immer ein Zeugganzes“ (Heidegger, 1979, p. 68).

disclosedness – or, self-manifestation – of that being. In terms of description *qua* description, Dasein may somewhat disappoint since it is not a representationalist image of man's corporeal intricacies, affectivities, and intimacies. As Haar (1993, p. xxv) points out, it is a proposition "quite other than man as subject" in the popular contemporary sense of it. However, it is precisely the neutrality of gender-, case-, age-, race-, sex-, class-, ideology-, and status-free notion of Dasein that allows for a coherent and convenient way of contemplating human existence without reducing it to a scientific phenomenon or narrativizing it at length in terms of complex cognitive and emotional processes caught up in some unfathomable mysteries of human history and the universe at large.

Even though it is not essential (to believe) that a kind of being such as Dasein may factually exist, Heidegger (1975, p. 273) stresses his commitment to a specifically human ecology: "Man alone exists. Rocks are, but they do not exist. Trees are, but they do not exist. Horses are, but they do not exist. Angels are, but they do not exist. God is, but he does not exist". Dasein (more graphically and practically: *da-sein*; or, both here/there *be-ing*) means groundedness, aroundness, unfolding and harbouring of the actual lived existence. It is a *sui generis* unitary phenomenon that is not pieced together but is "primordially and constantly a whole" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 65). The whole *raison d'être* of Heidegger's take on reality and on human life is its de-severing and de-distancing thrust. The fact that being-in-the-world is hyphenated indicates that the properties and *modus operandi* of Dasein cannot be fragmented and problematized into constituent parts<sup>4</sup>. The larger point is that, co-originally and co-occurently, the world does not obtain without Dasein, just as Dasein does not obtain without the world.

It is crucial to recognize that although Heidegger does not bring up any specific social, ethical or moral issues, and even though he does not acknowledge explicitly the relevance of empathy as such, his thought presupposes others as a co-constitutive element of everydayness. He seems to be implicitly subscribing, in fact, to a broad understanding of the anti-Cartesian *cognatus sum, ergo sum* [I'm related, therefore I am]<sup>5</sup>. To ever seriously contemplate the human condition in terms of other-less-ness is just as conceptually flawed and self-invalidating as to contemplate it in terms of world-less-ness. Heidegger presupposes sociality as an elemental aspect of everydayness. Each Dasein necessarily perceives, interprets and defines itself in relation to others:

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<sup>4</sup> "Das In-der-Welt-sein ist eine ursprünglich und ständige ganze Struktur" (Heidegger, [1927] 1979, p. 180).

<sup>5</sup> This observation is to be properly understood, of course, against the popular reading of *cogito, ergo sum* [I think, therefore I am].

One feels the touch of [the ground] at every step as one walks; it is seemingly the closest and Realest of all that is ready-to-hand, and it slides itself, as it were, along certain portions of one's body – the soles of one's feet. And yet it is farther remote than the acquaintance whom one encounters (...) twenty paces [away] when one is taking such a walk.

(Heidegger, 1962, pp. 141–142)

As a matter of fact, even without physically/experientially encountering others, and even without desiring or intending to have any-thing to do with others, the world of Dasein is constitutionally a with-world, a *Mit-sein*. It emerges that “as individual Dasein, we [simply] cannot (...) escape *being-with* others” (Warfield, 2016, p. 73). In general, it turns out that there is no sense of being that is not inter-being (which is, of course, but a logical conclusion to the by now standard recognition that there is no text that is not inter-text and no meaning that is not inter-meaning). Figuratively, an unfamiliar and empty boat anchored at the shore (see Heidegger, 1962, p. 154), entranced in its unknown past as well as present and future purposes, is self-apparently indicative of other entities, other beings, and other places. One becomes aware here not only of potentiality but of participatory readiness-to-hand; and, moreover, of having already been so. Also, just as at-the-door or on-the-bridge, this is not only indicating but actually facilitating being both here-and-there. This kind of projective-disclosive experience of phenomenological signification may deliver far more than any formal narrative, interpretation, classification, or communication, from the verdict of being no longer to the equally conventional supposition of being not yet. This is Heidegger's way of dispelling the “strange uncertainty” about both human (social) reality and reality in general; as diagnosed in his time for instance by Henry David Thoreau, ([1854] 1962, p. 89)<sup>6</sup>.

The philosophical project outlined here focuses on the human being insofar as it aims to highlight or, more properly, light-out being as a generic phenomenological manifestation and existential self-validation. Against such troubled and troubling notions and conceits as alterity, obliquity and adversary motion, against over-referentiality and ideologically driven over-specialized as well as over-affective discourse, the emphasis is on the self-manifestness of that which

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<sup>6</sup> Thoreau comes to mind in the present context also for his emphatic “Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity!” (1962, p. 89), as well as for his scathing (un-PC) reflection on “news”, or what I choose to call in this paper overdiscursivity – something Heidegger himself dubs idle talk or *Gerede* – “If you are acquainted with the principle, what do you care for a myriad instances and applications? To a philosopher all *news*, as it is called, is gossip, and they who edit and read it are old women over their tea” (Thoreau, 1962, p. 92). My particular objection here is against the insistent hyper-specificity as to, *inter alia*, the times *when*, the places and circumstances *where*, the grantors and auctors *who*, the grantees and dedicatees *whom*, the methods, techniques and instrumentalities *how*, and the reasons, purposes, mentalities and sensibilities *why*.



worlds, by virtue of constituting that in which we are embedded, towards which we are oriented and about which we care. We are confirmed in who we are by being thrown open (*Geworfensein*) to factual groundedness and aroundness, equipped with immanent potentiality for being. The single most positive message emerging from Martin Heidegger's early philosophy is that in a perfectly ordinary way it is perfectly possible to entertain and enjoy a perfectly ordinary being-in-the-world.

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## CHAPTER FIVE

# REVISITING MULTICULTURALISM IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNICATION POLITICS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM OF THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY

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**Abstract:** The UK doctrine of multiculturalism has been under recurrent criticism since the 1990<sup>s</sup>. The discourse was accused of promoting ethnic and cultural segregation, social unrest, separation and isolation of communities, resulting in scarce contact and connections with one another – to name but a few objections. Globalisation, massive migration and new patterns of diverse identifications made the British search for other viable forms of political and cultural communication. Interculturalism promised a new approach to old problems, corresponding more appropriately to the dynamically changing globalised world. Currently, apart from international variables affecting multinational course of action, the UK needs to confront the internal Brexit crisis as well. In the Brexit referendum, the policy of the strong unified nation was reinstated. The focal point of the campaign was the limitation of free movement of immigration into the British Isles, which means re-introducing control (regulation) over one of the key foundations of the global world. As a result, as the recent surveys and polls show, it has led to the increasing alienation of ethnic minorities in the UK. The article looks at several fundamental political speeches, reports and national surveys to examine how British multicultural politics evolved to the point where the majority of citizens decided to take back (as they believed) control over the processes currently happening in their multicultural country.

**Key words:** contemporary Great Britain, multiculturalism, interculturalism, Brexit.

## MULTICULTURALISM IN THE CONTEMPORARY UNITED KINGDOM

In “Multiculturalism in Contemporary Britain”: Ashcroft and Bevir argue that multiculturalism encompasses diverse spheres of life, not only cultural policy, political representation, law, race, immigration, language issues but also education, religion, norms of conduct and behaviour, as well as one’s preferred outfit or bank holidays that a given country observes (2018, pp. 2–4). The global reality of the modern world makes this register even more complicated. Cattle (2013) explains that massive population moves are accompanied today by international relocation of capital, in consequence, causing further migration shifts, especially among impoverished minorities. As stressed by Cattle (2013, pp. 1–3), due to globalisation and free movement policies, people can migrate without much restriction and they can create diverse, mobile populations, more numerous, influential and operative than ever before. No wonder that such relocations on a massive scale are perceived as threat to more solid, older types of identifications based upon national or even regional foundations. In line with that, multicultural Britain of the twenty first century and the concept of nationhood, according to Chuka Umunna, the UK chair of All-Party Parliamentary Group for Social Integration, have been correspondingly modified by emerging global and international economy patterns, the social media and IT technology, and above all, aforementioned massive migration. In his commentary to the results of the Opinium Research, Umunna (2017) states that “in the wake of Brexit, we must rebuild our divided nation to create a country that works for everyone”. The similar “unifying of all nation” doctrine was expressed by Theresa May in her Brexit speech, delivered on 8<sup>th</sup> of March 2019 in Brimsby where the British Prime Minister declares that now the Government’s role is “to bring our country together”, towards the “brighter future...our whole country deserve [s]”. As a matter of fact, the twenty first century British multiculturalism needs to define itself with regard to both contemporary global developments and its lasting internal crisis.

### “BRITISH JANUS-FACED MULTINATIONAL POLITICS”

To fully comprehend the origin of British multiculturalism, one needs to go back, as recommended by Ashcroft and Bevir (2018, p. 4) to 1707 and the Acts of Union which gave historical foundations for the country’s multinational structure, and then to the process of decolonisation and decline in British imperial status. After Colley, Ashcroft and Bevir argue that identity of the present-day British multicultural state has been formed as a political reaction to decolonisation process, perceived as challenge and danger to British defining their own standpoint and their international position (2018, p. 5). Reading in-between the

lines, what these theorists imply is that British multicultural tradition is established, to some extent, on apprehension and double-standards. In accordance with that, after Meer and Modood, Ashcroft and Bevir employ the term British “Janus-faced” multiculturalism, marked by racially-grounded limitations set upon external immigration with the simultaneous tolerance for British own inter-cultural diversity (2018, p. 6). As a consequence, the British post-imperial legacy seems to have led to distinguishing between the welcome (white) immigrants historically linked with England and race-based regulations put upon people coming from the New Commonwealth (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2018, p. 5, upon Hansen, 2000 and Karatani, 2003).

“Windrush scandal” (2018) proves that in the light of recent immigration policy, even Commonwealth citizens who after the WWII followed the political and economic appeal to come and work in Britain, may not always feel welcome “at home” these days. According to the BBC News, the Windrush generation (named after the MV Empire Windrush with 492 immigrants from Caribbean countries aboard) refers to people from the region of Jamaica, Tobago or Trinidad who came to the UK between 1948 and 1971. At that period, immigrants’ manual labour was very much appreciated by war-affected British economy. Commonwealth citizens who arrived by 1971 were granted the right to stay permanently in the UK. However, many of Caribbean post-war migrants were minor and they had no legal documents or their own passports. Since 2010, documents, such as landing cards from the Empire Windrush, were no longer kept by the Home Office. The reasons for shredding these papers remain unclear: be it moving offices or a conscious political decision. As a result, since 2014 when deportation could be legally applied to them, not all from the Windrush generation were able to document the legality of their stay in the UK. Under this new regulation, former workers and their families who once were granted their right to remain in the UK were now threatened to be sent back to Caribbean countries of their descent. When the scandal was publicised, the Prime Minister had to make an official apology, referring to the Windrush generation: “these people are British, they are part of us. They helped to build Britain stronger” (20 April 2018). It appears that in the eyes of the Prime Minister being recognised as “British”, “one of us”, and the reinstated official citizenship status are regarded as ennoblement in itself and ample compensation for all adversities that Windrush migrants might endure.

