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Speech Genres and Experience: Mikhail Bakhtin and An Embodied Cultural Psychology

by

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to those that are truly the others that constitute me. Most notably, these people are Natasha, Ethan, Peter, Farley, Penny, Joe, and Dave. You kept me sane.

Abstract

Theorists who endeavor to take sociality seriously have made substantial strides, but the phenomenological immediacy of experience has not been well explored or sufficiently addressed. This dissertation proposes an approach to cultural psychology that accounts for such experience. It addresses how authors such as Hubert Hermans, James Wertsch, Ken Gergen, Derek Edwards, and Jonathan Potter have tended to propose visions of cultural psychology that do not do justice to such experience, partly because they have different analytic interests. Regardless, there is a need in current theorizing in cultural psychology to address culturally orchestrated action in a way that includes experience. This dissertation attempts to address this need. To provide an alternative view on cultural psychology, this dissertation turns to the Russian thinker, Mikhail Bakhtin, and his notion of speech genres. The inherent sociality of embodied experience that is part of Bakhtin's notion of speech genres is presented in contrast to the views of above-mentioned authors. This work presents a view of Bakhtin's discussion of realism in relation to experience and sociality. This discussion leads to an alternative sociocultural understanding of individual agency that is central to the ontogenetic development of selfhood. The discussion then progresses to examine what Bakhtin can contribute to a psychology embroiled in postmodernism. Where self has been treated as socially constructed and changeable – such that notions like faithfulness to oneself, which is generally thought to belong in the domain of a true core self, are

rendered futile – Bakhtin offers a view of embodied self that both requires and clarifies these notions. The proposed alternative concludes by addressing how research could be conducted for those interested in extending the proposed cultural psychology in an empirical direction.

Preface

A driving concern of mine was how I could understand immediate phenomenological experience – the immediate visceral experiences that are part of being compelled to act. It seemed to me that such psychological *experience* is often not considered in any substantive way by dominant research modes, aside from how it arises as an epiphenomenon of cognitive processing. I was looking for an approach that would give me an understanding of my psychological experience, as well as that of research participants. This search opened the door to reading in social constructionism because this view critiqued the processing model that I already intuitively found unconvincing. As such, my work involves a dialogue that starts with social constructionism and leaves behind the debate with cognitivism. It is aimed at a discussion among those who already share ground with social constructionism.

Social constructionism addressed how everything that people think they know is socially constructed. The following existential concern became salient for me: my faith, in its experiential richness, could quite likely be a socially negotiated topic of conversation, lacking any inherent meaningfulness. Consequently, my personal groundings were abruptly shaken as I transitioned from a right-wing fundamentalist to a disillusioned social constructionist. However, while fundamentalism was no longer tolerable because of its a-social approach, neither was social constructionist disillusionment. The latter addressed experience, as something that could be

constructed in talk *about it* and this view seemed too capricious to offer an understanding of the kind of experience people have, including my own faith. The result was an intellectual and personal tension: my sympathy with social constructionism meant that I could not avoid giving serious weight to sociality, while fundamentalist faith meant that I could not be satisfied with the social constructionist focus on talking-about experience. This tension is what gave birth to the question that drives this dissertation: How do we approach immediate phenomenological experience and still retain sociality?

The Russian philosopher, Mikhail Bakhtin, has helped me conceive this question and propose a tentative answer. Reading Bakhtin's first work – that was recovered and published posthumously – opened my eyes to how I could read him as an author who was interested in a very similar question (e.g. 1993/c.1920, pp. 7-8; Appendix A lists the composition of Bakhtin's works, their English publication dates, and their Russian publication date. Because much of his work was not published until long after it was written, addressing the chronology of his work requires consideration of composition date as opposed to the Russian publication date. Accordingly, in the text of the dissertation, Bakhtin's works are referenced by both their English publication date and their composition date. They are listed in the reference section according to their English publication date). This early work served as grounding for interpreting the rest of his work and his essay on speech genres, in particular. Approaching Bakhtin in this manner has enabled me to

propose an approach to cultural psychology that brings sociality and experience together.

My resonance with Bakhtin challenged and shaped me academically and personally. Positions that I take, after having read Bakhtin, are what I seek to describe in the remainder of the preface. That is, the dissertation lays out my proposal in more detail while the remainder of the preface is intended to orient the reader to the academic and personal positions I am taking. The hope is to start with an open understanding of the context of the dissertation. Bakhtin challenged and shaped me in three unexpected ways. These ways revolve around (1) certainty; (2) authority; and (3) multi-vocality.

On Certainty

Michael Holquist is a translator and editor of many of Bakhtin's works and he first introduced to me a characteristic of Bakhtin that has been very important in my work: one of the well-known difficulties that come with Bakhtin studies is that he was not concerned with being a systematic thinker (Holquist, 2002, pp. 23-25). The terms and notions that Bakhtin introduced over the course of his work were often different, but the concern is whether or not they address similar ideas. For example, he would talk about heteroglossia in one place (1981/c.1937) and polyphony (1984a/1963) in another. Both terms can be understood as "multi-voiced", but he did not use the same term or cross-reference sources. I can never be certain of what Bakhtin meant. The result of such uncertainty is that working with Bakhtin is

work that prohibits a definitive claim. There is no such thing as Bakhtin Orthodoxy. He leaves us with the task of working through his writings to cultivate a generic sense of his claims. It has come down to me knowing Bakhtin like one would be familiar with a friend or family member. I have a generic sense of how he would respond while I may not be certain about what he would definitively say. But moreover, neither would Bakhtin himself.

Academically, I have to constantly struggle with this quality of Bakhtin. I have come to see how academic endeavors are not about searching for certain claims that serve as core propositions. Academics should, rather, work out a *generic* approach to problems and concerns. If I were to be certain that the only way to approach the study of sociality and experience is expressed in my dissertation, I would necessarily lose aspects of whatever phenomena is of interest. The struggle with Bakhtin's indeterminateness has changed the act of writing from an attempt to compile a definitive work to an informed yet necessarily uncertain commentary. Academically, this requires openness, because there is no longer need to be certain.

Such academic struggle is indistinguishable from personal struggle. Paradoxically, my studies had prompted me to move out of fundamentalism but I did not immediately lose the fundamentalist drive for certainty. The need for certainty eventually became more moderate as I really came to grips with how I can never know everything about life ahead of time – as one does when living as a rigid researcher or fundamentalist. I came to see how life cannot be understood in certain terms. Rather, it is about taking a generic

approach to life that includes a generic worldview. If I cling too tightly to the worldview and use it as a means to treat every individual as the same, then I lose the individuality of the other standing before me. By struggling with the indeterminateness inherent in Bakhtin, I came to grips with an inherent uncertainty in life.

On Authority

A closely related issue in regards to certainty is that of authority. One of the most interesting features of Bakhtin is that his work could not be characterized as ever being finished. Where some authors wrote their work with the attempt to close the book on some issue or another, this was not Bakhtin's aim. Bakhtin wrote in such a way that whatever or whomever was the authority, including him, could and would undoubtedly be questioned. Bakhtin wrote in such a way that questions emerge from his writing and he constantly opened up debate rather than closing it down. His ideas relied heavily on the notion of language communities and these are the small-scale communities that shape experience. For example, participation in an evangelical community affords a language expressing particular experiences and this way of speaking shapes the experience itself. Authoritativeness on experience exists within a single language community but no single community ever exists in isolation. Another language community will always subvert the first. For Bakhtin people acquire more and more communal languages and, in so doing, are able to avoid definitively authoritative claims.

The notion of not being authoritative initially offended my academic sensibilities. For a while, I attempted to be authoritative on Bakhtin but his style resisted this attempt. Good academics, I came to realize, are not about becoming the authority. They are about coming to understand something in more *depth*. Far from being an authority, depth seems to be about finding more questions to ask – questions that I had no idea could be asked. The goal of academic competence is thereby to find more questions and to become better and better at asking them. Such a process involves continuing to see human experience in new lights and from new positions. It is about gaining new languages from which new questions can be asked. It is in this context that knowing how to ask the right question is an expression of having learned something. A dissertation about sociality and experience should consequently open up more questions than answers.

Personally, the dismantling of authority was also fraught with deeply experienced tension. Authority had been as much the corner stone of my personal fundamentalist experience as it had been of my academic experience. I came to see that good living is not about becoming an authority. Good living involves seeing life in more and more depth instead of attempting to take a stance as one that has figured it all out. As in the case of my academic career, depth seems to be about finding more questions to ask about others and myself. The goal of personal and interpersonal competence is thereby to find more questions to ask about what I am experiencing and

what others are experiencing. Such a process involves continuing to see my experience and those of others from new positions.

On Multi-Vocality

Bakhtin points out that authority and certainty cannot be reached because of the way language communities work in people's lives. I explain in the dissertation how being part of a community involves acquiring the *language* of the community insofar as it amounts to acquiring a mode of being. There are two challenges that emerge from this claim. One challenge is that people never speak from within one community. People participate in many language communities and their voices are expressions of many simultaneously. One can speak the language of fathers, professors, lovers, and church leaders in the phrase "I do this because I care". Bakhtin pointed out that people cannot know which perspective is doing the speaking because they all speak at once in the same expression. Another challenge is that expressions (including self-expressions) are re-expressions of language communities. Since language shapes experience and how people see the world, people do not easily speak from a unique perspective. Individual uniqueness lies in the way that one combines voices in the moment of action. That is, Bakhtin articulated how action can be unique and individual, yet still expressive of the community.

People express what has been said before and it is for this reason that the dissertation does not use the first person pronoun. My hope that this choice

of writing style should not be taken to mean that the use of "we" or "our" implies homogeneity or unison. In fact, I intend it to involve disagreement and it may even prompt difference: points of disagreement between the text and the reader may be sharpened with the use of "we" when the reader does not resonate with the text. Such a stylistic decision is merely an attempt to honestly acknowledge that expressions, such as a dissertation, are expressive of communities fraught with their own tensions and disagreements.

Academically, I struggled with the disillusion that I am not saying anything new. Whatever academics articulate is rooted in communities and does not seem so new. I could think and write, but my thinking and writing was and is expressive of communities like acculturation psychologists, theoretical psychologists, students at the University of Alberta, and so on. However, I came to realize that academy is not about expressing one voice and, thereby, one perspective on sociality and experience. For example, it is not about knowing *when* I was speaking from the Bakhtin community, *when* I was speaking from our research community at the University of Alberta, or *when* I was speaking from fundamentalism. It is necessary to recognize that academic work is about expressing multiple communities at once. Academic life is about working out the tensions among voices and endeavoring to reconcile discordances, even though they may never be reconcilable. No dissertation is wholly unique, but it is individual in the way that multiple voices are expressed simultaneously. This dissertation is a multi-vocal

expression that is generic in its conformity to language communities but unique in how it individually expresses these voices simultaneously.

The same dissolution was at play personally: Is there is anything unique about my own experience? Am I simply social epiphenomena? It became painfully obvious that what felt like my own authentic commitments were nothing more than expressions of the communities that I am part of. As in the academic world, I realized that personal life is not about being unique and individual. It is about being part of communities where I find myself on common ground with others. However, it is should be no surprise that the communities of Christian fundamentalism, research psychologists, and post-modernist discourse contradict one another. Working out these tensions is the very stuff that life is made of and it is precisely these tensions that liberate me from the tyranny of any one perspective on experience. No person is wholly unique, but, nevertheless, is individual in how multiple voices are expressed simultaneously in the same utterance. Good living is a multi-vocal expression that is generic in its conformity to language communities but unique in how it individually expresses these voices simultaneously.