### “WHAT MAKES US BRITISH”

The question of “what makes us British” (Phillips, 2005) keeps returning in the political rhetoric and multicultural discourse in the UK. The speech “After 7/7: Sleepwalking to Segregation”, uttered in 2005 by the chair of the Commission

for Racial Equality, Trevor Phillips, attempts to render the sense of Britishness, conceived here as a set of “**our** shared values, traditions and lifestyle” rather than nationality *per se*. The inclusive pronoun (“**our**”) implies the common ground for the speaker and his audience. In the category of nationally shared principles, Phillips enumerates respect for democratic and egalitarian values and free expression, whereas the subsequent group of communal conduct and customs comprises “**our** common language, **our** good manners and **our** care for children”. Following this line of thinking, David Cameron’s “muscular liberalism” manifesto declared in Munich (5 February 2011) calls to educate British citizens in the spirit of shared culture and national curriculum, law and democracy, free speech and the denomination of one’s own choice, racial, sexual and gender equality, because all these values, according to Cameron, “define **us** as a society”. To the features that identify the UK population, Phillips adds as well British ways and manners of living: “diverse, individualistic even eccentric lifestyles in our private lives”. British sense of irony, humour and mockery are also enumerated among these crucial national traits (Phillips, 2005). Ashcroft and Bevir refer to the mood of the reborn national uniqueness as “a Whiggish British exceptionalism” (2018, p. 6), “monocultural in orientation even if it is multiracial in application” (2018, p. 7). From Phillips’s speech, one can clearly discern a strong individualistic practice of British singularity, summed up in the declaration: “no one tells us how to speak, how to dress, what we should eat or how we should worship” (2005).

As rightly suspected by Ashcroft and Bevir, this fervent mood of British distinctiveness has found its conspicuous representation in the Brexit campaign and afterwards. Hutton in *Them and Us: Changing Britain: Why we need a Fair Society* portrays Britishness as “a combination of kindness, instinctive liberalism, deference before well understood social values, belief in fairness, respect for parliamentary democracy...and an understated sense of national purpose” (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2018, p. 15). The whole catalogue plus the aforementioned eccentricity are well represented in the person of John Bercow, the Speaker of the House of Commons, well-known for repeating at the top of his lungs “Order! Order!”. The ostentatious eccentricity of odd patterned Bercow’s ties, overbearing politeness of “Honourable Gentlemen and Ladies” and meticulousness observance of Parliamentary protocol are the medial trademarks of modern British democracy, facing the Brexit crisis. Aside from its lengthy and perplexing Parliamentary dimension, incomprehensible on the level of procedure for the majority of the audience, the Brexit spectacle, due to Bercow, acquires a more relatable, human dimension.

In “A Reply to British Intellectual Elite”, prof. Rattansi, the author of *Multiculturalism: A Very Short Introduction* (OUP, 2011) observes that the sense of Britishness, when attempted to capture, is not only obscure by definition but reduced to predictabilities and clichés about “democracy, liberalism, tolerance and fair-

ness” (2012). Such an account is also unrepresentative in its selective choosing to ignore the country’s past record of violating democratic, social and cultural rules, ethnic abuses and colonial exploitations (Rattansi, 2012). Aschcroft and Bevir seem to subscribe to this view, pointing to double norms of inclusion and exclusion of the British multicultural doctrine, traced by them back to the colonial past.

## “US” AND “THEM”

In response to increasing radicalization, Nick Clegg in his Luton Speech (2011) declares the need to see the UK as “an open, confident society.” He stresses that openness and confidence characterise open and liberal societies that are self-assured about their own stand and not governed by uncertainty, apprehension and diffidence. Nonetheless, when one explores the most influential British political speeches, such as the aforementioned “After 7/7: Sleepwalking to Segregation,” one can notice clearly the scare tactics and a breach in the line of thought into “*us*” and “*them*”. At this stage, it needs clarifying that “After 7/7” was written as the aftermath of 2005 London bombing attacks and its fifty two casualties of different nationalities. Apart from Jamaican bomber, the remaining three attackers were the second generation Pakistani immigrants of roughly speaking, British working class up to middle class background. The bombers were descendants of immigrants coming from the Commonwealth area, which for the British belonged for decades to the special, nearly internal, immigration category. To put it crudely, bombing attacks such as 7/7 laid bare deficiencies and setbacks in an integrational process in the UK. David Cameron sums this up in Munich (5 February 2011): “the biggest threat to our security comes from terrorist attacks – some of which are sadly carried out by our own citizens”.

As argued earlier, Phillips (2005) maintains that paying too much attention to differences rather than similarities (the common culture) is the reason of the “isolation of communities”, which can eventually lead to frustration and violence. He concludes that “the fragmentation of our society by race and ethnicity is a catastrophe for all of us” (Phillips, 2005). The Cattle Report (2001) refers to this phenomenon as “parallel lives”, resulting in self-segregation, that is communities having virtually none or little contact with one another, living, educating and working separately. Cattle’s diagnosis is that if communities keep separating, depending upon their financial status, cultural or ethnic background, workplace, faith, the type of school which their children attend and districts or residential areas, they will never acquire knowledge about other social groups apart from their own. And the lack of this awareness will breed prejudice and fear, which, in turn, will lead to tensions and hostility (Cattle, 2001, p. 30). The solution to a “discourse of strangers” (Phillips, 2005) could be “a local commu-



nity cohesion plan” (Cantle, 2001, p. 11), that is encouraging connections and dialogue between communities, making them engaged in shared projects and activities, and promoting all kinds of interactions between them. The report recommends getting to know the first-hand experiences of the life in other communities, establishing direct contact between different group members, consciousness raising concerning needs, problems, goals and aspirations of a given group (Cantle, 2001, p. 50). It is through lived practice, active participation and inter-human interactions that Cantle wishes to challenge cultural stereotypes rather than by affirmative action or enforced structural changes.

As shown, Phillips was one of the first British politicians but not the last one who used the doctrine of multiculturalism as scapegoat for the escalation of ethnic conflicts and social segregation, announcing that: “In recent years *we*’ve focused too much on the ‘multi’ and not enough on the common culture. *We*’ve emphasized what divides us over what unites *us*. *We* have allowed tolerance of diversity to harden into the effective isolation of communities, in which *some people* think special separate values ought to apply” (Phillips, 2005). The similar conclusion is expressed in Cameron’s Munich speech of 5 February, 2011: “Under the doctrine of state multiculturalism, *we* have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and the mainstream. *We* have failed to provide a vision of society to which *they* want to belong. *We* have even tolerated these segregated communities behaving in ways that run counter to *our* values”. Once again, Cameron (2011) establishes a bipolar stratification with an active part (“*us*”) whose role is to create, provide and manage and the passive element (“*they*”) who has to simply adapt to the rules set by “*us*”. Having marked the common areas and rules for participation, Cameron (2011) proceeds to clearly demarcate the zones of difference. The repetitive droning tone of mirrored rhetorical questions, directed at some imaginary *they* establishes clearly a polarised split. The Prime Minister asks rhetorically:

Do *they* believe in universal human rights – including for women and people of other faiths?

Do *they* believe in equality of all before the law?

Do *they* believe in democracy and the right of people to elect their own government?

Do *they* encourage integration or separatism?

...*we* must build stronger societies and identities at home.

(Cameron, 2011, italics added)

The fragment cited above quite clearly implies that “*they*” [whoever they might be] do not share the values of “*us*” (on whose behalf Cameron seems to have spoken). At this stage, one can ask a question whether Britishness defined in this

way, inscribes itself into paradigms of the individualist liberal tradition the nation is based upon.

## THE THEORETICAL AND ETHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF MULTICULTURALISM IN THE UK

According to Ashcroft and Bevir (2018), British egalitarian and individualist liberal line was formed to protect the rights of majority rather than minority interests. Therefore, it does not always incorporate particular or culture-bound issues, assuming that it is enough to set the universal rights platform to ensure democracy. Raz however reminds us that different cultures fulfil liberal and universalistic goals in their own specific ways, and that such practices are by no means universal to all people (1998, p. 193). In line with that, Parekh (The Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain, 2000) emphasizes that moral principles can mean different things in different cultures, and that these differences should be read in agreement with individual dignity, self-worth and equality. It does not mean, however, that all kinds of abuse could be justified by dissimilar norms of cultural patterns or differences in defining moral principles. Raz (1998, p. 199) acknowledges the limitations to cultural rights, reminding us that people belonging to cultural communities need to be allowed the right to individual self-expression and their free participation in the political and economic spheres of life, regardless of the group dynamic, and the right to terminate their affiliation with the group according to their wish. According to Raz, the cultural community cannot subjugate an individual or be biased against one's beliefs. Whereas most people might agree on universal values concerning ethics, they might still wish to defend some practices, considered as unethical in different culture, by appealing to their own religious or conduct codes. If one assumes unconditional equivalence of any systems, using an argument of ethical dissimilarities, then it opens door to all kinds of acts that might be either discriminatory or oppressive. That is why Parekh (The Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain, 2000) rightly warns that: "Equality must be defined in a culturally sensitive way and applied in discriminating but not discriminatory manner<sup>1</sup>". It appears that assuming a well-balanced stand in the spirit of the common sense seems to be a vital part of the British tradition as well.

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<sup>1</sup> 2000 Report of the Commission on the Future of Multi-ethnic Britain led by Bikhu Parekh highlight's Britain's simultaneous function as "a community of communities" (multicultural) and "a community of citizens" (liberal).

## MULTICULTURALISM AND INTERCULTURALISM: EVOLUTION OR REVOLUTION

Interculturalism is frequently defined in opposition to multiculturalism, or even in open conflict with this discourse. However as rightly pointed out by Cantle (2012), instead of simply contesting multicultural tradition, interculturalism ought to benefit from its gains, such as non-discriminatory and equal opportunity practices, and employ them as the foundation for its own activities. The earliest British steps into interculturalism resulted from the much needed response to the deadlock of “universal” liberal and individualist tradition when faced with the nation’s cultural specificity. In *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory*, Parekh (2000) suggests moving towards “intercultural dialogue” (ICD) that will enrich the country’s own cultural identification. This dialogue means being responsive to other cultures and insights provided by them, readiness to study and absorb new impacts, and becoming open to question critically one’s own standpoint and assumptions about one’s own culture (Parekh, 2000, p. 338). Cantle (2013) explains aptly that intercultural dialogue tends to be frequently mistaken for the intercultural policy in general. According to him (Cantle, 2013, p. 11), intercultural dialogue (ICD) is an important tool used in the intercultural discourse, but interculturalism comprises a wider understanding of interrelations between communities. After Bouchard, he repeats that “it is a sustained effort aimed at connecting majorities and minorities, continuity and diversity, identity and rights, reminders of the past and visions of the future, and that it calls for new ways of coexisting within and beyond differences of all levels of collective life” (Cantle, 2013, p. 12). Comparing interculturalism and multiculturalism, it is a diversity of levels of difference and not simply the variable of race or ethnicity that distinguishes these two approaches (Cantle, 2013, p. 14). Correspondingly, ICD may be focusing on the cooperation of dissimilar communities, whereas interculturalism goes beyond the level of particular differences to look at many overlapping or competing variables, not solely reducible to one’s race or faith but involving transnational connections of the social media, diverse group identifications, networks, social and personal interactions and intercultural affiliations (Cantle, 2013, p. 14).

What seems to be especially needed in the twenty first century UK is the vision of the inter-connected society that is united by the choice and preference, cultural identifications and shared principles that transcend the idea of nationhood (Cantle, 2013, p. 2). As argued above, British earlier strands of multiculturalism may not be adequately responsive to the demands of the altering world, because its role was mostly diagnostic and anti-discriminatory (Cantle, 2013, pp. 2–6). Interculturalism offers much more: it shows how to move out of impasse, demonstrates “how to live together in an increasingly interdependent and intercon-

nected world” (Cantle, 2013, p. 6). Clegg (2011) captures the interrelated identification model in his Luton speech when he claims:

With advancement in communications technology, more freedom of movement and greater economic independence between nations, there is a much wider palette from which identities can be drawn....Many of the cultural issues of the day cut right across these boundaries: gay rights, the role of women; identities across national borders; differing attitudes to marriage, the list goes on.

As demonstrated by Clegg, the integration of inter-connected community happens along many different and frequently simultaneous trajectories. One does not have to choose between them, and frequently one may not be able to express preference for a single line of self-definement, finding diverse attachments, sentiments and loyalties equally important. With regard to multiculturalism<sup>2</sup>, Zapata-Barrero (2017, pp. 177–180) distinguishes three areas of intercultural subjectivity modification: instead of the national perspective, the stress should be placed upon the local, in place of ethnic and cultural community-oriented narrative – the shift needs to be directed towards an individual; and instead of immigrant versus citizenship categorisation, intercultural policy ought to be put in the centre of the discourse. Furthermore, Cantle (2011) advocates that instead of emphasis on the group identity and national difference, one needs to realise that modern hybrid identities tend to be based as well on heterogeneous (including online) types of connections.

Interculturalism may be viewed as opening new paths for the multinational discourse, but what it does is mostly adapting to new trends rather than setting them. The social media generation would not understand tenets of the territory-based and nation-state identity because their territory is the Internet and the global world. They grew up in a reality of the free flow of capital and people and (free) exchange of information. Therefore, their identifications have to be established along their own choices and values. Nonetheless, what is the strength of intercultural subjectivity (its flexibility, adaptableness, interconnectedness, open-mindedness and heterogeneity), due to its volatility might also be turned into its potential vulnerability.

## THE FUTURE OF THE BRITISH INTERNATIONAL POLICY

Regardless of intellectuals’ efforts to re-educate British society to embrace a new intercultural model of social and cultural inter-relations, the UK took a step back from this track, first in the Brexit referendum, and then in pro-

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<sup>2</sup> Like many other critics and politicians, Zapata-Barrero locates the reasons for intercultural discourse’s popularity in the bankruptcy of multicultural ideology.

nounced social attitudes towards immigrants living on the British Isles. What lurks beneath the data is suspicion and fear with which the British approach foreigners who work in their country. The British policy towards immigrants and the idea of the multinational state seems to have been put into doubt with the publication of two important surveys conducted in consecutive years of 2017 and 2018. 2017 Opinion research “Multicultural Britain in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” states that 52% of ethnic minorities observe further decline in tolerance in the UK since the Brexit referendum. The same source states that 24% of ethnic minorities do not feel that they belong to British culture. It shows clearly the overt failure of the integrational programmes directed at creating cohesive local communities in which people would not be segregated but engaged in shared projects and intercultural activities. This number indicates that, to a large extent, cooperation, dialogue and contact between different communities are still not sufficient enough to overcome mutual distrust and prejudice. To the contrary, minorities complain about the increase in new forms of racism: online hate discourse (45% of respondents under 34) and a wider social acceptance for humour based on racist grounds (41% of respondents experienced this type of discrimination). The crime rate for racist offences has increased considerably (41% from 2015 to 2016). What is more, as demonstrated, race is becoming a new old line of social divisions in the UK. One can clearly observe as pointed out as well by Umunna, the difference in scores between white and non-white British respondents. A majority of British citizens with no ethnic background (68%) still define their identity with regard to their national participation. Self-segregation of communities remains an unquestionable fact: the residential area with more than 50% of white British inhabitants have a small percentage of non-white inhabitants (5%), 25% of white Brits have 2% of non-white neighbours. 52% of white UK citizens blame minorities for the lack of sufficient commitment to integration with the rest of the society. At the same time, a meaningful percentage of British society is deeply sceptical and critical about the influence that immigrants had on the whole country and their neighbouring communities. In the UK Survey on Immigration (published September 2018), nearly 39% (31% online and 8% in poll) respondents replied that “immigration had a negative impact on the UK, including the local community”.

In the same survey, only 15% was satisfied with the way the government dealt with immigration, other respondents complained also about the lack of control, the rise in crime rate, insufficient contribution and effort made by newcomers. The respondents demanded a more competent management of the immigration policy at the local level, and setting transparent and fair rules regarding the movement of people into Britain. In reply to such expectations, Theresa May in her Brexit Brimsby speech (2019) explains the Government’s stand:

...our Government has no control of how many people move to Britain every year. The deal I have negotiated ends free movement and takes back control of our borders. We can create an immigration system around people's skills and not the country they come from.

In the speech cited, May attempts to market Brexit not as “anti-immigration” move but nearly pro-immigration, opening up to new countries outside the EU. Hence what is in reality closing of British borders, is presented by her as opening and establishing fair rules to all immigrants. To some extent, it remains in the tradition of British paradox and irony that they can preach limitation as freedom, control as liberalism. In accordance with that, May promises to give UK citizens control back over issues that are crucial for people. A misapprehension is being created that after leaving the EU, the level of people's influence is going to increase dramatically. Furthermore, once again, the card of Britishness is being played. In line with that, May (2019) offers to focus on improving “*our* NHS, *our* schools and our communities”, “*our* money on our own priorities”, “take back control of *our* trade policy in our own interests”, “restoring full sovereign control of *our* waters”, “economy that works for everyone”, “build strong community”, “protect the things *we* value”. What remains understated is that in the modern globalised world, no country can be 100% self-sufficient and rely entirely on their own resources and capital, be it cultural, social or economic type. May naturally is perfectly aware of that fact but she ensures to guarantee control over the capital intake, taking into account British interests primarily.

In conclusion, interculturalist discourse clearly suggests that the UK's brighter future cannot be built without understanding that the contemporary nation is not based on the notion of citizenship but it embraces multiple factors and identifications that go beyond the definition and borders of a given country or a given culture. It extends to intercultural interactions, global migration, diasporic translocations and social media interconnections (Cantle, 2013, p. 12). In order to “take a decisive step toward a brighter future” (May, 2019), “a new positive model” must be created (Cantle, 2013, p. 12). The new British “positive model” as advocated by Cantle must be looking to “*our* ways of living *together* in the future” (2013, p. 12). Since the present is far from the expected, the UK must look towards the future where the divisions based upon race and ethnicity in emerging communities are replaced by inter-connections around different identifications and shared goals.

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## CHAPTER SIX

### A DAMSEL IN DISTRESS IN SEARCH OF IDENTITY: ANN RADCLIFFE'S *THE MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO*

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**Abstract:** This chapter examines one of Ann Radcliffe's most popular novels, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) – published at the peak of the popularity of the first stage of Gothic novels – with a view toward its contribution to late-eighteenth century processes which led to the development of the so-called “modern identity”. The distress of the novel's main protagonist in the castle of Udolpho is seen against the formative stage in her life spent in idyllic simplicity of the countryside, where the attitudes of opposition towards urban sophistication and conspicuous consumption are inculcated by her father. Emily's distress after her departure from the safeguards of domesticity is seen as resulting from her first-time contact with the dictatorial type of men, epitomising the darkest aspects of patriarchy. Often wrongly accused of conservative views, Ann Radcliffe reveals herself in this novel as a thoroughly radical writer, departing from the established norms regulating social gender allocations, and propagating new models of both femininity and masculinity which are close to our own, modern understanding of the self.

**Key words:** Ann Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, identity, femininity, masculinity.

Ann Radcliffe was an immensely popular writer in her day, judging not only by the standards of the eighteenth century but even by those of the twenty-first. Her popularity can be measured in terms of the circulation figures her novels reached and of the reading audiences, predominantly female, that she accessed. The publication of her last two most important novels coincided with and greatly contributed to the dramatic “upsurge in Gothic works” in the 1790s, when for almost two decades, between 1788 and 1807, “the Gothic maintain[ed] a market



share of around 30 per cent of novel production, reaching a high point of 38 per cent in 1795” – indeed the year *The Mysteries of Udolpho* was published Gothic novels had reached a “plateau of market dominance” (Miles, 2002, p. 42). Radcliffe’s immense popularity was of course reflected in royalties. She famously received “unprecedented sums of £600 for *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and £800 for *The Italian* (1797)” (Wright, 2016, p. 17). By comparison, almost two decades later the publisher Thomas Egerton offered Jane Austen £110 for the copyright to *Pride and Prejudice* (Fergus, 2005, p. 9).

In the last decade of the eighteenth century Ann Radcliffe enjoyed unquestionable popularity with both readers and critics, the literary establishment placing her “in the front rank of contemporary English fiction” (Miles, 1995, p. 7). Considering the fact that in Britain in the closing decades of the eighteenth century “the social range of ‘literate’ was considerable” (Wahrman, 2004, p. 41), as the growing number of circulating libraries regularly supplied readers with material, the ideas she promulgated in her novels reached vast receptive audiences. Radcliffe tapped into a burgeoning literary form and into an emerging book market, and very effectively responded to the opportunities with which the Gothic novel – or romance as it used to be called in her day – provided female writers: to creatively express themselves on an unprecedented scale in publication history, to voice their opinions, though often anonymously, and to be heard, even if only in the recesses of their readers’ bedrooms and the parlours of their husbands’ country manors. Undoubtedly, the popularity of Gothic fiction makes Ann Radcliffe, together with other first Gothic writers, barometers of cultural and social changes taking place at that time.

The emergence of a substantial number of female novelists, some of whom were also translators, such as Clara Reeve, Eliza Parsons, Anna Laetitia Barbauld, Sophia Lee, and Maria Regina Roche, happened at a historically crucial moment in the redefinition of identity, and therefore their work, and especially the work of Ann Radcliffe, can be seen as witnessing and mirroring these changes, or, because of the range of their appeal, perhaps even significantly though unwittingly contributing to them. The emergence of Gothic novels in the closing decades of the eighteenth century happened at a time when a “distinctive eighteenth-century configuration ... the *ancien régime of identity*”, lost its cultural bearing and a new, radically dissimilar “regime of identity” emerged (Wahrman, 2004, pp. XIII, XIV). It was “a crucial period in ushering in recognizably modern notions of ‘self’” (Wahrman, 2004, p. XVI). Charles Taylor in *Sources of the Self* has famously recognised this period for the formation of “the modern identity,” when notions of self gradually became characterised by “inwardness, freedom, individuality, and being embedded in nature” (2006, p. IX).

## THE MYSTERIES, NOT ONLY OF UDOLPHO

The title of Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* refers to the protracted imprisonment of the main character, Emily, in the villain's eponymous castle of Udolpho in the Apennines. However, this infamous immersion into the fallen "gothic underworld" (Durant, 1982, p. 526) lasts approximately a mere one-fourth of the novel, and, at first glance, the mysteries this confinement is plagued with are, though emotionally disturbing for the heroine, not in any way more significant than others. A situation of a much greater personal import is Emily's discovery of her father's emotional attachment to a lady portrayed in a miniature that bears no resemblance to her mother. Her father's incomprehensible behaviour seriously undermines Emily's identity and makes her doubt both the impeccability of his moral conduct and the legitimacy of her lineage. The reader is encouraged to doubt her parentage in a series of ambiguities which the prim and proper Mrs Radcliffe never voices out loud in the novel. Other persistent mysteries Emily confronts already in the pre-Udolpho stage are the recurring sounds of musical instruments she hears, with which she will be plagued also during the later phases of her peregrinations. Once she flees from Udolpho, she will be brought to the end of her tether by the nocturnal haunting of the chamber of the late Madame de Villeroi, a mystery she will resolve to unravel. All of these disturbing occurrences are as mysterious as the eponymous mysteries of Udolpho, they seem neither more terrible nor more grievous or critical for the main character than those that precede or follow them.