Conclusion

This dissertation's strength does not lie in a certain exegesis of Bakhtin or philosophical discussion, which are both tasks well beyond my ability. Rather, it is an attempt to deal with experience as it relates to sociality and

how Bakhtin's work, although embroiled in different debates than what I am dealing with in psychology, enabled me to propose a unique approach to cultural psychology. It is an attempt to speak to current work in cultural psychology by engaging with Bakhtin's early work. It is my hope that it opens up more questions than answers. Thereby, it should undermine authority while simultaneously engaging it. Its multi-vocality means that it is expressive of many language communities, but it is also intended to be unique in the way that these language communities are combined. This is the context in which I have struggled to come to an understanding of sociality and experience and it is the context in which I seek to offer a unique approach to cultural psychology.

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Chapter 1

Standing Upon the Threshold of a Unique Cultural Psychology: Bakhtin & Speech Genres

Introduction

Among psychologists, there has recently been an increased interest in developing a psychology of agency (e.g. Martin, Sugarman, and Thompson, 2003; Miller, 1997, 2003; Oyama, 1993; Turiel & Perkins, 2004; Wertsch, 1998). The argument that people actively choose and structure the world that they experience is not new and has been articulated from perspectives varying from cognitive psychology (e.g. Bruner, 1990) to social constructionism (e.g. Harré, 1983, 1995; Harré & Gillet, 1994; Shotter, 1993). However, many cognitive psychologists seem to have abandoned the idea of agency in favor of a merely mechanistic account of human behavior. Such a mechanistic account sets out to explain human behavior in terms of its causal antecedents rather than understanding human action in the language of faithfulness and commitment. Social psychologists interested in social cognition are usually no exception to this practice (e.g. Moskowitz, 2004). Typically *the social* is either seen as merely an antecedent condition for individual behavior (if, for example, a categorical notion of social group is used to explain individual behavior) or as a consequence of cognitive mechanisms operating within self-contained individuals (if, for example, group membership is reduced to mere social categorization).

Social constructionism[1] has presented itself as an alternative to cognitive psychology (e.g. Edwards, 1997; Edwards & Potter, 1992; Gergen, 1991, 1999b; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). With its strong focus on *talk as action* and on the inherently social nature of psychological phenomena, a social constructionist psychology seems to be especially well equipped to understand socially situated agency. In recent years, however, several authors have pointed out shortcomings within the social constructionist framework, shortcomings that hamper its ability to offer a genuinely agentive account of social action (e.g. Edley, 2001). One line of critique concerns social constructionism's neglect of themes like *experience* and *embodiment* (e.g. Baerveldt & Verheggen, 1999; Baerveldt & Voestermans, 2005; Soffer, 2001), but also its limited account of sociality and the generically normative dimension of human life (e.g. Hook, 2001, 2005). As we suggest in this introductory chapter, these points of critique are not independent of each other. They can be seen as revolving around social constructionism's limited ability to offer a satisfactory account of embodied and culturally situated agency. In their forceful rejection of psychology's immanent mentalism, many variants of social constructionist psychology may have ended up with a theory of action without *experiencing* agents or insight into the communal quality of experience.

In particular, we are interested in proposing a view of *cultural* psychology that offers an understanding of the phenomenologically immediate experience of life. One author refers to this experience as "…the kind of

active, engaged experience we have of the world throughout the course of our everyday life: *hearing* the toll of a campus bell, *seeing* the smile of a friendly face, *grasping* a coffee mug by the handle and bringing it to one's mouth to sip." (Kelly, 2003, p. 114, emphasis added). Müller & Newman explain how lived experience "helps to constitute this world-as-experienced. We cannot understand the meaning and form of objects without reference to the bodily powers through which we engage them – our senses, motility, and desires." (2008, p. 320). Much like these authors, we are concerned with the body-as-experience and we will refer to this in terms of the body, embodiment, experience, or, as we establish later, emotionality. We equate the body with experience because it is in the very flesh of our living of life that such experience happens. For example, we see and emotionally feel the smile of a friend in our body. Another notion that falls in with our attempt to address the phenomenological immediacy of experience is that of living *life*. When we talk about life, we are talking about the kinds of *doings* that people are engaged and these are done in the body. As our work progresses, we will address how much of life is just lived without a second thought. Our proposed cultural psychology is one that attempts to offer an understanding of life in the body is irreducibly social.

With its strong claim about how psychological processes are constructed in talk – that is, discourse – the social constructionist reading of presumed predecessors like Alfred Schutz, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and Mikhail Bakhtin has involved an outlook on language that has not included experiencing

agents. Paradoxically, this has led not only to a neglect of forms of social action and expression that do not obviously involve conversation, but also to an impoverished account of language and sociality itself (Baerveldt & Voestermans, 2005; Soffer, 2001). In this chapter, we seek to discuss how social constructionists have appropriated the Russian scholar Mikhail Bakhtin and then proceed to set out an alternative appropriation. In doing so, we set the stage for the remainder of the dissertation that amounts to a different appropriation of Bakhtin. This appropriation sets out his potential contribution to an embodied cultural psychology.

Bakhtin's audience is wide because he has served as an inspiration to scholars in many disciplines, despite the fact that all of his work revolved around literary aesthetic activity (e.g. Bell & Gardiner, 1998; Hirschkop, 1999; Hirschkop & Shepherd, 1989; Holquist, 2002). The reason for Bakhtin's wide scope of appeal is probably due to the manner in which he always tied aesthetic activity into lived experience. His early works focused on the interpretation of poetics and lived experience in his phenomenology of ethics and action (1990/c.1920, 1990/1924, 1993/c.1920). Next, he dealt with the "philosophy of language and of signification in general, with particular reference to literary material" (Brandist, 2002, p. 12). Bakhtin wrote about the novel as a genre by discussing how human life is novelistic when he made the claim that the evolution of the novel is expressive of the evolution of humankind (1981/c.1930, pp. 3-83). He also wrote about the novel in relation to language by arguing that the experience of the societal

emergence of pluralism, the emergence of many "social languages", is expressed in the collision of languages seen in the novel (1981/c.1937, pp. 259-422). Bakhtin wrote how popular culture is lived by describing its expression in the novel. For example, he wrote about how the works of Rabelais and Goethe are expressions of social tropes lived by the authors (1981/c.1930, pp. 84-258) and he wrote about the popular culture of the medieval carnival as it is expressed in Rabelais' (1946) *The Uninhibited Adventures of Gargantua and Pantagruel* (Bakhtin, 1984b/1940). Bakhtin's work on Dostoevsky addressed language and its relation to the experience as it was expressed in the Dostoevsky's oeuvre (1984a/1963). Similar ideas can be seen in his essays on the *Bildungsroman* (1986/c.1937, pp. 10-59) and speech genres (1986/1952, 60-102). This brief sketch of Bakhtin's work shows that there was a consistent coupling of human living experience with aesthetic activity and language. It also shows how he was as interested in understanding human life as he was in interpreting art. Hence, we consider Bakhtin appropriate to draw upon when attempting to develop an approach that deals with experience in cultural psychology.

Bakhtin's current popularity in non-mainstream psychology is partly due to the way in which discursively oriented psychologists have come to use his concept of "speech genres" in an attempt to establish a more genuinely social and cultural psychology. In general terms, *speech genres involve patterned and distinguishable styles of expression associated with a particular sphere of activity* (Bakhtin, 1986/1952, p. 60). An example that Bakhtin used was the

way that members of a professional community express themselves with a generic vocabulary, grammatical style, tonal patterns, and so on. We will suggest that social constructionism's appropriation of Bakhtin partly follows from excluding features that could easily, on the basis of some of his early writings, be seen as central to speech genres: their embodied and their irreducibly communal character. Addressing these features will open the door to the rest of the dissertation that discusses how Bakhtin could be understood as a different *kind* of social constructionist than he is typically made out to have been. A unique theory of agency that maintains both the embodied and the inherently social and cultural dimensions of human action then becomes possible.

Bakhtin and the Communal Quality of Agency

Authors who work on Bakhtin have mentioned that it is important to approach the study of Bakhtin in a manner that takes into account the wide scope of his work (e.g. Brandist, 2002; Emerson, 1997; Morson & Emerson, 1990; Hirschkop, 1999). Three of Bakhtin's works – *The Problem of Speech Genres* (1986/1952), *Discourse in the Novel* (1981/c.1937), and *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1984a/1963) – have been the subject of most discussion among psychologists interested in Bakhtin (e.g. Billig, 1996; Gergen, 1991, 1999b; Hermans & Kempen, 1993; Hermans, 2001, 2002; Shotter, 1993; Shotter & Billig, 1988; Wertsch, 1991). Because attention has been paid to these three works, we suggest that there is neglect of his earlier

work (e.g. 1990/c.1920, 1993/c.1920). In fact, by looking at the notion of speech genres through the lens of these earlier works, we are lead to a different perspective on speech genres. Where current trends in Bakhtin theorizing trend to look at differences and changes in Bakhtin's work (e.g. Bernard-Donals, 1994), we seek to point out consistent themes present throughout his career. Of course, our agenda is not without precedence as Michael Holquist, an editor and translator of many of Bakhtin's works, argued that speech genres is a consistent theme throughout Bakhtin's work. Holquist made this argument by linking this term used late in Bakhtin's career with the notions that appear early in Bakhtin's work (e.g. Holquist, 2002, p. 66). He also noted, in his introduction to Bakhtin's early work, that this work "makes possible a deeper understanding" of Bakhtin's later works such as the essay on speech genres (Holquist, 1990, pp. ix-x). Likewise, another notable Bakhtin scholar, Craig Brandist (2002, p. 27) argued for more emphasis on Bakhtin's early works in order to inform a reading of Bakhtin's later work (see also Bonetskaia, 2004). Consequently, we follow this precedence because it enables us to propose a cultural psychology that deals with phenomenologically immediate experience.

As a point of departure, we begin with a quote from Bakhtin's first work, *Towards a Philosophy of the Act*. Bakhtin (1993/c.1920) wrote "…we act confidently when we do so not as ourselves, but as those *possessed by the immanent necessity* of meaning of some *domain of culture*" (p. 21, emphasis added). In this early quote, from a work that dealt with the topic of agency,

there are themes that remain central throughout Bakhtin's later work. First, there is the idea of non-propositional "participative consciousness" that points to inherent normativity of different "domains of culture", which we think later emerged in the notion of speech genres. For example, consider how, in *Towards a Philosophy of the Act,* Bakhtin (1993/c.1920) wrote consistently about the importance of participating in "activity" associated with domains of culture and then later about speech genres in terms of "domains of activity" associated with social groups in the essay on speech genres (1986/1952). Second, the idea of acting with *natural* confidence, which we will discuss below, can be seen as expressive of his theory of the communal quality of embodied style and expression. We use the phrase "natural" throughout this dissertation to address the notion of acting in a way that is second nature or without a second thought. That is, it refers to a tacit mode of being caught up in acting[2]. This use of the term does not, unless we note otherwise, relate to naturalism in reference to biological reductionism.