While at Udolpho, Emily hears the same mysterious music she had been hearing before coming from the wings of the castle, and, in fact, though its source long remains unexplained, there are moments when these gentle tones do offer her soothing consolation during her prolonged and unwished-for stay in the Apennines. Eventually, she even reads love and hope of escape into these sounds when she erroneously believes the man she had fallen in love with, Valancourt, to be their producer. Even when Emily faces what is the central mystery of Udolpho, introduced in the celebrated scene when she unveils something that no one had dared to uncover before, a secret connected with the unexplained disappearance of the previous owner, Signiora Laurentini, the emotions provoked in this scene cannot rival those she is filled with when she involuntarily witnesses her father's tears while still in the paradisiacal stage of her life in La Vallée. Though all the conjecture and gossip convince Emily that hidden behind the veil must be Laurentini's mouldering corpse, a tangible metonym for Montoni's murderous capacity, this fact is never confirmed and the incident is never again referred to during Emily's stay at Udolpho. The only measure of its impact is the intensity of her bodily reaction to the sight: in predictable eighteenth-century fashion, she faints. For Emily, the stay at Udolpho is certainly one of prolonged uncertainty

concerning her future, a state of unending anxiety caused by the realisation of her defencelessness and the insecurity of her economic status, but not one decidedly marked with mysteries. Why then are they charged with greater weight if they are, as has been shown above, neither more plentiful nor more intense than those in other parts of the narrative? Why – if we may assume that the reasons were other than commercial – were the mysteries of Udolpho given pride of place in the title of the novel?

## PASTORAL SIMPLICITY AND APPRECIATION FOR THE LOCAL

The first phase of Emily's life, though marked by the deaths of her two brothers, her mother, and finally terminated by the death of her father, is idyllic, spent in "pastoral simplicity" (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 1), one that will later serve her not only as a point of reference in her personal definition of happiness, but also as a starting point to which she will eventually return at the end of the narrative. Early on it is stressed that Emily is brought up in an atmosphere of "conjugal felicity" (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 2), however, for all Radcliffe's attention to the centrality of female experience, evident for example in the narrational focus on Emily's consciousness, the passages that describe her childhood and adolescence present primarily the point of view and the life choices of her father, St. Aubert. For example, he is the one responsible for the family's return from "the gay and ... the busy scenes of the world" to "the scenes of simple nature, to the pure delights of literature, and to the exercise of domestic virtues" (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 1); he looks after Emily's education, while the mother, in line with eighteenth-century expectations, remains a silent and subdued character, eventually erased from the stage by her premature death.

The feature that Emily's parents had in common was their determination to follow the dictates of their hearts when making their marital choices, against the wishes of their families to aggrandise themselves through their matches. St. Aubert had "too nice a sense of honour" to enter into a splendid alliance in marriage in order to make up for the deficiency of his wealth or to succeed "in the intrigues of public affairs" (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 2), and after the death of his father he could marry a woman of his choice. Similarly Emily's mother's decision to marry St. Aubert was "mortifying" to her brother's ambition, "for he had designed that the matrimonial connection she formed should assist him to attain the consequence which he so much desired" (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 11). St. Aubert's qualities, such as "pure taste, simplicity, and moderated wishes, were considered as marks of a weak intellect, and of confined views" (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 11).

From the early stages of the novel the values cherished in the household of Emily's parents are contrasted with those of the rest of their family and acquaintances. St. Aubert teaches his daughter the value of temperance, modera-

tion, and self-command, with the view that “[a]ll excess is vicious” (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 20), whereas the Quesnels, Madame Cheron, the passionate Monsieur de Villeroi and his Italian lover, Signora Laurentini, are all characterised by immorality in their love lives and extravagance in their aesthetic consumer choices. For St. Aubert virtue is associated with a rural existence, respect for tradition, and communion with nature, whereas evil breeds as a consequence of exposure to the world of conspicuous consumption and love for ostentatious display of wealth. In the early stages of the novel Radcliffe very elegantly ridicules blind followers of foreign fashions and their disregard for the local, but also demonstrates the consequences of financial frivolity and lack of prudence for younger generations. Emily’s grandfather’s “liberality, or extravagance” (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 2) resulted in her father having to sell part of the family property to his brother-in-law, Monsieur Quesnel, the epitome of dubious current fashions and tastes. When after the death of her mother, Emily, together with her father, pays him a visit, he announces his intention to extend this ancient mansion in order to build rooms for his servants, “for at present there is not accommodation for a third part of [his] own people” (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 13). Upon their arrival, Emily and St. Aubert are welcome by “a gay Parisian servant,” and they soon notice “frivolous ornaments” on the walls, and other items that denote “the false taste and corrupted sentiments of the present owner” (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 23). Similarly, Madame Cheron, her father’s sister, expatiates “on the splendour of her house,” and is depicted admiring what Emily dubs as “the brilliant nothings” (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 118). Even Valancourt, the man she loves and eventually decides to marry, has a degrading Parisian stint during which he falls for the allures of libertinism and extravagance characteristic of the opportunity-breeding urban environment. Because Radcliffe does not restrict her censure to one age group, but instead depicts representatives of three generations falling prey to excessive passions or conspicuous consumption, she manages to achieve a plausible universality of her vision of both moral integrity and familial relations. Moreover, because concealed beneath a depiction of Gascony in the year 1584 is her contemporary England – or, as Diane Hoeveler has aptly phrased it, “a large social and historical canvas: ‘The Way of the World, Europe, circa 1790’” (1998, p. 97) – Radcliffe’s spatial and temporal departure from her native land is not an exercise in apolitical escapism she has been accused of, but a fictional testimony to her preoccupation with current discourse and affairs. It seems that certain aesthetic leanings in the England of her times which she is exposing in the novel are not much different from those ridiculed by William Hogarth four decades back. For example the engravings opening the *Marriage à la Mode* series (1745) unmask blind admiration of French manners and the aesthetic excesses of rococo interiors in aristocratic manors, while their attention to ostentatious splendour is seen as dangerously infecting their aesthetic imitators, the moneyed merchant middle-classes.

## A NEW MODEL OF FEMININITY AND MASCULINITY

In her study of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Diane Long Hoeveler elaborates on the importance of the epistemology of music in the novel, concluding that “the ability both to produce and to appreciate music indicates a sympathetic and sensitive soul” (1998, p. 87). By analogy, it is possible to speak of the importance of the epistemology of dress. However, whereas music is almost immediately interpreted by the characters – especially by Emily, for whom, as Hoeveler contests, it is “the subjective and feminine equivalent of reason and objective data” (1998, p. 87) – the sartorial metaphor becomes more of a narrational index of a character's worth to be decoded by the readers. During the above-mentioned visit with the Quesnels, Emily is contrasted with other ladies at a dinner party, her aunts, Madame Cheron and Madame Quesnel. The interpretative tool that is used to classify her in this scene is her unawareness of the dictates of contemporary fashion: Emily “knew nothing of Parisian fashions, or Parisian operas; and her modesty, simplicity, and correct manners formed a decided contrast to those of her female companions” (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 24). Such a depiction of Emily's disregard for dress becomes a declaration of her ethical code, and gains the quality of a metonymical antonym of the wantonness, uncultivated frivolity and superficiality of the other ladies. If, as Wollstonecraft pointed out in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), it is part of the culture of misogyny to perceive women as “naturally attentive to their persons” (1999, p. 110) and “fonder of things of show and ornament” (1999, p. 153), Radcliffe seems to be systematically propagating a new model of femininity, and of humanity.

She is also setting forth a typography to be read within the category of men. In her introduction to *The Feminization Debate in Eighteenth-Century England*, E. J. Clery draws an important distinction between “effeminacy” and being “feminized” (2004, p. 9), whereby,

‘feminization’ is reserved strictly for representations that approve or even advocate the acquisition of certain characteristics gendered ‘feminine’: sociability, civility, compassion, domesticity and love of family, the dynamic exercise of the passions and, above all, refinement, the mark of modernity. The ‘feminized’ man is a model of politeness, shaped by his contact with the female sex, full of respect and admiration for moral women, and ably fitted to undertake his heterosexual duties.

‘Effeminacy’ or ‘effeminization’, on the other hand, is employed as the sum of a complex of derogatory ideas also gendered ‘feminine’, including corruption, weakness, cowardice, luxury, immorality and the unbridled play of passions. The ‘effeminate’ man ... takes on the qualities of self-indulgence, wantonness, vanity and hysteria traditionally attributed to women by misogynist rhetoric. (Clery, 2004, pp. 9–10)

If, by the time the novel was written, sexual dimorphism and biological divergence had replaced a Galenic Aristotle-fed one-sex model of sexuality dominant from Antiquity to the Enlightenment, which had seen woman as an incomplete, imperfect man, and ‘woman’ had begun to be “reconceived as a separate and singular sex”, she could then become “the repository of values to which men could aspire” (Clery, 2004, p. 11). Following this distinction, in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* the qualities of the feminised type of men are attributed to Emily’s father, St. Aubert, and his replacement, Valancourt, who never allow their humanity to falter and their sensibility to wane, even though both had fallen into temptation and the snares of Paris in their youth. In the novel the propagation of a ‘feminised’ type of man is translated into creating such male characters who show humane respect for women, who choose appreciation of the domestic not because of their own inadequacy or fear of the public, but because of a knowing defiance of its immoral trappings, men who are not ashamed of their emotionality and weep when unhappy. Hoeveler says these men are “coded as ‘good’, that is, womanly men, who possess ‘feminine’ qualities, who are sensitive, long-suffering, patient, and who appreciate art, literature, and music” (1998, p. 98). The qualities of the second, effeminate type of men are to be seen in the fashionable Quesnel-like spendthrifts, superficial lovers of pretty baubles, the Hogarthian Squanderfields, likely to plunge into decadent libertinism. Frittering away their fortunes on luxurious ornamentation which annuls local tastes and aesthetic tradition, they pursue current vogues and splendour, and their detestation for the provincial and preference for the foreign and the urban impels them to collect estates and contribute to the formation of the class of eighteenth-century cosmopolitan nomads.

However, Radcliffe delineates also a third type of men, which can be called the *ancient régime* one, represented by Montoni and his Italian accomplices. When thrust under the legal guardianship of her aunt, and, upon the latter’s marriage, also that of Montoni, Emily plunges into a distant and unfamiliar territory which clashes with the memories of the values of La Vallée and transforms her into a truly gothic damsel in distress. Distress, however, as Radcliffe makes clear, is not an innate female quality, because being a woman does not make of her a valetudinarian, is not by birth an emotional handicap, but is a state of those women who say “no” to subjection, who object to the politics of ignorance imposed on them. A damsel in distress is a derogatory term which describes the realities of the female condition – perhaps hyperbolised and often supernaturalised in gothic fiction – and her frenzied disagreement with the assumptions of a society that expects female reticence and subservience. To attain these she is best harnessed in a state of permanent ignorance and inanity by cultivating her sensibility and emotionality. As I have argued elsewhere, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* “deftly dramatizes how the practices of the politics of ignorance subsequently turn into effective tools of oppression and how female ignorance is en-

gineered by the widespread technologies of objectification” (Łowczanin, 2015, pp. 106–107). Emily’s distress in Udolpho is not the mere fancy of a hysterical damsel, or “the dream of a distempered imagination” (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 296), but a landscape of nightmares come true when she and her aunt are transported to be disciplined in the confinement of Udolpho and subjected to the psychological and physical violence Montoni resorts to in order to subdue them. In Udolpho Emily experiences a painful awakening from a “state of illusion” (Clery, 1995, p. 120) and learns that brutality can be part of conjugal reality. All she encounters and witnesses there is novel in every respect: the hostility and brutality she experiences, the stories she hears, the crumbling yet overpowering aristocratic grandeur of the architecture she inhabits, the woman she is expected to be, the company of Venetian courtesans and Italian banditti she is expected to join and enjoy; “the characters and circumstances, now passing beneath her eye, excited both terror and surprise” (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 296). That is why when Robert Kiely says of Emily that she “half-creates her own Udolpho” he is speaking half-truths (1973, p. 74).