In what follows, we discuss each of these themes in more detail and argue that they amount in the end to a theory of culturally situated agency[3]. First, we discuss what Bakhtin meant by "participative consciousness". This discussion will set the stage for understanding how speech genres are, for Bakhtin, inherently communal in nature. It is in linking the understanding of speech genres as communal practices with the idea of confident embodied expression that a theory of agency emerges.

Speech Genres and Participative Consciousness

Bakhtin found special value in the novel as an expression of human experience that informed his claims about speech genres (e.g. 1986/1952, p. 61). In the following commentary on Dostoevsky, he wrote:

> Any acquaintance with the voluminous literature on Dostoevsky leave the impression that one is dealing not with a *single* author-artist who wrote novels and stories, but with a number of philosophical statements by several authors-thinkers. … The character is treated ideologically and authoritative and independent; he is perceived as the author of a fully weighted ideological conception of his own and not as the object of Dostoevsky's finalizing artistic vision. … What unfolds in his works is not a multitude of characters and fates in a single authorial consciousness; rather a *plurality of consciousnesses, with equal rights and each with its own world*, combine but are not merged in the unity of the event. (1984a/1963, pp. 5-6, original emphasis).

Bakhtin was writing about how the Dostoevskian novel expresses that heroes are not brought under the tyranny of a single authorial vision. A point that we will substantiate in more detail in later chapters is that Bakhtin treated the novel as expressive of society, which is itself made up of many speech genres. Like the novel, society is constituted by speech genres that are not brought together under the unity of one constant structure (1986/1952, pp.

60-61). The issue is what this vision for the novel, and what it expresses about sociality, can tell us about consciousness. What Bakhtin was referring to when he addressed the concept of consciousnesses is the point where we will diverge from the typical social constructionist appropriation of Bakhtin. We will shortly demonstrate that Bakhtin links the idea of consciousness with speech genres. The social constructionists have not appropriated Bakhtin's coupling of consciousness to speech genres. Coupling these two notions makes room for the inherently communal quality of speech genres that we think is necessary for agency.

First, we should articulate the notion of consciousness, as social constructionists tend to use it. Influential social constructionist authors such as Billig (1996) and Gergen (1991) have held up Bakhtin's philosophy as an anticipation of postmodern thought (we will return to theme in more detail in chapter four). Gergen (1991), for example, described how the postmodern rejection of the idea of access to a unified underlying reality leads to what he calls the "postmodern consciousness" (p. 111). Gone are the realities of the processes like "individual reason, intention, moral decision making, and the like" (p. 241). Instead, the postmodern consciousness entails, according to Gergen, a sense that people have no ultimate grounding for identity other than what is negotiated in talk. Postmodernism, according to Gergen, opens the way to "a free play of discourses" (Gergen, 1991, p. 247). He sees this idea reflected in Bakhtin's notion of heteroglossia, "the multiplex nature of language within a culture" (ibid). Billig (1996) picked up this theme in the

introduction to the second edition of his *Arguing and Thinking* and linked it even more closely to Bakhtin. Billig takes Bakhtin's idea of heteroglossia to mean that the speaker can use any speech genre necessary to establish identification with others.

It is clear that when Gergen and other social constructionists wrote about consciousness, they were not referring to individual psychological consciousness made up of rational propositional reasoning, but to consciousness as a "social-ideological fact" (Shotter & Billig, 1998). We commend and agree with the social constructionist rejection of consciousness as constituted in rational propositional reasoning. It is on the quality of consciousness as a social-ideological fact that we differ. We propose that Bakhtin aligns consciousness as a social-ideological fact with the notion of speech genres, but we see how it can be done in a way different from social constructionists.

In early work, Bakhtin extensively addressed the problem of consciousness using the term "participative consciousness" (in some cases, "participative thinking"; e.g. 1993/c.1920, p. 8); and he charged psychologists with mistakenly approaching consciousness in a merely theoretical sense (e.g. 1990/c.1920, p. 114). He described participative consciousness as an alternative to the transcendental cogito as it was described by Descartes and elaborated upon by Kant. Bakhtin argued against the idea of a priori judgments situated outside experience (e.g. 1993/c.1920, p. 7). But by the same token, he rejected the idea of meaning being the result of a reflective act

of consciousness, conferring meaning on otherwise meaningless experience and actions. For example, he wrote:

> That is, that what is clear to [a person] are only the universal moments and relations transcribed in the form of concepts? Not at all: he sees clearly *these* individual, unique persons whom he loves, *this* sky and *this* earth and *these* trees … and what is also given to him simultaneously is the value, the actually concretely affirmed value of these persons and these objects. He intuits their inner lives as well as desires; he understands both the actual and the ought-to-be sense of the interrelationship between himself and objects… (1993/c.1920, p. 30, original emphasis).

In this quote, Bakhtin was describing consciousness as participative because the happenings of everyday life are its content. The content of participative consciousness emerges *as an agent participates in activity with others*. The notion of answerability to others was repeated in Bakhtin's early work (e.g. 1990/c.1920, 1993/c.1920) and this emphasis was paralleled in his work on speech genres when he wrote about responding to another (e.g. 1986/1952, p. 76). People answer for their actions according to the dynamic communal standards pertaining to a domain of embodied activity. Simultaneously, people experience life in terms of what Bakhtin (1993/c.1920) repeatedly called the "once-occurrent event of Being". Every situation is unique and unrepeatable, making propositional codification of the meaning of actions

impossible. Since the unique event of "Being" is in the flow of normative practice, action entails responding to community lived in concert with others. What makes life meaningful are neither priori propositions, concepts that serve to synthesize experience, nor after-the-act reflective individual constructions.

Where social constructionists have not treated consciousness as being composed of a priori propositions, they treated it as discursively constructed in speech. In looking to Bakhtin through the notion of the participative consciousness, we understand consciousness as participative insofar as it involves being embedded in a practical world of *answerability* when people participate with others in different domains of activity (1993/c.1920, pp. 56-57). *Our proposal moves consciousness from discursively negotiated achievement in talk, which is central to social constructionism, to activity with others in a community*. Bakhtin replaced the transcendental onlooker with an agent immersed in lived experience who acts according to meaning as it unfolds in activity with others (e.g. 1993/c.1920, p. 6; 1986/1952, p. 67-69). Social constructionism, of course, shares Bakhtin's rejection of a constitutive transcendental consciousness, but social constructionism has maintained that meaning is constructed in accounts and descriptions, which are considered action among interlocutors, but not necessarily action that is constituted in community with others. That is, as we outline in more detail in subsequent chapters, social constructionism treats the *social* quality of consciousness as emerging from its construction through "relational

interchange" (Gergen, 1994), "talk" (Edwards, 1997), or "argument" (Billig, 1996).

We are endeavoring to show how Bakhtin's writings on the participative consciousness are linked to his work on speech genres and thereby show how a different notion of sociality, and ultimately language, can be addressed. This linkage would lead to a notion of sociality that extends beyond in situ interchange into community participation. Consider how Bakhtin expanded upon the links between participative consciousness and sociality when he addressed the notion of speech genres:

> We use [speech genres] confidently and skillfully *in practice*, and it is quite possible for us not even to suspect their existence *in theory*. … We are given these speech genres in almost the same way that we are given our native language […] not from dictionaries or grammars but from concrete utterances that we hear and that we ourselves reproduce in live speech communication with people around us…The forms of language and typical forms of utterances, that is, speech genres, enter our experience and our consciousness together and in close connection with one another… Speech genres … have a normative significance for the speaking individuum, and they are not created by him but are given to him. Therefore, the single utterance, with all its individuality and creativity, can in no way be regarded as a completely free combination of forms

of language (1986/1952, p. 78- 80, original emphasis).

Bakhtin noted that speech genres are not apprehended by the participative consciousness through propositional instruction. Rather, they are apprehended in participation in community. Such communal participation with others is shapes a consciousness in terms of a given experience. The way that the communal – that is, normative – quality of speech genres is addressed prompts us to propose that speech genres cannot be picked up and used as easily as social constructionists assert. That is, we propose that Bakhtin's discussion of participative consciousness highlights how sociality beyond dyads is important in a way that is not addressed by many social constructionists.

It is precisely this communal quality of speech genres that, by drawing on Bakhtin, we seek to show to be a necessary part of agency. We will do this by showing how he could be understood as considering embodied action to be grounded in the participative consciousness of a generic communal style. This discussion is what will lead us to a proposal for how cultural psychology could be approached in a way that deals with immediate phenomenological experience *and* normativity.

Confidence and Embodiment

By laying out Bakhtin's claim regarding participative consciousness, we explicated how speech genres could entail a participative consciousness lived by those who participate in speech genres. The quote above described speech

genres entering our "experience" and so brings us to the phenomenological immediacy that we seek to articulate. Understanding speech genres, as they relate to participative consciousness, is necessary in order for us to describe the role of community as it relates to the body in Bakhtin's work.

The central work most known for Bakhtin's discussion of the role of the body is *Rabelais and His World* (1984b/1940). Bakhtin made use of the description of the medieval carnival by the French author, Rabelais, as a means by which he could espouse his ideas. We will discuss the role of embodiment in speech genres so that we can illuminate how the communal quality of embodied expression of speech genres contradicts the popular claim that carnival implies the substantial freedom to pick and choose speech genres (e.g. Billig, 1996).

Indeed, Bakhtin described the Renaissance carnival as a place of intermixing of people from many speech genres. He addresses the Renaissance carnival as follows:

> We see at what a complex intersection of languages, dialects, idioms, and jargons the literary linguistic consciousness of the Renaissance was formed. … Languages are philosophies – not abstract but concrete, social philosophies, penetrated by a system of values inseparable from living practice … (1984b/1940, p. 471; see also p. 465)

We take the discussion of languages, idioms and jargon to be expressive of the notion of speech genres because these were the terms that Bakhtin used

to describe speech genres in a different work (e.g. 1986/1952, pp. 60-63). The phrase "complex intersection" in the quote above thereby referred to speech genres and this claim can be seen in the way that Bakhtin, in the essay on speech genres, wrote "[s]pecial emphasis should be placed on the extreme *heterogeneity* of speech genres" (1986/1952, p. 60, original emphasis) and that speech genres are in "close connection" (1986/1952, p. 78) with one another. That is, we claim that the "complex intersection of languages", in Bakhtin's work on Rabelais, is the same thing as heterogeneity of speech genres coming coexistent in society – that is, "in close connection". As such, we propose that we have grounds to treat Bakhtin's discussion of the different languages intersecting in the carnival as later being expressed in terms of speech genres.

One of the carnival activities was the humorous parody of others' speech genres. This parody would take the form of the inversion of social roles in comical exaggeration. For example, the nobleman would be the subject of exaggerated parody by the peasant and the peasant would be the subject of parodist acting by the nobleman. The parody did not only include emulation of the manner of speech, but the whole *embodied* way of enacting the expressive style indicative of the speech genre from which the subject of parody came. Bakhtin's description of parody in the carnival served to emphasize that the body was an intimate part of the expression of a speech genre (e.g. 1981/c.1930, p. 163; 1984b/1940, p. 255). In this comic exaggeration, the embodied speech genre would be emulated and

exaggerated to a humorous degree (one can imagine the peasant enhancing the arrogant swagger of the nobleman or displaying excessively silly piety as a mock priest). The humorous exaggeration of a generic style pointed to the normativity inherent in the embodied expression of a speech genre. Exaggeration is funny in the way of making mockery of communal standards according to which the nobleman acts and becomes the tool by which the whole of the expressive style of the speech genre would become evident to observers of the parody.

In describing how the parody enabled participants in the carnival to see their own generic style through exposure to a comedic exaggeration, Bakhtin noted that the subject of parody can come to see what they cannot see for themselves (1981/c.1930, p. 163). For example, the swagger of the nobleman is not something that he does according to a set of propositions as to how to swagger. Instead, the speech genre of the nobleman is embodied in and through the activities of the participative consciousness that are unreflective to the degree that he embodies the style in a natural manner. Embodying a generic style is naturally done through a tacit know-how, and it is therefore not immediately in focal awareness to those who embody the speech genre (1986/1952, p. 78). In the terms that we used above, embodying a generic style is lived as an experiential given. However, the embodied style is clear to those from outside the speech genre, because they do not share in its taken-for-granted quality (1984b/1940, p. 471). By engaging in parody, the comic *impostor* serves to illuminate for the nobleman what his style looks like *from*

the outside, in a way that is not immediately available to him.

Bakhtin leads us to recognize that community may never be a matter of propositions or statements about life in a free interplay of discourses. Social constructionism has appropriated Bakhtin's notion of speech genres so as to imply that personal identities are constructed and reconstructed in a free interplay of discourses. It is argued elsewhere that this notion of identity leaves unanswered the question how any of those discourses can become compelling for a particular group of people (Baerveldt & Voestermans, 2005). Moreover, although social constructionism makes a case for an inherently social account of human conduct, by placing this sociality exclusively in the domain of accounts, statements, and descriptions, it fails in the end to account for the way people can come to have a generic *experience* in common. Rather, according to our reading of Bakhtin, participation in a domain of activity enables the world to be experienced as if it were given. Again, we are directed to the way in which speech genres are communal in nature. It is in the communal practices of those participating in a domain of activity that communal standards are enacted non-propositionally in an embodied style characteristic of a speech genre. We act “confidently” in the sense that we naturally act out of an embodied disposition.

In an early work, Bakhtin described how a naturally lived style of embodiment is learned through participation in domains of activity with others:

> The plastic value of my outer body has been as it were sculpted

> for me by the manifold acts of other people in relation to me, acts performed intermittently throughout my life: acts of concern for me, acts of love, acts that recognize my value. In fact, as soon as a human being begins to experience himself from within, he at once meets with acts of recognition and love that come to him from the outside – from his mother, from others who are close to him. The child receives all initial determinations of himself and of his body from his mother's lips and from the lips of those close to him (1990/c.1920, p. 46l; see also 1993/c.1920, p. 8).

By coupling the way Bakhtin addressed the plasticity of the body in this early work with his later work speech genres (Bakhtin, 1986/52, p. 78-80), we can show how, for him, the body is an expression of community – the *communal body*. What comes to be the naturally lived content of participative consciousness is established through interactions with co-participants in a domain of activity. It is in mutual coordination among self and others that the participative consciousness – the communally embodied style expressive of a domain of activity – is "shaped" (1990/c.1920, p. 51). Participants in a domain of activity establish community together so that one cannot just be the embodiment of any speech genre one desires.

Convincingly emulating the lifetime of participative learning that goes into embodying a speech genre according to propositions would require the impossible task of mastering complete knowledge of every stylistic nuance

entailed in every potential social situation. Each interaction requires a finely tuned embodied confidence in what one *ought to do* so that propositionally spelling out how to act is impossible[4]. An embodied style is recognizable by others of the same speech genre, and they naturally know when someone is *like us*. One must have gained, through participating in life with others, a participative consciousness that can be confidently lived. This acquisition of a speech genre means to embody the expressive style indicative of a speech genre that others in a community recognize as authentic. That is, bona fide participants within a domain of activity (speech genre) will speak and act in ways that appear as *natural* to them and other participants engaging in the same domain of activity (see 1993/c.1930, p. 30). Thus, the quality that marks authentic members is the embodying of a speech genre in a *natural* manner, lived as expression through their embodied style. Extending the example above, it is because of this confident *naturalness* that the nobleman cannot propositionally apprehend his style for himself, but he can nonetheless recognize the poseur. That is, the parodist and the poseur both make obvious to the nobleman something of what the expression of his embodied style entails (e.g. 1981/c.1930, p. 163). He is participatively aware that he is an authentic participant of the generic group and the other is not, even though the other may copy the nobleman's style. He need not consider whether or not he belongs, because he knows with certainty and unreflective confidence that he does belong.

Even though we have been focusing on the embodied and stylistic aspects

of speech genres, we would like to point out that these aspects are not separate from language. Part of our goal is to introduce a conception of language that involves the body. That is, by linking the notion of speech genres with participative consciousness and experience, we are able to introduce the possibility that language is integral to what people experience as being a phenomenological given. It is this approach that we develop throughout this dissertation in order to propose a version of cultural psychology that involves community and experience.

Furthermore, we would like to emphasize that embodiment of a speech genre also, as Bakhtin maintained, entails an ideological style. Bakhtin (1986/1952, 1990/c.1920, 1993/c.1920) noted that the embodied expression of a particular ideological perspective was very natural. When he used phrases such as “the objective unity of a domain of culture” (1993/c.1920, p. 2), he was addressing the all-encompassing immanent necessity entailed in speech genres. Bakhtin indicated that the speech genre has an objective unity: objective in the sense that it is grounded outside of the person and unified in the sense that there is dynamically agreed upon communal ideology that participants in a speech genre embody in their conduct (1986/1942, p. 93; 1990/c.1920, p. 37). To the participants in a speech genre, this communal ideology is irreducibly real and obvious.

On the surface, it may seem like we do not differ from social constructionism. For example, Gergen wrote “what one takes to be real, what one believes to be transparently true about human functioning, is a by-

product of communal construction" (2001b, p. 806). The notion of "communal" would seem to point in the same direction as us. However, when social constructionists like Gergen use the term "communal" he uses it in the sense of "communal rhetoric" (e.g. 2001b), which is indicative of how it referred to the employment of such a notion in conversation. As such, when social constructionists referred to the communal or "historical" (e.g. Gergen, 1985a), they were referring to how it is used in "relational interchange", which is basically conversation (e.g. Gergen, 1994). It is here that we again see how the social constructionist understanding of Bakhtin differs from what we propose. The construction of identity by means of changing generic style according to the demands of the situation downplays the communal standards experienced as immanently necessary.

Conclusion

By covering earlier works by Bakhtin, it is possible to introduce how living a communal style could be treated as central to his concept of speech genres. Bakhtin is praised for his move away from the self-contained cogito, a central position inherited by social constructionist movement and cultural psychologists. However, his exposition on the community as it is experienced has not been addressed and we seek to explore this link between sociality and the body throughout this dissertation. We have discussed how the embodiment of a speech genre could be seen to involve confident expression of a generic style that is not spelled out propositionally. Through

participating with others, the communal standards as to what constitutes the expressive style of a speech genre is naturally acquired in participative consciousness. It is by virtue of speech genres, so conceived, that communally situated agency is made possible. Bakhtin lays the potential groundwork for a psychology of culturally situated agency that accounts for immediate phenomenological experiential richness and complexity.

Faced with the need to both humanize and socialize its subject matter, the discipline of psychology is challenged to provide an adequate account for agency. We seek to address agent-like aspects of the human experience such as faithfulness, compellingness, commitment, and so on. The perspective presented by social constructionists initially seemed to provide a way in which psychology could account for such aspects of the human condition. However, due to the neglect of experience, social constructionism is limited in its ability to provide a culturally situated yet agent-like account of human conduct. Lacking an adequate psychology of agency is a significant problem because human experiences central to engagement in day-to-day life could be left shrouded in obscurity

This dissertation is an attempt to work towards a remedy of this lack by proposing an approach to cultural psychology, selfhood in particular, that places lived experience of culturally situated agency front and center. Indeed, this opening chapter has served to open up more questions than it answers. As such, the remainder of the dissertation involves elaborating upon the ideas in this chapter by spelling out the implications that fall from

Bakhtin's notion of speech genres, as we have articulated them.

Dissertation Outline

Being that we seek to expand upon the ideas presented above and Bakhtin wrote about novels and what they expressed about human experience, we are required to address Bakhtin's discussions on aesthetic expression. As such, chapter two involves an address of our appropriation of Bakhtin relative to a scholar who is closely associated with Bakhtin: Hubert Hermans. It reviews Hermans' reliance on the social constructionist interpretation of Bakhtin and Hermans' proposed understanding of the self that is known as the Dialogical Self (see Hermans & Kempen, 1993). Hermans conceived of the self as constructed in the narratives (stories) that we tell others and ourselves. Because Bakhtin often discussed his vision of human nature by way of interpreting novels, he would seem to naturally fit such an approach. However, we will claim that this is not necessarily the case. In order to bring to light how Hermans' interpretation of Bakhtin differs from ours, we discuss how Bakhtin approached the interpretation of artistic expression and how his approach revolves around the embodied and communality of speech genres. Moreover, this discussion will point out that Bakhtin can contribute to our understanding of selfhood in a manner that is different from Hermans.

Chapter three addresses how the view on speech genres that we put forward relates to how Bakhtin saw dialogue as fundamental to selfhood. One of the key players in cultural psychology and human development is

addressed: James Wertsch. Wertsch draws upon Bakhtin to promote a sociocultural approach to ontogenetic development that involves the claim that agents' development and action is mediated by social systems of signs and symbols. We seek to offer an alternative to Wertsch by revisiting Bakhtin and the sociocultural quality of embodied action inherent in Bakhtin's work. In particular, we seek to take issue with the notion of mediation because, as it is has been used by Wertsch, it implies a functional approach to language that undercuts the embodied quality of language and the communal quality of phenomenological immediate experience. Moreover, we will propose that mediation actually presupposes the communal quality of phenomenologically immediate experience. Our discussion addresses how it is possible to have a theory of embodied individual agency while still advocating a sociocultural conception of developmental psychology.

Where chapter three addresses dialogue as a general quality of selfhood, the fourth chapter examines what Bakhtin can contribute to a psychology that recognizes the challenges posed in postmodernity. Postmodern critique has found its way into the psychology of self largely through the efforts of Ken Gergen. As one of the leaders of the social constructionist movement, he has promoted a view that sees the self as socially constructed. This view treated the self as changeable and the result is that notions like faithfulness to oneself, which are generally thought to belong in the domain of a true core self, were rendered futile. However, Bakhtin offered a different view of embodied and lived self that expands Gergen's work in two ways: (1) it gives

us a different understanding of dialogue and how community shapes possibilities for self (curbing the ability to construct a self in endless directions), and (2) in so doing, calls for a return to the notion of faithfulness to oneself. We seek to provide an approach to the authorship/creation of self that does not sacrifice the postmodern emphasis of sociality, yet retains experiential notions like faithfulness.

Chapter five addresses how research could be conducted in light of the foregoing discussion. Since Bakhtin was concerned with action, we address an approach that has considered talk as action: discursive psychology as addressed by Derek Edwards and Jonathan Potter. There are two critiques that can be leveled this branch of social constructionism and these resonate with Bakhtin's own position, as we see it. First, these discursive psychologists have downplayed the role of wider communal practices (hence, neglecting communally situated agency). In order to address the interpretation of communal practices, we will draw on Garfinkel's (1967) ethnomethodology and conversation analysis (Sacks, 1995). These traditions are forerunners of discursive analysis and they are centrally interested in communal practices. They justify the use of conversation analysis as a technique for research. Second, discursive psychologists have downplayed the role of experience. While ethnomethodology and conversation analysis interprets communal practices, they do not consider experience. Bakhtin did consider experience as a communal practice. We address how experience can be interpreted as a communal practice by way of the techniques put

forward by ethnomethodology and conversation analysis. This chapter thereby brings together our forgoing work on Bakhtin with ethnomethodology and conversation analysis. It is our hope to offer an alternative to the practice of discursive psychology that responds to the two critiques.