Emily unravels the first mystery of Udolpho as she learns that a woman can be treated as an article of trade, a fate Montoni designs for her in order to secure her possessions when he intends to marry her off to his friend, count Morano. During a party Montoni throws in Udolpho, she is scorned for her “prudish appearance” and ordered to “wear the most splendid dress she had” (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 311), and while at the table, neither she nor her aunt are expected to engage in conversation. A pretty face and a pretty dress are recognised as the only semiotic markers of femininity, and differences in the characters’ attitudes toward accoutrements are read as significant markers of the self. The more vain and superficial the character, and often also the more vicious, the more attention they pay to appearance and current fashion in dress, architecture, and interior design. Emily does not care for ostentatious display, and what is conspicuous in her dress on this occasion is “[t]he simplicity of a better taste, than Madame Montoni’s” (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 311). The second mystery of Udolpho that Emily unravels is that, paraphrasing Wollstonecraft, in their fondness of dress, women are expected “to please the sex on which they are dependent” (1999, p. 109).

In his discussion of the treatment the eponymous character of Samuel Richardson’s much celebrated novel (1747–1748), *Clarissa Harlowe*, receives from her family in the incidents leading to her elopement with Lovelace, Michael Suarez argues that she is subjected to “patterns of infantilisation” which are made evident especially “in the forms of address directed at her and the perceptions that underlie them” (1996, p. 69). To deprive her of agency, the family “diffuse her power” by “emphasising her childishness and lack of experience” (Suarez, 1996, p. 72). So little recognised as destructive and yet so common was the use of the strategy of infantilisation towards women that Wollstonecraft made it one of the

targets of her reform plan advocated in *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*. Addressing her female readers, she sarcastically apologised for treating them “like rational creatures, instead of flattering their fascinating graces, and viewing them as if they were in a state of perpetual childhood, unable to stand alone” (Wollstonecraft, 1999, p. 73). In his final attempt to make Emily surrender her estates, in an exchange which turns into a true verbal combat, Montoni tries to corner her with threats: “If you are really deluded by an opinion, that you have any right to these estates, at least, do not persist in the error ... Dare my resentment no further, but sign the papers.” But Emily is not intimidated and answers sharply: “If the lands are yours by law, you certainly may possess them, without my interference, or my consent” (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 393). Her unbaffled response cleverly reduces the problem to a rational argument and with one stroke defeats the feebleness and falsity of his claim and logic. Montoni knows Emily is his intellectual rival, there is nothing more he can do but assert her intellectual incapacity and unreliability by reducing her status: “‘I will have no more argument’, said Montoni, with a look that made her tremble. ‘What had I but trouble to expect, when I condescended to reason with a baby’” (Radcliffe, 1992, pp. 393–394).

Further immersion into the destructive consequences of masculine power takes place when, during Emily’s flight from Udolpho with her two guides, Bertrand and Ugo, she hears one of them relate a story of his former master, Signor Orsino. He had fallen in love with a woman who was, however, “perverse enough” to prefer another man, even though Orsino “tried to talk reason to her.” When despite his continuous efforts “nothing would bring her to reason” (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 404), and against the will of her unwanted suitor she dared to marry the man of her choice, Orsino determined to attack the couple and kill the woman’s husband. Since the account is largely a man-to-man talk which Emily overhears, it not only offers her a shocking insight into the two ruffians’ morality and their unwavering support for the assassin’s right “to have justice done at once, without more ado” and without going “to law” (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 404), but also makes her realise the prevalence of masculine presumptions of obligatory feminine obedience, permeating all spheres of society, from aristocracy to simple folk. Moreover, the scene illustrates the dominance of the devastating assumptions of lack of reasoning abilities in women when they dare to oppose a man’s will. Bertrand comments on the woman’s refusal to have anything to do with his master Orsino: “she had not wit enough even to tell him she liked him, as I heard, but the contrary, for she used to say, from the first, she never meant to have him” (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 404). Her refusal to comply with the will of the man she does not love automatically places her outside reason, is taken for “ill usage”, and is seen as the direct cause of the tragedy inflicted upon her. Bertrand’s comment is that “she might thank herself for what happened” (Radcliffe, 1992, p. 405).



## CONCLUSION

The negative juxtaposition sketched above illustrates a distinction between the brutal Montoni-Orsino type of men, for whom a woman is a visual signifier of property, an object devoid of reason he will not hesitate to subject and immobilise in order to have his way, and the St. Aubert-Valancourt type of civil men of feeling, with whom a woman does not have to “precariously seek safety and some affirmation of selfhood” (Chaplin, 2014, p. 205), but for whom a fair attitude to the fair sex is part of an index of humanity.

Emily's stay at Udolpho exposes her to the dread of domestic horror from the hands of the first type, a horror that “contracts, freezes and nearly annihilates”. These are the mysteries of the world that, together with the novel's numerous readers, she is given a chance to experience. She witnesses scenes of domestic violence and coercion from the hands of sophisticated gentlemen, and instances of similar tyranny from uncouth brutes because a voracious disrespect for ‘the weaker sex’ runs right through all the layers of society. Therefore in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* Radcliffe proposes a radical redefinition of masculine and feminine identities, and seems to systematically redefine their social roles. The foundations of modern identity she is promulgating are anchored in the quietness of domesticity and rural simplicity, and entail mutual understanding and respect, but also self-improvement to which both men and women are encouraged. Viewed from this perspective, “mother” Radcliffe is not as conservative and reactionary as critics are accustomed to showing her.

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

### 'OPEN TO NEGOTIATIONS, LONG, GENEROUS': LITERARY EXPRESSIONS OF INTERCULTURALISM: IRISH WOMEN POETS IN AN INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE WITH THE AMERICAN POETRY

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**Abstract:** When referring to Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital, one realises that this concept embraces not only (its "*embodied, objectified and institutionalised*" form, as distinguished by Bourdieu) culturally recognised and valued patterns, but also their meaningful exchanges between different cultures. In "The Forms of Capital", Bourdieu states: "the most powerful principle of the symbolic efficacy of cultural capital no doubt lies in the logic of its transmission....in the system of reproduction strategies" [1986, p. 246]. With this in mind, interculturalism can be realised on many levels: one of them is when the cultural capital of one country becomes transformed, processed and re-created in a dialogic way via the prism of another country's perspective. The following article examines literary examples of intercultural transmission/exchange that may take different forms: the literary dialogue with texts acknowledged as the meaningful cultural capital (i.e. Plath, Frost, and Lowell etc.), the symbolic rendering of the cultural capital's attributes, the first-hand experience of the valued "foreign" cultural representations, the inter-cultural mediation through the third party media coverage.

**Key words:** contemporary Irish women's poetry, American poetry, cultural capital, Pierre Bourdieu.

In his canonical monograph, *Language and Symbolic Power*, Bourdieu advocates that:

...the social world can be represented in the form of a (multi-dimensional) space constructed on the basis of principles of differentiation or distribution constituted by the set of properties active in the social universe under consideration, that is, able to confer force or power on their possessor in that universe (1991, p. 229)

The social space is also referred to as “a field of forces” whose value can be expressed in the social capital, otherwise identified as “distinction” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 238). As a logical extension of that fact this capital is to be distributed, exchanged and circulated. Consequently, Bourdieu explains that “the structure of the social field is defined at each moment by the structure of the distribution of capital and the profits characteristic of the different particular fields” (1991, p. 242). What is more, he stresses that the value of the utterance cannot be determined beyond the “marketable” fields of its production and power relations (Bourdieu, 1991, pp. 67–69)<sup>1</sup>. In the name of “symbolic exchanges,” Bourdieu encourages to abandon the juxtaposition between the economy and cultural discourse (1991, p. 37). In “The Forms of Capital”, Bourdieu notices that:

The social world is accumulated history, and if it is not to be reduced to discontinuous series of instantaneous mechanical equilibria, between agents that are treated as interchangeable particles, one must reintroduce it into the motion of capital, and with it, accumulation and all its effects (1986, p. 241)

Overall, cultural capital constitutes one of the major realisations of this concept. What is more, its classification can be further subdivided into three types, depending upon their ways of participation in the social field. Bourdieu explains the threefold categorisation of cultural capital as follows:

Cultural capital can exist in three forms: in the *embodied* state, i.e. in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body, in the *objectified* state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.), which are the trace or realisation of theories, or critiques of these theories, problematics, etc., and in the *institutionalized* state, a form of objectification... (1986, p. 243)

As rightly noticed by Bourdieu, the borders between various forms of cultural capital frequently overlap: i.e. a work of art can first exist in its embodied, conceptual form, then, when it is transferred onto the paper or canvas, etc. it is “transmittable in its materiality” (1986, p. 246) and then, it could undergo an institutionalised process, or even be turned into a form of the economic capital

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<sup>1</sup> Bourdieu goes even further than that, claiming that “all speech is produced for and through the market to which it owes its existence and its most specific properties” (1991, p. 76).

when it is sold or purchased (1986, pp. 246–248). Furthermore, the cultural capital may become, as Bourdieu calls it, “a weapon” (1986, p. 247) employed by various conflicted forces in the symbolic field. It happens because the “distribution of the different types and subtypes of capital at a given moment in time represents the immanent structure of the social world” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 242).

Bourdieu’s theory has inspired contemporary intercultural discourse where the main emphasis is put on the dialogic exchange of the cultural capital and its mutual interrelation. Bourdieu, himself, has admitted that “the reproduction of the social capital presupposes an unceasing effort of sociability, a continuous series of exchanges in which recognition is endlessly affirmed and reaffirmed” (1986, p. 250). With regard to this paper, “America”, rendered in various manifestations of cultural capital (poetry, painting, architecture, attitudes, values etc.) can become the starting point not only for the reproduction of this capital in Irish poetry but also its critical redefinition and re-examination.

In Cairtriona O’Reilly’s poem, “An Idea of Iowa”, included in the third volume *Geis* (2015), the titular American state exists as a function of the speaker’s *habitus* rather than solely as the persona’s state of mind. According to Bourdieu, the non-material form of cultural capital is transformed into one’s *habitus* – “an integral part of a person” (1986, pp. 244–245). Bourdieu’s notion of *habitus* signifies “a set of dispositions that incline agents to act and react in certain ways. The dispositions generate practices, perceptions and attitudes” (Thompson, 1991, p. 12). Webb, Schirato and Danaher argue that *habitus* is acquired from one’s cultural and historical background and it expresses one’s reactions to cultural patterns, depending upon one’s location in this field (2002, pp. 36–37). Similarly, Swartz argues that “on one hand *habitus* can be read as a way of conceptualizing culture as practice, on another level it associates practice with habit” (1997, p. 115), it “represents a sort of deep-structuring cultural matrix that generates self-fulfilling prophesies” (1997, p. 104). In “An Idea of Iowa”, O’Reilly reads an imagined place through her dispositions and cultural patterns to arrive at the conclusion that is in agreement with her own cultural narration. What is more, “Iowa” can be perceived as a form of the embodied cultural capital, due to the meaning (even if ironic) that the speaker attributes to this concept.

According to Andrewes, the state Iowa is named after the Native American designation “Kiowa”, signifying “This is the place” (1896, pp. 466–468) although some earlier (today contested) sources suggest, i.e. “Drowsy One” (Hildreth) or “‘dusty nose’ or ‘dirty face’” (Schoolcraft) (Andrewes, 1896, p. 465). The present-day American state symbols online platform provides a different origin: its designation is claimed to be derived from the Sioux people: Iowa(y)s who called the river after their tribe. The persona in O’Reilly’s alliterated “An **I**dea of **I**owa” asks rhetorically:

Who in their bleakest hour has not considered Iowa?  
We live in a place where everything leans in  
as if to confide in us, and learn, too late, it is a trick:  
the frieze, the whole entablature must topple,  
as the drunk on the bus, in the course of his life story  
anooints us with cidery spittle, as the ash  
from a thousand fag-end sunsets settles on us.