Chapter 2

Bakhtin on the Novel and Aesthetic Expression: Towards a Bakhtinian Vision of the Dialogical Self

Introduction

Understanding the *self* requires recognition of its inseparable entwinement with culture. This statement has been central in the work of Hubert Hermans, who often claimed psychologists embrace Descartes' famous *cogito ergo sum* and treat the self in terms of a grand-I – a grand homunculus – that runs counter to this inseparable entwinement (e.g. Hermans, Kempen, & Van Loon, 1992; Hermans & Kempen, 1993; Hermans & Kempen, 1995; Hermans, 2001, 2002, 2003). As such, he argued that psychologists who work from this Cartesian perspective operate under the assumption that the self is locked within a separate and enclosed (self-contained) mind upon which culture operates as merely a source of external stimuli. While it may be difficult to actually locate any major theorist who is a strict Cartesian, we do acknowledge that the emergence of the social constructionist movement (e.g. Gergen, 1985a) and cultural psychology (e.g. Bruner, 1990; Shweder, 1991) has undermined the taken-for-granted assumption that self is self-contained subjectivity.

In order to reject self-contained subjectivity, Hermans has led a move to understand the self as a dynamic struggle among multiple personae. He drew on Bakhtin to argue that the self is better considered in terms of

"dialogue"[5]. Often Hermans addressed Bakhtin's discussion of the polyphonic novel in order to argue that the self is "dialogical" in the sense that it is a narrative construction emergent in inter-subjective exchange among interdependent personae. These personae, Hermans claimed, are not marshalled by a single grand-I.

However, we propose that Bakhtin could provide a different way of denying Cartesianism. A discussion of Bakhtin's notion of "realism" illuminates how the self is communal at an experiential plane in which inter-subjective exchange is anchored. Hence, a different appropriation of Bakhtin is possible and it involves an understanding of the phenomenological immediacy of experience. That is, we seek to account for the experiential dimensions of life that are exemplified in instances such as an immediate revulsion at the grotesque, a breathless arrest at the sublime, an irresistible care and commitment to another, and so on. By revisiting Bakhtin's discussion of the novel and comparing it to the way that Hermans has interpreted Bakhtin, we can offer a proposal for the Dialogical Self that takes into account such culturally orchestrated experience.

We seek to extend Hermans work by revisiting the notion of the Dialogical Self through two discussions: (1) addressing the centrality of experience in Bakhtin's notion of realism and how current theorizing neglects the communal quality of lived experience and (2) addressing how the communal quality of experience means that it is social at a experiential level that undergirds inter-subjective exchange.

Bakhtin's Discussion of Realism & the Communal Quality of Experience

Bakhtin (1990/1919, 1990/c.1920, 1990/1924) was concerned with aesthetics in his early work. This concern evolved into a concern with aesthetics of literature in the novel in terms of what they expressed about human life, which is the concern of this dissertation. Indeed, Bakhtin praised the works of Dostoevsky for its "realism" in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*:

> At the very end of his creative career, Dostoevsky defined in his notebook the distinguishing features of his realism in this way: "With utter realism *to find the man in man …* They call me a *psychologist; this is not true*. I am merely a realist *in the highest sense*, that is, I portray all the *depths of the human soul.*" (1984a/1963, p. 60, original emphasis).

And Bakhtin also wrote:

> But we must emphasize here that if Dostoevsky died 'having resolved nothing' of the ideological problems posed by his epoch, then nevertheless he died having created a new form of artistic visualization, the polyphonic novel – and it will retain its artistic significance when the epoch, with all its contradictions, has faded into the past. (1984a/1963 p. 38)

Bakhtin is potentially valuable for psychologists if we work towards unraveling his claim that Dostoevsky's realism involved a "new *form* of his artistic visualization of the inner man" (1984a/1963, p. 62). Such an unraveling cannot begin unless we are clear about what sort of realism is at stake.

Expressive Realism in Bakhtin

In regards to realism, as Bakhtin approached it, he wrote "Dostoevsky believed that this *new* task cannot be adequately performed by realism in the usual sense, that is, by what is in our terminology *monologic* realism" (1984a/1963, p. 61, original emphasis). Monologic realism referred to the claim that there is a reality about the inner man that could be definitively represented in descriptions of universal covering laws. This sort of realism would involve a definitively completed artistic expression that represents a given reality. It would involve an imitation or depiction of reality that is judged on how accurate the depiction is. According to Bakhtin, Dostoevsky did not give such a definitive account of anything, least of all, the inner man. Bakhtin wrote "[a]rtistic form, correctly understood, does not shape already prepared and found content, but rather permits content to be found and seen for the first time" (1984a/1963 p. 43). Bakhtin offered an alternative understanding of realism that differs from monologic realism because it involved revealing what people experience as real in a way that that they had not apprehended before. This understanding of realism differed from monologic realism insofar as it also shaped what is experienced as real, rather than representing an independent reality. We seek to explore this understanding of realism by referring to it as "expressive realism"[6]. While Bakhtin did not use this term "expressive realism", we use it because it articulates what Bakhtin was working on. In the essay on speech genres, he

talked about the “expressive aspect” of speech genres (1986/1952, p. 84). It is tempting to assume that Bakhtin referred to this aspect of speech genres as an expression of an emotional state. However, he rejected the idea of expression-as-telling-an-internal state because he saw it as an expression of communal way of being (e.g. 1990/c.1920, pp. 64 and following). Expression is not about expressing a subjective state. Rather, it is about the expressive style of a community constituted in language. We seek to bring this notion of expression together with Bakhtin’s claims about Dostoevsky realism. Hence, we will use the moniker “expressive realism”.

Dostoevsky was not the only author that Bakhtin praised for his realism. With regards to the work of Rabelais, Bakhtin wrote:

> The total makeup of the [artistic] image itself remains *thoroughly realistic*, but concentrated and compacted in it are so many essential and major aspects of life that its meaning far outstrips all spatial, temporal, and sociohistorical limits – outstrips them without, however, severing itself from the *concrete sociohistorical base* from which it sprang. (1981/c.1930, p. 223, emphasis added).

Aesthetic expressions, such as Dostoevsky’s novel or the grotesque imagery found in the work of Rabelais, involve rich expressions because they extend their meaning beyond the immediate socio-historical situation. The specific constituents of a particular culture such as its language, history, geographical location, and so on shape and enable an artist to express his work. Dostoevsky, for example, wrote in Russian and took for granted what he and

those in his community took for granted. We can see how his writing of the *Brothers Karamazov* was shaped by the use of different variations on names, where Aloysha is used in one place and Alexi is used in another (Dostoevsky, 2004/1880). The meaning of the formal verses informal names enabled Dostoevsky to express different kinds of relationships, formal verses informal, among heroes. Those who read him in 19th century Russia would take the same for granted, while some of us who read him now may not. However, aesthetic expression is not limited to the immediate socio-historical place of its writing because it speaks to people living in a different time and place. Dostoevsky's work was realistic to his contemporaries, but it also has meaning to us who read him today – especially for psychologists who are interested in what Bakhtin saw in regards to the self. This is why Bakhtin wrote about the aesthetic activity as "outstripping" and going beyond situated expression. A key to understanding art as extending beyond itself lies in understanding what Bakhtin meant by the "concrete sociohistorical base from which it sprang". We will address how this understanding then leads to insight about human experience.

When Bakhtin claimed that, for Rabelais, "the biological could not be separated from the social, historic, and cultural element" (1984b/1940, p. 406) and that "[Rabelais] wants to return both a language and a meaning to the body… and simultaneously return a reality, a materiality, to language and to meaning" (1981/c.1930, p. 171), he is discussing the way in which the world of experience is simultaneously communal and corporeal (see also

1984b/1940, p. 438). Bakhtin so related the body to the "socio-historical". In Bakhtin's philosophy, as we understand it, experience could not be separated from sociality. That is, an artist with admirable artistic visualization brings into focus the body entwined with community and we are seeking to understand how this can be possible.

In his discussion on artistic expression, Bakhtin (1990/c.1920) addressed how one's own experience is expressed in the art itself. Consider Bakhtin's (1984b/1940) discussion of the grotesque imagery in the work of Rabelais. Grotesque imagery, where the body is exaggerated and blown out of proportion, constitutes a central motif throughout Rabelais' work. For example, Rabelais wrote about giants decimating a nation by drowning people in urine (Rabelais, 1946/c.1534). Bakhtin argued that the grotesque image of the body is not expressed for the purposes of glib exhibitionism. The expression of grotesque imagery accomplished the important task of bringing readers into embodied awareness of the images presented. Grotesque imagery, as it is expressed in Rabelais, brings about an embodied participation with the work in that there is something the reader *feels* she has in common with the work itself. The reader may *feel* ill at ease with a detailed description of people drowning in urine or have a *felt sense* of revulsion. Readers of Rabelais experience an embodied participation in their corporeal response to the aesthetic imagery. Not only did Rabelais and his contemporaries have such an experience, those of us who read him today go through a comparable experience. To understand how this is possible is to

take a step towards understanding what it was about the "inner man" that is expressed in Dostoevsky by way of expressive realism.

At several points in his discussions of Rabelais, Bakhtin argued that the body should be thought of as a social entity and not a personal or biological entity. He wrote "[t]he individual *feels* that he is an indissoluble part of the *community*, a member of the people's mass body. In this whole the individual body ceases to a certain extent to be itself; …" (1984b/1965, p. 255, emphasis added). One enters into community – that is, coming together into a unity – with others by virtue of being caught up in the "people's mass body" in enacting a corporeal style along with others. In the act of living traditions together, people come to have a *felt* sense of life that brings about a *felt* unity with others. In short, we come to learn what it means to frown by frowning *along with* others. Our own "inner" experience, which grounds our emotional-evaluative stance in and towards the world, is ultimately communal by virtue of our living life with others: the participative consciousness. People participate in activities together that are re-enacted time and time again and, in the course of joint participation in social practices, establish a communal style of embodied expression. Understanding reaches its most acute point when understanding the experience of another involves a phenomenologically immediate sense of what the other living (see Poole, 2001 and chapter three). Two persons grieving over lost children participate in an embodied community that puts them on the same plane of experience. They participate in the same experience by virtue of the

embodied community into which they have been socialized. Because they have learned to cry by crying with others, they experience their grief by living it with others according to the communal standards that they have been given. Hence, we draw from Bakhtin the claim that even our dearly held experiential emotional-evaluative experiences are social.

The community and the body were thereby inseparable, for Bakhtin. Moreover, the inseparability of community and the body was entailed in Bakhtin's notion of speech genres. Bakhtin (1986/1952) argued that members of a community use a common lexicon, enact a similar embodied style, and espouse a similar ideology. For example, members of the military may use a common jargon, walk with measured strides and a straight back, and characterize nations in terms of enemies and allies. While Bakhtin used the term "speech" in reference to speech genres, it should be noted that we are illuminating how he used this notion to conceptualize a complete and deeply pervasive way of *being,* similarly enacted by members of a community. Bakhtin thereby brought to bear a conception of language that involves being. In other words, a speech genre is another way of describing the *communal body* lived by members of a community that constitutes a "concrete sociohistorical base" of aesthetic creation.

One learns to competently embody a speech genre in a natural manner, such that it is unreflectively lived. An appropriate way of enacting a world is deeply communal such that it is not often questioned, but rather experienced as unquestionably obvious. In the case of the novels written by Rabelais and

Dostoevsky, a kind of life is expressed that is both lived without reflection and lived as if it were naturally given by members of a speech genre. For example, things like seas of urine are simply taken as *being* revolting in their offense of our sensibilities and this revulsion is expressed in the art. This means that the lived experience is one of acting out speech genres as *naturally appropriate* manners of expression. Living experience is *lived naturally such that it is all but unknown in its tacit livedness.*

Bakhtin's (1990/c.1920, 1993/c.1920) early work on aesthetic activity addressed the role of the artist in light of this unreflective living of speech genres. He argued that an artist is able to "consummate" and "give shape" to what is lived unreflectively yet compels life (1990/c.1920). An artist's creative use of the materials of expression, such as words in the case of the novelist, gives new meanings that bend the communal standard of how these are used. This newness is the very creative quality that brings a reader outside of the life she naturally lives. When reading a great novel, the work reveals aspects of one's own life that are usually naturally lived. In other words, an artist grants a reader a position, by which she can get outside of the naturalness of a speech genre. The expression of experience in a work of art provides a way to see one's own experience that was formally tacit in its naturalness. A novelist like Dostoevsky, for example, expresses speech genres in the dialogue of his heroes and this dialogue makes the speech genres, which are naturally lived by the reader, less natural to the reader. That is, the artist expresses something that is already lived in an embodied

practice by members of a speech genre and enables them to get partly outside the speech genre when reading the work. The expressive achievement of a work of art makes it possible to partly get outside the natural living of speech genres. A work of art, in its creative genius, extends beyond a speech genre because it exposes life's natural livedness.

We can see how art permits naturally lived speech genres, to be found and seen for the first time in the way that it enables one to grasp what one already lives unreflectively. An adequate critique of an artist's work should thereby not regard the way that the artist failed or succeeded to *represent* reality but the degree to which the work brings people into new understanding of communally *lived* worlds of experience. The realism in the novel is an articulation that is expressive of what is experientially lived as given to members of a community while at the same time opening them up to outsideness through exposing their lives as situated within a particular sociocultural tradition – making life *un*-natural. For example, Ivan, in the *Grand Inquisitor* speech from Dostoevsky's (2004/1880) *Brothers Karamazov,* could prompt outsideness for someone in a religious tradition because it looks at that tradition in a different light. It thereby reveals aspects about the tradition that are naturally lived. Dostoevsky's artistic expression brings about a dawning awareness of a life already lived.

Implications for Extension of the Dialogical Self

It was Bakhtin's work on the novel that has partly inspired Hermans' view

of self, which is entitled the *Dialogical Self*. We deal with Hermans because there is a point of commonality between his work and ours. Hermans drew on Bakhtin to highlight that self should be social and we agree with this agenda (e.g. Hermans, 2001, 2002, 2003; Hermans et al., 1992; Hermans & Kempen, 1993; Hermans & Kempen, 1995). As we will explain below, Hermans' view of the Dialogical Self does not help us understand the phenomenologically immediate experience that we are interested in. In what remains in this section, we discuss how our proposal thus far differs from Hermans and we will explain below how it would change the way that we think about the Dialogical Self.

Hermans tended to follow Bakhtin to some degree by turning to the use of aesthetic notions, such as metaphors, in an effort to do away with what Bakhtin called monologic realism. The discussion put forth by Hermans often revolved around Bakhtin's "metaphor" of Dostoevsky's polyphonic novel, which represented the "essence of personality", in Hermans' view (Hermans et al., 1992, p. 28; Hermans & Kempen, 1993; Hermans, 2001, 2003). Hermans discussed the notion of metaphor particularly in terms of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980; especially Johnson, 1987) work on metaphors, which rested on what they call "experiential realism" (see Hermans et al., 1992; Hermans & Kempen, 1993). There are two features of experiential realism that found their way into Hermans' work.

First, experiential realism, and the notion of metaphor it involved, emphasized how we construct our *knowledge-of* reality by understanding

one conceptual domain in terms of another. Hermans and Kempen wrote, for example, "…metaphor is an indispensable structure of human understanding by which we can figuratively *comprehend* our world… [it] is an implicit comparison between two unlike entities. The quality of one entity is transferred to the other entity" (1993, p. 9, emphasis added). Thus, Hermans generally looked to the polyphonic novel as a metaphor by which we could *conceptually* understand the human mind, presumably to cast a new light on the latter. The important point is that his reliance upon this notion of metaphor trapped his interpretation of Bakhtin on a conceptual plane. Bakhtin's metaphor of the polyphonic novel became for Hermans a way of *conceptually* "comprehending" and constructing knowledge-of the self and mind.

Second, Johnson's (1987) notion of experiential realism did not involve the communal body. Rather, it involved the use of individually experience to construct knowledge-of life and mind. For example, experiential realism would have involve the use of a notion like "up" as a way of constructing sense regarding a state of mind. Knowledge of self could be constituted on the basis of how one can be "up" instead of feeling "down". This use of experience is different from Bakhtin, as we interpret him, because it was based on individual experience being metaphorically used. Bakhtin, on the other hand, was interested in experience as communally constituted. Expressive realism does not thereby deal with individual experience in the same way that experiential realism did. While both are about the

constitution of experienced reality, Bakhtin was interested in the irreducible sociality of this experience while the other was not.

The result of Hermans' reliance on experiential realism is that his version of the Dialogical Self retains the same focus on individuality, despite his commendable efforts to offer a sociocultural view of self. Instead of expanding his discussion into a theory dwelling on the interrelationship between community and the body, Hermans developed a notion of the body in terms of "positioning". He argued that people in the social world are positioned relative to one another in metaphorical terms of spatial placement. For example, one refers to one's superior as being "above" and one's inferior to being "below". Drawing upon Lakoff & Johnson (1980; Johnson, 1987), this metaphorical positioning was mapped onto the mind – the metaphorical positioning is internalized. That is, personae (including the likes of parents, teachers, mentors, friends, and so on) were taken as being incorporated into the psyche to constitute an intra-psychic population of characters. These personae were taken to engage in intersubjective exchange within the individual. Accordingly, Hermans wrote that Bakhtin is praising Dostoevsky for representing a "society of mind" populated by independent personae positioned relative to one another in a spatially, metaphoric sense (Hermans, 2002). The intra-psychic cosmopolitan of positioned personae is what Hermans called an "imaginal landscape" (1993, p. 58) that constituted the Dialogical Self. It is in this manner that Hermans argued for a conception of the "body in the mind" (Hermans et al., 1992, p.

25). The result was that the body, as Hermans conceived of it, was not a social entity, as we argue it is by way of our work on Bakhtin and expressive realism. Hermans' perspective left us with a notion of the body that is disembodied insofar as it is an intra-psychic imaginal landscape. Therefore, it was a conception that was less social than Bakhtin and this is important for our purposes because we are endeavouring to bring about an understanding of the phenomenological immediacy of embodiment that is also social.

We concur with Hermans' efforts at taking positive steps towards understanding the way that aesthetic notions can inform human psychology and that his efforts to move away from monologic realism. Our concern is not one of expressive realism in opposition to monologic realism per se. Rather, we are concerned with where to go after moving away from monologic realism. While it is unclear exactly what brand of social constructionism was at stake for Hermans, it is clear that Hermans draws upon Lakoff and Johnson's experiential realism and was generally concerned with socially constructed narratives that constitute conceptual *knowledge-of* experienced life. What is also clear is that this form of social constructionism was focused more on the individual, diluting its cultural quality. Where Herman's reliance upon Lakoff and Johnson's work on metaphor kept his interpretation of Bakhtin on a conceptual and a-social plane, our discussion of Bakhtin is more concerned with how life in its experiential richness is socially constituted. Thereby, reliance on experiential realism distinguishes our view from Hermans.

It is our position that cultural psychology has a blind spot insofar as the immediacy of phenomenological experience is not currently accounted for. Furthermore, we seek to retain an emphasis on sociality. As such, we conceive of cultural psychology as requiring an account of both experience and sociality. Expressive realism is not limited to conceptual *knowledge-of* life and so brings us to a way of understanding experience. Expressive realism also involves sociality because it involves communal experience lived in community. Our proposal opens up new possibilities for understanding life in its livedness and how, even at the plane of the body, such lived life is communal. Turning from experiential realism towards expressive realism enables us to add an account of experience. In contrast to Hermans, we are able to move from dealing with *knowledge-of* the mind to an understanding of lived experiences.

The importance of the forgoing claims was that acknowledging the crucial role of experience inherent in expressive realism allows us to move from a *conception of* the Dialogical Self to what it experientially means for us as psychologists to say that the self *is* dialogical. We will now turn to an explication of what expressive realism made available to Bakhtin and offer a conception of dialogue that will be used throughout the rest of this dissertation.

What Expressive Realism Made Available to Bakhtin

In what follows, we will sketch what expressive realism made visible to

Bakhtin about dialogue and how it can be extended beyond the manner in which Hermans conceived of it (this notion will lead us to a Bakhtin-inspired vision of the self in subsequent chapters).

A Bakhtin-Inspired View on Dialogue.

The Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics is the work where Bakhtin frequently addressed the notion of dialogue and he did so by discussing dialogue among heroes. To consider the notion of dialogue in Bakhtin's work, we will address what he wrote about heroes in the novel. When Bakhtin approached the heroes in the novel, he approached them with special interest in the particular point of view that heroes had:

> The hero interests Dostoevsky not as some manifestation of reality that possesses fixed and specific socially typical or individually characteristic traits, nor as a specific profile assembled out of unambiguous and objective features which, taken together, answer the question "Who is he?" No, the hero interests Dostoevsky as a *particular point of view on the world and on oneself*, as the position enabling a person to interpret and evaluate his own self and his surrounding reality. What is important to Dostoevsky is not how his hero appears in the world but first and foremost how the world appears to his hero, and how the hero appears to himself. … The hero as a point of view, as an opinion on the world and on himself, requires utterly special methods of discovery and artistic characterization. And this is so because what must be discovered and

characterized here is not the specific existence of the hero, not his fixed image, but the *sum total of his consciousness and self-consciousness*, ultimately *the hero's final word on himself and his world.* (1984a/1963, pp. 47-48, original emphasis)

The heroes' points of view were expressive of communal bodies. In other words, Bakhtin treated heroes as expressive of speech genres because he stated that "[t]he hero is assigned to a plot as someone fully embodied and strictly localized in life, as someone dressed in the impenetrable garb of his class or social station, his family position, his age, his life, and biographical roles" (1984a/1963, p.104). This meant that Bakhtin understood the consciousness of the heroes as socially constituted in the communal body – the participative consciousness discussed in chapter one. When we interpret Bakhtin's discussion of dialogue among heroes in the novel, we must bear in mind that we are addressing the expression of speech genres and all that they entail, including experience that is communally constituted. Bearing this in mind, we turn to the notion of dialogue.