(2015, p. 53)

Geographically specific as the aforementioned America's region might be, the female voice constructs an imaginary location which she visits in her mind to find solace during "the bleakest hour". The initial, ironic rhetorical question sets the mood for the whole narrative: people who consider Iowa as their consolation in the worst of times, most likely are not as numerous as the persona maintains. After mocking, yet inclusive commencement, the female voice in "An Idea of Iowa" invites readers to accompany her in her journey.

O'Reilly's speaker begins her argument, complaining in a cliché, ostentatious media-report way "**we** live in a world when..." Her protest about the contemporary experience of a global reality concerns the invasion of the private space, establishing (unwanted) intimacy and shortening the individual distance. The simile – the shared experience of an uncomfortable journey on a crowded, public means of transportation – establishes a point of the comparative reference in the narrative. The objective correlative evokes the sensation of an intoxicated intruder, bending over one's shoulder, whose drunken breath attacks one's senses from behind one's back. The mutual (world-wide) trip and its feared familiarity ("confide in us") are perceived by the speaker as incursion. The illusive appeal of closeness resembles a façade of the feeble construction about to collapse. The image of entablature is derived from the Greek classical architecture, signifying the horizontal part of the column, frieze being a middle section of it. The high ancient culture is counteracted with the low modern discourse: see a drunkard losing balance in the vehicle that lurched forward with abruptness. The poem's diction uplifts the register by the Middle English French-based "anoint", to plummet again with the stench of the alcoholic, acidic saliva. The uncanny sensation of the spit sprinkled on the bus passengers gets reinforced with the cigarette's ash falling on them. The alliterated "sunset settles on us", which elevates the image – does not win with the vulgarity of "a thousand fag-ends". Yet again, the idea of unwanted contact and invasion upon one's private and bodily space re-emerges in the narrative's surface. It is then that the persona in "An Idea of Iowa" articulates her argument of contrast:

But Iowa. A darkening indigo, shimmer above tracts of corn,  
 yellow as far as the eye can see, yellow as the sun  
 in a child's first drawing, as the cere of the bald eagle  
 hanging with locked wings on thermals.  
 Iowa is rising. Free of the deadweight of ice,  
 it gains an inch a year, a vast loaf of proving.  
 Who first thought of it? (Indian grass, prairie moonwort  
 The Pleistocene snail? A place where wars are fought for honey?)  
 (2015, p. 53)

The sound-based text operates to a large extent around the diphthong “aI.” From the list of American states, one can observe that IOWA is the only state abbreviated with two vowels (IA). In O'Reilly's poem, the moment of escape into the soothing, familiar sound pattern (“but Iowa”) is conjured by the speaker. In the dream-like, corn state, even the ordinary blue colour acquires the sophisticated hue of indigo, the onomatopoeic phrase “shimmer above tracts of corn” echoes comfortably in the clichéd, accustomed way, comparable to the dull elevator music. At that moment, the poem's textual reality gets covered in the overwhelming, omnipresent, hallucinogenic Coldplay-like “Yellow”. Embryonic and elemental – the yolky image oscillates between pathos and the ridicule: readers are zooming on the waxy spot on the bird's bill: the American bald eagle.

The idea that unlike other locations, Iowa “ascends” above the sea level needs to be verified in its accuracy. According to the speaker, when icebergs melt in an apocalyptic way, Iowa surfaces from this doomsday discourse. Ironically, the persona appears to argue that Iowa with its alleged expansion is supposed to be a counterpoint not only to the emotional but the global climactic crisis. The speaker wittily claims that some animal species are attributed with the awareness of this “fact” when establishing their habitat in the region. What is more “Indian grass, prairie moonwort, The Pleistocene snail?” – they all have the variation of “ia” (IA) in them. It needs clarifying that not all these species are either nearly extinct or indigenous to the state of Iowa. The Midwest Region Endangered Species faculty enlists the Iowa Pleistocene snail as a protected animal, and indeed, the molluscs are related predominantly to this region. Iowa prairie moonwort is similarly relatively rare, whereas the Indian grass seems quite common in other areas of America as well. Furthermore, in O'Reilly's poem, the intentional historical “mistake” warns us not to take the narrative as the reliable source of scientific knowledge. “Honey War” was a territorial and not “honey” conflict between Iowa and Missouri, named after an incident (1839) in which some trees with beehives were cut to claim Missouri's right to the land (Everett, 2008, pp. 283–284).



Named for a people asleep, a people with dusty faces,  
even its hills are so much dust: loess, the millennial  
accumulation of cracked flood-plains; winds.  
(2015, p. 53)

After the accolade to Iowa, the speaker focuses on the wind-blown sedimentation, and then, the image of dusty-faced people during their shared journey re-surfaces. The layers of soil, like layers of meaning are inscribed into rocks and plains. In a circular way, faces covered in dust evoke associations with the passengers, coated in the cigarette ash, on the local Irish bus. On the other hand, historically, as reminded by Andrewes after Schoolcraft, the appellation “dusty nose” comes “from the fact that they first settled near the mouth of a river where there were sand-bars and the wind blew wind and sand in their faces” (1896, p. 465). On an intertextual level, T. S. Eliot’s “Ash Wednesday” and “Hollow People” are brought to mind as well.

“The Poem for Dillon with North Carolina in It” is included in *Geomantic* by Paula Meehan (2016). Like Morrissey’s “Iowa”, Meehan’s “North Carolina” is rendered via the catalogue of its fauna, mostly indigenous to this region. Similarly, the narrative claims to be composed when the speaker has felt vulnerable (“my broken face”), and maybe that is why she focuses entirely on the signs of destruction in the natural world. The textual (natural) world on the verge of extinction needs to be preserved at least as a written record before it disappears for good. The poem’s ostensible key appears to be the American flag colours. However, sound configurations seem equally intricate: the poet consciously breaks the vowel sequence: “e / o” in single-syllable mirrored words “Red fox and red wolf” when “o” is raised to /ʊ/ and fronted in “deer”. The rhyming pattern of “deer / fear” meets half-way through “rattler / rare”. The auditory reverberations imitate the snake’s warning sounds. The elliptical suspension of “rare” might suggest data processing problems with verbal equivalents fading away (“they slither through memory’s field”). The images “fixed in print” seem to echo Ted Hughes’s “Thought Fox”.

After the slammed doors the door opening  
to my broken face; the window  
that gave onto darkness engulfing  
your humid subtropical biome.  
Red fox and red wolf and white-tailed deer.  
Cornsake, milksake, diamond back rattler,  
the copperhead you taught me to fear –  
they slither through memory’s field: rare,  
heraldic, set now and fixed in print.  
(2016, p. 82)

Eavan Boland's volume *The Lost Land* (1998) draws upon the poet's first-hand experience of American cultural capital, partly assimilated by the speaker, and partly still estranged<sup>2</sup>. The speaker in "Home" witnesses October gathering of multitudes of monarch butterflies "in a grove of eucalyptus", "in southern California" (Boland, 1998, p. 35). This only seemingly natural phenomenon can be enlisted as the part of cultural capital, as it exists in the symbolic, mind-inspiring dimension as much as in the biological one. Monarch butterflies tend to return to the very same habitat regularly (U.S. Forest Service, 2008, p. 5). It could explain why Boland's speaker defines this place as "Home". According to U.S. Forest Service, the butterfly's life lasts only about 2–5 weeks, forms that over winter can live up to 9 months (2008, p. 3). What is more, monarchs tend to choose trees (i.e. firs, pines or cedars) that guarantee them much needed warmth and moistness (U.S. Forest Service, 2008, p. 5). In her poem "Home", Boland frequently employs enjambment, leaving the words "suspended" in the air, like winged insects. The one-word sentences tend to accumulate and then "cluster", as if mimicking butterflies' surviving strategies. The speaker in "Home" claims:

Every leaf was covered and ended in  
a fluttering struggle.  
Atmosphere. Ocean. Oxygen and dust  
were altered by their purposes:  
They had changed the trees to iron.  
They were rust.

(1998, p. 35)

The real-life image of this extensive relocation is much less romanticised than its commonplace vision. "The fluttering struggle" is not just the race for the location and food but for the survival of the trees upon which butterflies roost. Trees occupied by monarchs, year after year, dwindle. Butterflies tend to cluster, and their masses on a tree can damage it or break branches (U.S. Forest Service, 2008, p. 4). In Boland's poem, the imagery of decay is rendered in the colour-marked deterioration from iron to rust (see the copperish orange and black wings). The process of monarch's arrival into their selected habitat seems to resemble the chemical corrosion, as related by the speaker: "Atmosphere. Ocean. Oxygen and dust / were altered by their purposes". Not only trees "corrode"

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<sup>2</sup> Since 1996, Eavan Boland has lectured and worked as a tenured professor at the Stanford University, California.

under the burden of seemingly weightless insects, the textual perpetuity depletes the vision, which, repeated again and again, loses its meaning<sup>3</sup>.

Mary O'Donnell's cycle "New York Days", from the collection *The Place of Miracles*, is narrated from a down-to-earth perspective of "a mesmerised [Irish] country-woman" persona who looks at America with awe but not without a dose of an ironic distance. As in *Synecdoche, New York* (directed by Charlie Kaufman), the city seems to stand for the whole of the American cultural heritage. This perspective appears to empower the speaking voice (see "the rising of the self") enough to confront some ("old familiar") dilemmas that are difficult to reconcile. The persona in "New York Days" admits:

....On Times Square,  
I stand like any mesmerised country-woman,  
then comes that old familiar rising of the self  
from all that keeps me in my place,  
against all that instructs on how to live.

(2005, p. 182)

In the second part of "New York Days", the speaker becomes a keen observer, contemplating buildings' proportions, their symmetry, spatial arrangement and symbolic dimension. The section opens with the personification of edifices, depicted here as endowed with the human agency, perceived as both dynamic and visionary (see "rush and dream"). The solidity of buildings is contrasted with their insubstantial nature: the extended phrases are constructions where the first element is solid in structure and the latter seems to be airy, i.e. "bolts of clouds" or "blocks of light." The atmospheric element is rendered as "deferred" and, then, qualified with the heaviness of the marble. Moreover, the preposition "down" weighs on the syntactical components heavily like the gravity force. The negative space (in the architectural terminology) denotes another paradoxical phenomenon: the area around an object takes its own creative form, apart from being merely the shapeless background. The female voice in "New York Days" comments:

These buildings rush and dream, trailing bolts  
of cloud from high plateaux. Blocks of light  
are suspended like marble down the perspective  
of Avenues, negative space is perfection  
of the whole, air and colour nudge into every angle,

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<sup>3</sup> For the postcolonial reading of the poem, see K. Poloczec's (2008), "Whose Colony?" – *Irish Women Poets and Postcolonialism*. In M. Cieślak, A. Rasmus (Eds.), *PASE: Studies in Literature and Culture* (pp. 330–331). Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego.

precise, as the high regal office plummets then widens  
to street level, laying weight and dynamic deeper  
into every storey, torso to hips and hips to feet  
that grip the earth. A lesson in standing firm.