Bakhtin wrote that dialogic relationships "are a much broader phenomenon than mere rejoinders in dialogue" (1984a/1963, p. 40). Dialogicality cannot thereby be reduced to turn-taking among individuals. A passage in Bakhtin's *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* revolves around dialogue and it illuminates the richness of Bakhtin's notion of dialogue (see 1984a/1963, p. 183). Here, he wrote that there is an "extralinguistic" quality to dialogue and we align with him to argue that this quality makes it

distinguishable from discursive rejoinders (we will come back to this passage in detail in chapter four). Bakhtin's understanding of how dialogue is "extralinguistic" was expressed in his notion of "speech genres" (Bakhtin, 1986/1979). A community speaks its *own extralanguage* in the sense that its members enact a generic phonology, jargon, bodily style, and ideological stance. Speaking from within a speech genre involves expressing an ideological purview on what is counted as right or wrong and this is naturally lived. This means that expressing oneself from within a speech genre involves enacting an all-encompassing ideological stance in and towards the world. For Bakhtin, the dialogue among heroes illuminated how expressing oneself in the style of a speech genre is a socially cultivated embodied sense of what constitutes the *right kind* of thing to say and the *right way* to say it. Enacting a speech genre is expressing a cultural tradition that is so deeply ingrained that it is lived as a personal experience. Throughout this dissertation, we will refer to "personal" experience but we do not mean a wholly individual subjective experience. Even though experience may be personally experienced – that is, experienced by a person located in space and time – it not to be taken as a wholly individual experience but rather as a communally constituted one.

To put it simply, dialogue in the polyphonic novel is expressive of our ongoing living expression of sociocultural traditions: speech genres. This means that, for Bakhtin, his work on the novel revealed to him that dialogicality involves *an aspect of life not reducible to discursive rejoinders*.

Discursive rejoinders – including the knowledge-of experience that is constructed by them – rest upon experientially lived speech genres. When Bakhtin wrote about dialogicality, he was writing about how we are fundamentally communal, even at the embodied plane that compels our actions.

When Bakhtin wrote about dialogical relationships, he was writing about the juxtaposition of speech genres in a societal condition of polyphony (we will expand upon this claim in chapters three and four). Just as society is constituted in the juxtaposition of speech genres that are expressed in the lives of people, the polyphonic novel involves the expression of speech genres in the dialogue among heroes:

> In this social world, *planes were not stages but opposing camps*, and the contradictory relationships among them were not the *rising or descending* course of an individual personality, but the *condition of society*. The multi-leveledness and contradictoriness of social reality was present as an objective fact of the epoch. The epoch itself made the polyphonic novel possible. *Subjectively* Dostoevsky participated in the contradictory multi-leveledness of his own time: he changed camps, moved from one to another, and in this respect the planes existing in objective social life were for him stages along the path of his own life, stages of his own spiritual evolution. … this experience only helped him to understand more deeply the extensive and well-developed contradictions which co-existed among people – among people, not among ideas in a single consciousness.

(1984a/1963, p. 27, original emphasis; see also 1984a/1963 p. 40)

Note how, for Bakhtin, the distinction between the novel and ostensive reality was constantly blurred, because he saw the former as expressive of the latter. A novel involves heroes' actions as expressions of speech genres just as human action is expressive of speech genres. The expressive quality of the novel also expresses the genres lived by readers in the dialogue among heroes. The polyphonic condition of society carries on through the novel. What Bakhtin thereby saw in novels, such as those written by Dostoevsky, was the polyphonic condition of society that was already lived (1981/c.1930, pp. 41-83). Bakhtin wrote that authors such as Dostoevsky lived in polyphony and they expressed it in their novels. For example, in regards to Rabelais, Bakhtin wrote "Beyond the images that may appear fantastic, we find real events, living persons, and the author's own rich experience and sharp observation" (1984b/1965, p. 438). Although Bakhtin did not refer to Rabelais' novels as polyphonic, there was discussion about the collision of social languages, speech genres, that was described as polyphonic in the Dostoevsky book (e.g. Bakhtin, 1984b/1940, p. 471). Bakhtin, in turn, recognized the polyphonic condition in which he was already naturally living, even under Stalinism. Bakhtin's efforts to show that it was impossible for there ever to be a non-polyphonic society also attested to how novels expressed the polyphonic life Bakhtin was already living. For example, Michael Holquist is a biographer and translator of Bakhtin and he wrote the following in the prologue to Bakhtin's book on Rabelais:

> Bakhtin, like Rabelais, explores through his book the interface between stasis imposed from above [i.e. the Stalinist regime] and a desire for change from below, between old and new, official and unofficial. In treating the specific ways Rabelais sought holes in the walls between what was held to be punishable and what was unpunishible in the 1530's, Bakhtin seeks gaps in those borders in the 1930's. (Holquist, 1984, p. xvi-xvii).

The mention of "old and new, official and unofficial" points to the different genres that were at play in Bakhtin's life. In this manner, novels brought Bakhtin into awareness of life that he already lived; permitting "content to be found and seen for the first time" (Bakhtin, 1984a/1963 p. 43). One thing that the novel revealed to Bakhtin was that that polyphony involves the expression of many speech genres in the dialogue of heroes' voices.

It was also the dialogicality of the polyphonic novel that enabled the novel to go beyond the socio-historical base from which it sprang. The *dialogue among* heroes expressive of speech genres is universal and not the speech genres themselves. In other words, it is the *juxtaposition of* ways of living that occurs in a polyphonic society and not any single speech genre itself that was made available to Bakhtin. Aesthetic expression presumably prompted Bakhtin to write that life is irreducibly polyphonic and thereby always involves the dialogical juxtaposition of speech genres. Bakhtin's discussion of aesthetic activity is the articulation that he, and presumably everyone else, is naturally living life in a polyphonic condition.

Hermans' View of Dialogicality Relative to Bakhtin

Bakhtin's notion of dialogue can be extended in a different direction relative to how it is used by Hermans, who has not addressed the communal body. Hermans and Kempen only hinted at the sort of social corporeality spelled out above through a short summary of Giambattista Vico in their treatise, *The Dialogical Self* (1993, pp. 1-10). They addressed Vico's discussion of the necessity of the body and then interpreted Vico as supportive of experiential realism. Vico's support, or lack thereof, of experiential realism is not the issue but, rather what Hermans and Kempen did with Vico. Instead of expanding this discussion into a theory dwelling on the interrelationship between sociality and embodiment, they developed a notion of corporeality in terms of "positioning" and thereby do not approach the communal body. The intra-psychic cosmopolitan of positioned personae is what they called an "imaginal landscape" (1993, p. 58) that constituted the Dialogical Self. In this context, when Hermans wrote about "dialogue," he generally wrote about it in terms of "intersubjective exchange" among real or imagined interlocutors (Hermans & Kempen, 1993). Self, he argued, can be thought of as a story that is generated when people give an account *of* their experience. It is by way of such a conception of dialogue that he treated the self as being constructed. Drawing upon a narrative conception of self (e.g. McAdams, 1985), Hermans argued that personae struggle for an opportunity to tell a self-story in the midst of intersubjective exchange. Hermans thereby

tended to draw upon the discursive conception of dialogue to explain how self-narrative comes to be told: in the course of intersubjective exchange, different voices employ rhetorical strategies in order to have their version of the self-narrative told or come to the fore. The self was treated as dialogical by virtue of such intersubjective exchange. That is, he treated dialogue as intersubjective exchange and, in so doing, treated it as rejoinders in a conversation.

We are inspired by Bakhtin to take a different view of dialogue in which dialogue involves personally experienced, yet communally constituted, embodied engagements with others. Instead of attending to Hermans' narrative *knowledge-of* self, our view of dialogue involves action within experience that is itself communal. We thereby avoid the risk of conceiving of sociality in terms of intersubjective exchange only – the latter conception having no account for the expression of the communal body. Dialogue, we propose, needs to be understood as expressive of the juxtaposition of personally experienced community, and this grants us a different role of sociality beyond that of mere intersubjective exchange.

Conclusion

We offer the claim that Bakhtin was interested in articulating a theory of self that addressed life in its experiential richness. Yet, Bakhtin did not relent in holding to the claim that such experience is communally constituted. Rather than dealing with knowledge-of self, Bakhtin dealt with the

constitution of embodied self.

We have recounted Bakhtin's approach to aesthetic expression in order to pave the way for a uniquely Bakhtinian version of the Dialogical Self compared to Hermans. Relative to Hermans' version of the Dialogical Self, our proposal brings the entwinement of community and embodiment to bear on a sociocultural view of self. We hope to offer a view of the Dialogical Self that gives us insight into how self can be sociocultural in nature, while not sacrificing experientially compelling and personally lived realities. We unfold the details of this offering over the next two chapters by addressing the ontogenetic development of self in chapter three and the authorship of self in chapter four.

Chapter 3

The Body and Language: Bakhtin on Development

Introduction

While there may be differences in regards to how much weight is granted to the role of culture, a host of researchers in the area of human development have made a general claim that our understanding of children and their psychological development is one that must come from endeavors that give serious weight to sociality (e.g. Burman, 2008; Carpendale & Lewis, 2006; Fogel, 1993; Rogoff, 2003; Valsiner, 2000; Wertsch, 1985). James Wertsch is a key player in this claim and he promoted a "sociocultural" perspective on human development. Wertsch argued that there are no aspects of higher mental functions (e.g. volitional self-control, logical memory, and thinking; 1985, pp. 61-65, 188; 2007, pp. 178-181) that emerge solely from the biology of self-contained autonomous agents. This is because language and culture *mediate* all action in Wertsch's view (e.g. 1985, p. 26-27).

This perspective drew upon a notion referred to as "mediation" and mediation gave language a central role (Wertsch, 2007). Mediation meant that whatever biological influences exist on human development, they were treated as shaped through meaning systems – especially language – as soon as an infant begins to acquire these meaning systems. As such, higher mental functions were treated as linguistically mediated. Wertsch argued that linguistic mediators are socially derived because they come from caregivers

who talk to a child. However, he pointed out how a notion of sociality beyond dyadic interaction is required and he thereby called for researches to consider how wider sociohistorical settings provide linguistic mediators (e.g. 1991, p. 46). Wertsch turned to Bakhtin's notion of speech genres in order to show how sociality beyond dyadic interactions plays a role in agents' activities (1991, p. 67; 1985, p. 225-226). Wertsch has championed a sociocultural view of ontogenetic development by coupling the work of Bakhtin with the notion of mediation, a notion that he drew from Vygotsky (Penuel & Wertsch, 1995; Lavelli & Wertsch, 2005; Wertsch, 1991, 2000, 2008; Wertsch & Tulviste, 1992). Our discussion is about Wertsch's claims as they relate to Bakhtin and not Vygotsky because our discussion aims to consider Bakhtin in terms of current cultural psychologists. Wertsch's view will be discussed in relation to our work on Bakhtin.

While we agree with Wertsch that language plays a central role in human development and that a sociocultural view of development is necessary, we will show that a different sociocultural view on development is possible. Our proposed alternative is inspired by Bakhtin's concern with socially orchestrated experience that has been a concern throughout this dissertation. As we propose below, Wertsch would differ from our proposal on the basis that we seek to include the communal body and this quality of sociocultural psychology was not a central concern for Wertsch. Our proposed manner of looking at development would retain an emphasis on sociality, thereby aligning with Wertsch, but we add an emphasis on the

experiential immediacy of action that is central to our appropriation of Bakhtin.