(2005, p. 181)

O'Donnell's speaker challenges the symbolic value of the dominant arrangement of the public space, focusing, instead, on the relations presented as contextual. The persona in "New York Days" suggests that the space around Avenues deserves at least equal attention in comparison to the widely recognised silhouettes of plate and glass edifices. The oxymoronic phrase that something "negative" – can be ideal, flawless – consistently builds the speaker's argument of reversing the viewer's perspective. The poem's composition, like the organisation of the contemplated space, is marked by precision. Volatile "air and colour" seem to move purposefully according to the will of the designer. The majestic office block signifies the well-shaped body whose weight is harmoniously distributed upon lower limbs, carrying the load of its sturdiness. In contrast to this grandeur ["time to ornament the block-work of a second floor" (2005, p. 181), O'Donnell's speaker appreciates the amateur's drawings that break the regularity and excellence of the professional design ["some flapper-boy ensured that things/ were more than simply lined and straight" (2005, p. 181)]. The female voice comments:

3.

In MoMA, we search the Jackson Pollock  
for hidden screws and buttons, the sheer nerve  
of teasing concealment – cigarettes, dimes  
knotted in a texture of black, red, titanium,  
a wormery of paint. He must have known  
what held the world together was a matter  
of small things: things that tighten, that close,  
small change that makes the difference to our work.

(2005, pp. 181–182)

"The country-woman" in O'Donnell's "New York Days" does not claim to be an art critic but a person who appreciates "misconstrued aesthetics at odds with taught beauty" (2005, p. 182). In Pollock's paintings, she admires the connection of artworks with reality and everyday objects: "the sheer nerve / of teasing concealment." The speaker's definition of art embraces the materiality of "things that tighten, that close, small change that makes the difference." These frequently overlooked or underestimated mundane devices keep the larger, more impressive constructions in place. In the persona's view, regardless of its trade-

marked abstraction, Pollock's art seems to be rooted in experience and "joined together" by its relation to the thingness of the world. After leaving the museum, the speaker's performative repetition of the "small things" ritual ["Outside again, I light up and smoke, undo / a button, finger loose change in my pocket," (O'Donnell, 2005, p. 182)] is her tribute paid to Pollock, and her individual way of re-affirming this cultural capital. Referring to the poetic language, Bourdieu notices that "connotation refers to the singularity of individual experiences...constituted in a socially characterized relation to which the recipients bring the diversity of their instruments of symbolic appropriation" (1991, p. 39). O'Donnell's speaker argues:

....I must face down the congenial  
root, land, suburb, parish, home....  
....If I were male  
I'd maybe drop my 'home disputes', then  
hit the streets 'to cruise for prostitutes', like Lowell  
talking sense. But women just come home,  
and now like some choleric Kathleen I'll cross the foam  
and do the best I can with the compartments  
of my life,...

(2005, p. 184)

The final part of the cycle, drawing upon Lowell's "To Speak of Woe That Is in Marriage", seems to disagree with a lighter mood of the section. At first glance, Lowell's claustrophobic poem is saturated with nothing more but apprehension and solitude. The wife (the speaking voice) who feels humiliated that her husband prefers the company of prostitutes, at the same time, seems relieved when he is not at home. The spouses' presence only escalates her discomfort and anxiety. O'Donnell's "beat" ("the pulse of love **beat** true, eternal and good") might echo Lowell's ambience of the pathological vicious circle. Nonetheless, "New York Days" cycle, even in its ending, transcends the hopelessness of Lowell's internal monologue. It is worth noting though that critics suggest that apart from "suppressed violence" (Axelrod, 1978, p. 123), Lowell's poem might have some self-ironic tropes for interpretation:

Lowell makes Hardwick a sympathetic character, though the title derived from *The Wife of Bath* and a note of self-righteousness within the poem itself allow for the possibility of irony. "To Speak of Woe" portrays a maniacal Lowell "free-lancing out along the razor's edge". This madness is primarily personal...but it also carries the failure of the entire social tradition... and a political system that has achieved only tranquilization at home and "agonizing reappraisals" abroad.

(Axelrod, 1978, pp. 123–124)

In contrast to the intimidated female speaker in Lowell's poem, O'Donnell creates a sharp, Irish, "country-woman" persona who is far from being docile. "Choleric Kathleen" does not dread to take control over her ex-patriot fate and she confronts boldly the challenges of "root, land, suburb, parish, home." Needless to add, this identitarian heritage does "stall over her like an elephant" (2017, p. 81) but "choleric Kathleen" does not pretend that an elephant is not present in the room.

As shown, in "New York Days", the intertextual context of a poem within the poem creates a dialogic, an intercultural space where the cultural capital of one country is re-defined via the perspective of another. The poems by Sinéad Morrissey and Paula Meehan, analysed below, function in a similar manner. Morrissey's "Driving Alone on a Snowy Evening" is written after "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" by Robert Frost. Morrissey has used Frost's motto's in her other poems as well (i.e. "Reversal"), however, in this case, the Irish poet goes even further: she enters a polemic dialogue with Frost's canonical text. The deliberate structural resemblance leads to intentional repetitions and the regular rhyming pattern. Like Frost, Morrissey retains a four stanza regular construction, keeping the rhymes but selecting her own, altered recurrent refrain: "The heart still beats *repeat repeat*./ The heart still beats *repeat repeat*". The female speaking voice admits:

There is no reason that I know  
To go on waking, eating, so  
I turn the urgent wipers off  
And watch the screen sift up with snow.

(2005, p. 43)

The location in "Driving Alone on a Snowy Evening" is perceptibly modern: instead of an American village or local woods, it is set on the (post) Celtic Tiger motorway in the dense (sic) Irish snow. Morrissey's poem, though, does not meditate about the actuality of suicide but about the conceivability of death. "Those inward, ticking moments when / The seduction of stopping obliterates fear" are the situations when one does not cross the line but allows the potentiality to enter. The persona's reasoning mind evokes the catalogue of "rational" reasons that other people could raise after her death ["emptiness, despair, / Disease in the wings, a failed career" (2005, p. 43)]. Morrissey's speaker decides to renounce agency, leaving her life / death options to sheer chance. Despite employing the word: "choice" ("The choice of crash I leave to fate") the speaker, paradoxically, rules out *a priori* a personal decision taken by her intentionally. On one hand, it releases the female voice from the burden of taking the ultimate step and assuming responsibility for her actions. On the other hand, however, the persona deliberately puts her life to unnecessary danger; despite the blizzard, she

deactivates the heavy snow wipers and resigns from reducing speed or putting on the brakes. When referring to Frost, one might say that the speaker “stops,” and she “puts on hold,” her self-preservation instinct and the life drive. Frost’s biographer, Hart claims that the hypothetical act described in “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” could be life-threatening and nearly suicidal: referring to New Hampshire woods, he argues that “If the man on the sleigh were to wander into the woods without proper survival gear, he would quickly freeze to death” (Hart, 2017, p. 123).

In Morrissey’s poem, the appositional syntactical word order appears to be deeply Frostian. With short, non-complex sentences, the text reads deceptively effortlessly, as if it were a child’s nursery rhyme, not a death-wish narrative. Morrissey has learnt from Frost to preserve the purity of structure, the clarity of vision, she writes with no redundant embellishments. Her poem is sterile, winter-cold as the *post-mortem* autopsy. “Driving Alone on a Snowy Evening” seems to be free of despair or even of Plathian, performative aspect. Morrissey’s speaker declares:

The car purrs on. I do not brake.  
The choice of crash I leave to fate.  
A tree, a bridge, a railway line.  
Behind the brightness dark shapes wait.  
(2005, p. 43)

The last stanza qualifies the actuality of the presented vision, as in the persona’s room, the ceiling appears to merge with snow. Was the female voice imagining the near-death scene in the comfort of her own home? Or was she located in the hospital, looking at the ceiling and the white sheet in the infirmary? After the original, Morrissey preserves the final line’s repetition. Bloom argues that Frost’s reiteration “gives the phrase a sombre cadence and enforces its figurative meaning: the speaker has to travel on the road that evening and also far to go in his life’s travel and travail before the sleep of death” (1999, p. 64). The speaker in “Driving Alone on a Snowy Evening” concludes her argument on a dissimilar note:

The snow and ceiling kiss, then meet.  
The view’s as white as a winding sheet.  
The heart still beats *repeat repeat*.  
The heart still beats *repeat repeat*.  
(2005, p. 43)

Morrissey’s speaker differs from Frost’s persona who declares firmly in protest: “But I have promises to keep / And miles to go before I sleep, / And miles to go before I sleep” (Astley, 2002, p. 73). In “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening”,

the male speaking voice takes an autonomous decision resulting from the sense of commitment. In Morrissey's "Driving Alone on a Snowy Evening," being alive becomes a function of continual, involuntary heart contractions. They appear to happen as if irrespective, or even against the speaker's will. Once again Morrissey's persona's agency seems to be qualified in the argument. To some extent, the resignation from the free will is what defines this text. Bloom in his reading of Frost's poem stresses its elusive character:

"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"...teases us with a near-nihilism, and then reaccepts the world of continuities and obligations, whose emblem is the tingle of harness bells. Tempted by the dark loneliness of deep woods, share in the easy sweep of the wind and snow fall, intimating a solitary quest where can be no promises....Frost observed that the poem was a momentary stay against confusion.

(1999, p. 10)

In Paula Meehan's collection *Dharmakaya* (2000), the poem "Swallows and Willows" enters an intercultural dialogue with Sylvia Plath's "The Jailer". In Meehan's poem, the female juvenile student is punished for socialising with "the curly headed green eyed boy." While being kept in detention, the pupil is made to copy hundred times, five lines from a poem of her choice. Despite being shamed by the teacher, the female speaker does not recall pondering about "her ruined reputation" but she regrets not being able to enjoy a sunny day outdoors: "swallows / and willows and sun on the river" (2000, p. 53). The teacher's speech with a clear, sadistic narrative twist, builds up an elaborate argument, gradually intensifying the punitive tension. It goes on and on for several lines, creating absurd, protracted, Monty-Python like account of the symbolic violence exerted upon a disobedient schoolgirl:

Write out, let me see,  
a verse of a poem. Any  
verse of your choice,  
but longer than a quatrain,  
five lines at least.  
A hundred times.

(2000, p. 53)

The pupil, yet, outwits the master and fights fire with the fire; she employs the same medium to subvert the teacher's alleged authority. When restricted against her will and forced to do the pointless task, the persona protests with a poem about confinement:



from *The Jailer* (underlined three times)

by Sylvia Plath

*I imagine him*

*Impotent as distant thunder,*

*In whose shadow I have eaten my ghost ration.*

*I wish him dead or away.*

*That, it seems, is the impossibility.*

(2000, p. 53)

Plath's poem adds an intertextual dimension to the context of a young female persona who rebels against being subjected to the senseless autocracy. Her statement can be expressed in the uncited line from Plath's "The Jailer": "I am myself. That is not enough" (1992, p. 226). The pupil in "Swallows and Willows" admits ironically about her punishment: "I was neat at first, maybe / neat to the tenth line" (2000, p. 53). Her defiant selection of the poetic material, adequate to the situation, is spitefully commented upon by a teacher: "'I meant a verse from a *set text*,'" emphasis original (2000, p. 53). Plath's poem does not qualify as a "proper" penalty because it does not come from the censored material. Nonetheless, the symbolic violence cuts both ways: the teacher's self-usurped supremacy is exposed as illegitimate ("*dead or away*"), he can neither control the speaker ("*Impotent as distant thunder*") nor feed her intellectual hunger ("*In whose shadow I have eaten my ghost ration*").

According to Bourdieu, some professions (i.e. teachers) rely entirely upon the "delegated capital of...authority...the product of a limited and provisional transfer...held and controlled by the institution" (1991, p. 194). Therefore, it is not given to them permanently or unconditionally. As "authorised representatives" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 111), they can lose this capital in the case of "usurpation which consists in the fact of asserting that one is capable of speaking *in the name of*" the institution that one represents (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 212). Comparably to a politician, the teacher's capital and their symbolic power rests upon "credit and credibility, exists only and through representation, in and through trust, belief and obedience" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 192). In the case of Meehan's narrative, this capital was wasted because the "authorised representative" lost his credentials by displaying ignorance and malice. The persona comments:

I sat at the edge of his class

right into summer exams

sulky, and lonely, and cruel.

(2000, p. 53)

In “Swallows and Willows”, the sound in “set” and “sat” is repeated in the next line. The exposure of the alleged authority’s true weakness affected the speaker herself (see “sulky, and lonely, and cruel”). In this way, Meehan’s poem seems to expose what Alvarez captures about Plath as “an underlying sense of violent unease” (1974, p. 433), when the persona discovers “roots of her own inner violence” (1974, p. 435).

Similarly to Boland, Vona Groarke lectured in the United States of America. “An American Jay” refers to the years when Groarke taught in the suburbs of Philadelphia and North Carolina. The poem begins when the female voice is preparing her evening poetry classes. “An American Jay” revolves around the latent tension between attitudes of the persona’s students and her tutoring expectations. This conflict is further extended upon the English versus American cultural capital, the popular and high culture, and the generation gap in general.

For the speaker’s children, the American cultural capital seems to be expressed in the visually attractive, marketable content and TV commercials [“ads for the new Hummer / dealership on Silas or Larry Cobalts’s Rent’s-a-Wreck / or the pre-Thanksgiving clear-out at K-Mart” (Groarke, 2009, p. 16)]. In an (self) ironic contrast, the stereotypical Irish or British Isles family abroad embrace their “classic” BBC television series and soap operas [“an Anglophile mid-morning with the Kumars / or *All Creatures Great and Small* or *The Royle Family* or any other one of a hundred ways to fritter a tea-break” (2009, p. 16)]. Nonetheless, regardless of cultural clichés, the persona in “An American Jay” is eagerly anticipating a television programme about William Carlos Williams and his poetic masterpiece (“Queen-Anne’s-Lace”). Williams’ text and its effect upon the speaker constitute the central part of the narrative. The female voice in “An American Jay” claims:

tense of wheatfields in Ohio, or plain-speak in Kansas  
can pull us away from a pre-paid, half-hour feature  
on William Carlos Williams reading ‘Queen Anne’s  
Lace’, a recording that sheds decades and darkness  
as ripe as this Fall’s haws or quinces  
left to rot on the ground for lack of a crew to harvest  
even this sound-bite....

(2009, p. 16)

Television academics (“a crew to harvest” poetic output “left to rot” on the cultural field) who discuss Williams’ works, come to the speaker as disappointment, because instead of analysing his poetry, they compete with each other for attention, engage in personal disputes and name-dropping. The persona in “An American Jay” seems to be put off by this show of self-promotion and scholarly

contest ("Two experts pull rank....They're at it hammer and tongs, spite and rancour / name-calling, the works"). Being "authorised" guardians of the cultural capital, academics have used the credit to build their own personal capital upon it.

Regardless of the unsatisfactory professionals' commentaries, the wild carrot and its unblemished white flowers begin to grow inside Groarke's narrative. As written by Williams, "whole field is a / white desire /empty, a single stem / a cluster, flower by flower" (1986, p. 162). Rozaitis argues that "desire [gets] re-enacted in the 'field' of the poem as it is in the 'field' of wild carrot and on the field of Floss' body" (1997, p. 204). Williams' sensuous rendering of physical and emotional attraction [embodied by his wife (Rozaitis, 1997, p. 202) via the botanical image] contrasts with the Groarke's persona's own merry-go-round "song of desire" that makes her lose the balance. The female speaker's drive, however, is not planted in the natural metaphors, like in the case of Williams, but it operates on rather artificial, mechanical ("a wound-up hummingbird or jay") and cultural (see the funfair and the carousel) representations.

The **funfair** image is echoed in the "good build-up, **fanfare** / and blow, Keats and Goldsmith, the full absurd ballet / of merciless broads, mad dogs and Englishmen" (Groarke, 2009, p. 17). Groarke's persona self-ironically views herself as a noble, underappreciated educator who persists, against all odds, in unremitting efforts to motivate her American students. Regardless of how meticulously the speaker selects varied teaching material, relevant to her students' interests, combining classic English texts, formal aspects of poetry with items currently debated in America, she appears to fail. She fails to see that for her students knowledge (education) is a product that they purchase and that they have other priorities in life at their age. Like in Larkin's narratives (i.e. "Reasons for Attendance"), after a few stanzas of well-intentioned make-believe, Groarke's resigned female voice accepts this truth as it is, and she embraces the real reasons for her frustration. The modifiers: "hoary" (rendering the persona's ageing, grey hair, perhaps), combined with the "alleged 'asexuality' of middle-aged and older women" (Ostalska, 2018, p. 43), being "washed-up" (bygone and unsuccessful) and her ethnic background ("hoojah"<sup>4</sup>) disclose potential grounds for the speaker's sense of not-fitting in. The cultural capital (Williams) that the persona has absorbed into her *habitus* does not enable her to relate to the present-day generation's cultural attitudes, identifications and dispositions. What is more, Williams' poem, with its intense sensuality, makes her aware of her own yearning for the passionate existence. The speaker in "An American Jay" concludes:

I'm too old for this. I feel like some hoary, washed-up hoojah  
on the edge of that funfair waiting for the carousel

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<sup>4</sup> According to the Oxford. Reference, "hoojah", in the American slang, signifies pejoratively a person of the Caucasian origin.

to jolt into life like a wound-up hummingbird or jay  
to circulate a sincere song of desire, blaze, arousal.

(2009, p. 18)

The article's titular quote is derived from Mary O'Malley's poem "Sentence", included in *Playing the Octopus* (2016) in which the poet sums up what might be referred to as both positive and negative cultural capital of America. In a poem "Sentence", Mary O'Malley takes a satirical account of Irish poets' "collective" experience of the USA. The female voice in "Sentence" claims:

Something about America  
Is good for us  
Frank O'Hara's lunchtimes  
The public road, skies  
High as kites.

(2016, p. 61)

"Sentence" as the title might refer to the grammatical structure or a judicial punitive pronouncement. Considering the fact that the poem comprises two sentences, separated with a full stop, the latter option seems to be more plausible. "Sentence" begins optimistically: the speaker declares that America's cultural capital has a supposedly beneficial influence upon Irish poets. The argument contains two positive statements and a pejorative implication in-between them. To begin with the valued cultural heritage: Frank O'Hara *Lunch Poems* (1964), as the legend maintains, were purportedly written during his lunch breaks at The Museum of Modern Art<sup>5</sup>. The volume has created "an image of insouciant genius...careless of his talents" (Hampson & Montgomery, 2010, p. 3) for whom writing poems "happens" effortlessly and in-between work hours. As stressed by the editors of *Frank O'Hara Now: New Essays on the New York Poet*, O'Hara's *Lunch Poems* due to the publication in an affordable, pocket size format, reached the mass audience and gained wide popularity not only among intellectuals or academics (Hampson & Montgomery, 2010, p. 2). Furthermore, "the public road" could imply the local or federal responsibility for this type of infrastructure. In the following simile, the "natural" order is reversed: skies' height seems to be confined to the level of kites. The persona in "Sentence" encourages:

Send your poets out  
Early and often in chain gangs  
To listen to the jazz chants  
The beat, the out of the head  
Into the feet blues, the trail of tears

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<sup>5</sup> Mengham relates O'Hara's writing pattern as follows: "every day the poet takes lunch and every lunch-time he writes a poem: writing a poem is a function of a diurnal cycle – it is one of those things that continues, that recurs day by day" (2010, p. 53).

Outer space size of what can be said  
Where envelopes are pushed and lines  
Stretch open to negotiations, long and generous.

(2016, p. 61)

As the poem progresses, O'Malley's catalogue does not seem very consistent in the choice of positive qualities that the persona claims to "praise". It remains disputable as to whom the appellation "your poets" might refer: Irish fellow writers or American authors. The notion of the Irish poetic community who arrive in bulk ("gang-chained") to American promised land to write or take well-paid academic positions is ironically recommended as "early and as often." Similarly sarcastically, the context of this "visit" remains heavily charged with negative historical inferences. According to Mark Colvin, the author of *Penitentiaries, Reformatories, and Chain Gangs*, the origin of chain gangs goes back to 1866 (Georgia) and the term applies to using the involuntary workforce of prisoners, during the road construction or at the plantation<sup>6</sup>. Corporeal punishment or even gunfire could be employed when the work was not considered as satisfying, or if offenders tried to run away. The conditions of drudgery were appalling: convicts worked long hours and even slept chained to one another, they were undernourished (Colvin, 1997, p. 220), what is more, the whole exploitative procedure affected even more Afro-Americans. The practice of tying up prisoners lingered until the 1960s, and it was revived in some states in the 1990s i.e. in Alabama (Colvin, 1997, p. 253, Brag, 1995). Applying these connotations to Irish poets, seems at best an overstatement.

Subsequent cultural references to jazz and blues do not break but only underline historically-grounded implications. The word "beat" brings back the physical enforcement, "blues" that arises from the "head-to-feet" corporeal sensation of resentment and sorrow, leads to the non-capitalised usage of tears. The lack of capitalization might allow more general and literal understanding of this phrase. However, in American history, it will always have a specified, historical meaning, connected with the Cherokee term for their compulsory relocation during under the Indian Removal<sup>7</sup>. The author of *The Trail of Tears and Indian Removal* refers to what happened between 1838 and 1839, as the ethnic cleansing, providing a number between the 4.000 and 8.000 of Cherokees, who died during the coerced relocation (Sturgis, 2007, pp. 2–3).

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<sup>6</sup> Colvin claims that "chain gangs not only punished offenders and provided needed labor for plantations but also brought revenue to hard strapped county governments" (1997, p. 258).

<sup>7</sup> "Named after the Cherokee designation, which translates as 'the trail where we cried,' the Trail of Tears is the name commonly given to the forced removal of the Cherokee nation from its lands by the United States, and the relocation of the Cherokee people across the Mississippi river, to so called 'Indian territory,' an area in the present-day state of Oklahoma" (Sturgis, 2007, p. 2).

As argued, America's symbolic capital can be interpreted both as valued (positive) and as a deterrent (negative) for the history never to be repeated. O'Malley's poem commences in a seemingly affirmative way: nonetheless, the body of the poem is far from laudatory. It may be sensible to remind one that:

the culture that unifies (the medium of communication) is also the culture which separates (the instrument of distinction) and which legitimises distinctions by forcing all other cultures (designated as sub-cultures) to define themselves by their distance from the dominant culture (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 167).

Separate adjectives: "open to negotiations, long, generous, good and high," individually and out of context, denote positive sense, whereas the overall tone of the poem appears to be rather derisive. The aforementioned designation "your poets," has an inclusive, yet mocking meaning, and it may sound as if it were a part of the commercial campaign directed to international (Irish) travelling poets' society. Nonetheless, the freedom of speech ("Outer space size of what can be said") becomes the black hole universe sucking in all the nonsense. In O'Malley's poem, all kinds of boundaries are crossed in a new and extreme manner. Overall, "Sentence" balances between positive and negative aspects of the American cultural and historical heritage, between the speaker's fascination and sarcastic contempt.

The poems analysed in the article explore diverse forms of America's cultural capital: from architecture, painting, visual art through poetry and natural heritage and mental dispositions and attitudes. In this intercultural dialogue, ideas, concepts and outlooks were exchanged and tested against one another. Sometimes, this symbolic exchange might have begun in inspiration, irony or suspicion, but in the process, all sides (including readers) were affected by the outcome of their mutual interaction.

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