We will propose that the inclusion of the body is an important issue for the following reason. Wertsch's notion of mediation involves what we will refer to as a *functional approach,* because he repeatedly referred to the "function" of mediational systems such as language and how they enable volitional self-control – that is, agency (e.g. Werstch, 1985, 1998). On this view, language was considered a functional tool that people used to mediate their action. Wertsch's approach does not do away with the body all together in the sense that his work did make room for how one physically acts through the use of language. The body was only addressed in terms of physical action that is an outcome of the function of mediation (see Wertsch, 1985, p. 212). The problem is that the body was not treated as a living expression of a community and this treatment of the body, as we will explain below, is required for Wertsch's functional approach. That is, language was primarily addressed as a tool and we seek to propose an alternative that illuminates how speech genres are the conditions for tool use, setting language as the condition for tool use.

Our discussion addresses how Wertsch has appropriated Bakhtin in a manner that is different from our appropriation of Bakhtin. In particular, we consider speech genres in light of the forgoing discussions of expressive realism and participative consciousness. This chapter involves three points of discussion. First, we articulate Wertsch's view on Bakhtin in order to

orient readers to our discussion. This discussion involves giving more detail on the notion of mediation and how it relates to Wertsch's appropriation of speech genres. Second, by exploring some notions in Bakhtin and the source from which he drew them – Max Scheler's (1970/1913) notion of sympathy – it is possible to show how Bakhtin treated language as an embodied "emotional-volitional tone" (e.g. 1986/1952, pp. 79-86; 1990/c.1920; 1993/c.1920, pp. 28-37). We will explain how emotions, broadly conceived, are linguistic embodied dispositions to act that undergird the use of mediational tools. Third, Wertsch provided an account of how individual agents emerge through mediation. If we are to provide an alternative to Wertsch, we are then required to also show how individual agents emerge in a manner that does not rely on mediation. Bakhtin provides us with an account of the ontogenesis of individual agents that is thoroughly cultural, yet also allows for agency in terms of individual uniqueness. This account shows how dialogue, as it was introduced in the previous chapter, is a condition for individual development of self.

Wertsch's Sociocultural Theory & Bakhtin

In order to explicate our alternative to Wertsch's work, it is necessary to first explain Wertsch's general position and how he appropriated Bakhtin. Wertsch argued that understanding the development of a child's mind and how a child acquires volitional self-control (agency, on Wertsch's view) requires one to place emphasis on how action is mediated by language.

Wertsch (2001), for example, argued that

> …humans are basically tool-using animals, where the word *tool* is used in the broad sense that includes language and other sign systems as well as "technical tools"… The defining property of mediated action is that it involves an irreducible tension between active agents (individuals or groups) and the "mediational means" or "cultural tools" (terms I will use interchangeably) they employ to carry out action. (p. 512, original emphasis).

He pointed out how language functions as an intricate part of development, and one needed to recognize how it mediated a developing child's higher mental functions. Note that we are focusing on language rather than all of the possible systems that Wertsch addressed; this focus is due to the manner in which language is the dominant form of mediation dealt with by Wertsch and that bringing the body and language together, as we seek to do, brings many other potential mediational systems under the umbrella of language. A good example of the use of language to mediate psychology was in Wertsch's discussion of egocentric speech (e.g. 1985, pp. 108-115). He described how, starting around two years of age, children begin to engage in egocentric speech where they talk out loud to no one in particular. They talk like an outside observer describing what they are doing and what they are feeling. For example, a child named Tammy may say something like "Tammy pu' 'way toys" as she cleans up her toys. Wertsch argued that this speech is a transitional form of speech where a child is "internalizing" the linguistic

mediators provided by caregivers (ibid; 1998, pp. 46-58). In the case of the speech of the child above, it involved the child talking in the manner that others have spoken to her in order to direct her with this speech. The use of such speech marks how she was beginning to appropriate others' use of language for herself. Eventually, she would not engage in such speech out loud because it will become internalized. She could thereby be using the words spoken to her to speak to herself and regulate herself.

Wertsch argued that mental functions like thinking and self-regulation are enabled through such "internalization" of language (1985, pp. 61-67; 1991, pp. 28 & 32). Such enabling was considered possible because a child was considered able to "decontextualize" the language-use from the concrete situation where it was learned (Wertsch, 1985, pp. 56-57). Once language was internalized it could be decontextualized, meaning that it could be used by a child in a range of situations where the caregivers were not present. A child appropriated language for herself and uses it in a range of situation to regulate herself. Language came to be a context unto itself and it was not dependent on others using it. In the example above, the child would internalize language about cleaning up and use it to regulate herself in a variety of situations where cleaning was an issue. It is in this way that Wertsch wrote about the "voices" of caregivers being decontextualized by way of internalization (1991, pp. 86-89). It was these decontextualized voices that then became the mediational tools Wertsch saw as necessary for higher mental functions such as volitional self-control.

Note that the use of "internalization" did not erode Wertsch's sociocultural position. In fact, he wrote that "the term *voice* serves as a constant reminder that mental functioning of the individual originates in social, communicative processes" (1985, p. 13, original emphasis). The claim he put forward was that higher mental functions emerge from and in interactions with caregivers (Wertsch, 1985, pp. 61-67). For example, Wertsch & Tulviste wrote that "[m]ind extends beyond the skin… because human mental functioning, on the intramental as well as the intermental plane, involves cultural tools, or mediational means" (1992, p. 551). To paraphrase Wertsch (1991) [7], any facet of a child's higher mental functions first appear on a linguistic cultural plane and then on a psychological plane. Furthermore, Wertsch sought to show how mediated action is social in a broader sense that extends beyond dyads. He endeavoured to show how "specific historical, cultural, and institutional settings are tied to various forms of mediated action" (1991, p 46; see also 1985 pp. 225-230; Wertsch & Tulviste, 1992). He wrote that it was important to broaden the social origins of mediated action in this manner and argued that Bakhtin could help in this regard.

In particular, Wertsch appropriated Bakhtin's (1986/1952) notion of "speech genres" and coupled it to the notion of mediation (e.g. Wertsch, 1991, 1998). He described Bakhtin's notion of a speech genre as a typical situation of speech communication marked by the manner in which speakers use a generic form of speech (Wertsch, 1991, pp. 103-110). This approach to speech genres claimed that specific historical, cultural, and institutional

settings are marked by generic repertoires of language styles. Wertsch wrote: "voices … are not those of isolated, ahistorical individuals; they are the ideological perspectives or 'axiological belief systems' (Bakhtin, 1981 [sic], p. 304) that can adequately be understood only in terms of a specific sociohistorical setting" (1985, p. 226, citation of Bakhtin is in the original). It was thus argued that Bakhtin saw each instance of language-use as coming from a particular ideological perspective, and Wertsch thereby drew on Bakhtin's phrase "axiological belief *systems*" to highlight how a perspective is generic to a community. Wertsch highlighted how acquiring the language of a community meant learning to produce utterances that were generic to the members of the community in question. This extended to the ideology of how language about psychology should be used. Linguistic tools used by caregivers function to structure the mind. Such tools were taken to draw upon a generic repertoire of mediational tools and these tools specified higher mental functions. The implication of this position was that Wertsch treated acquiring a speech genre as acquiring tools that mediate one's higher mental functions and action[8]. He wrote that Bakhtin viewed "speech genres as the means by which communicative and mental action can be organized" (1991, p. 104). In short, *speech genres were treated as systems of mediational tools rooted in sociohistorical, cultural, and institutional settings.*

This chapter diverges from this understanding to speech genres and then spells out the implications for development. We start from a shared position with Wertsch: that psychological developmental is best understood from a

sociocultural paradigm. From this starting point, we will explain our understanding of what Bakhtin could have meant by speech genres relative to how Wertsch has used them and the implications that come from our understanding of speech genres. This work will lead to an understanding of the entwinement of culture, development, and phenomenologically immediate experience.

Speech Genres & Emotional-Volitional Tones

We agree with Wertsch, insofar as his contention that speech genres involve different communities that constitute a society. Our divergence from Wertsch lies in his appropriation of speech genres in a way that does not include the communal body. This difference amounts to diverging views on how Bakhtin approached language.

When it came to Bakhtin's views on the phenomena of language, he wrote about it in terms of "translinguistics" or "metalinguistics" (e.g. 1984a/1963, p. 183; see Morson & Emerson, 1990, pp. 123-171) in order to explicate how language-use is always more than formal grammatical linguistics. Wertsch noted these terms and how Bakhtin promoted a view of language that was against understanding language as a formal system separate from everyday speech (Wertsch, 1985, p. 225; 1991, p. 51 & 61). We concur with Wertsch until this point. However, we diverge when Wertsch addressed "translinguistics" or "metalinguistics" to argue that Bakhtin was referring to "the organization of signs and their significance in social context" (Wertsch,

1985, p. 225). In order explain this divergence, we will unfold more of how we understand Bakhtin's approach to language. This unfolding will be founded on the foregoing discussion of the participative consciousness, expressive realism, and speech genres.

Our previous discussion of speech genres highlighted how they involve human activity and communal bodies in general. This claim means that speech genres involve more than just generic repertoires of vocabulary. Participants in a speech genre express not only a generic vernacular of terms, jargon, and colloquialisms, but also generic ideologies – the *oughts* that are lived as a matter of course by participants in a speech genre. Furthermore, speech genres involve generic embodied styles. A speech genre is expressed in a generic style that includes embodied aspects ranging from accent and cadence to style of dress. Bakhtin conceived of a speech genre as communal enactments of generic constellations of words in generic embodied styles to express generic oughts. Where speech genres are noted for involving an embodied style, our previous chapters proposed that Bakhtin also treated the "inner" experience as integral to speech genres. He thereby granted a view of language that conceives of it as bound up in ideology and the body. One uses the words that one naturally *feels* one ought to say and expresses them in the embodied style that one *experiences* as naturally appropriate. What is this "feltness"?

Scholars, translators, and biographers of Bakhtin have argued that interpreting Bakhtin requires recognizing the philosophers that Bakhtin

appropriated in his work and we think that this holds for describing this feltness (see Brandist, 1997, 2002; Emerson, 1997; Poole, 1998, 2001). Based on histographical work by Poole (2001), we suggest that Bakhtin's views of early childhood development, agency, and what constitutes this feltness were heavily influenced by the phenomenology of Max Scheler. For example, Bakhtin drew directly on the terminology used by Scheler when he addressed sympathy – a concept central to Bakhtin's early work that involved what he meant by feltness (e.g. Bakhtin, 1990/c.1920, pp. 81-87).

At the most general level, when Scheler (1970/1913) referred to sympathy, he referred to an understanding that one gains when one intends to gain a sense of how life feels to another emotionally:

> All fellow-feeling [i.e. sympathy] involves intentional reference of the feeling of joy or sorrow to the other person's experience. It points this way simply qua feeling – there is no need of any prior judgment or intimation "that the other person is in trouble"; nor does it arise only upon sight of the other's grief, for it can also "envisage" such grief, and does so, indeed, in its very capacity as feeling. … Fellow-feeling proper, actual "participation" presents itself in the very phenomenon as a re-action to the state and value of the other's feelings. (1970/1913, p. 14)

This understanding includes a sense of emotions that another is in the midst of living and not just an intellectual assent to another's state of being. For example, if one sympathizes with another, who is angered at an injustice, one feels indignation just like the indignant other instead of merely giving

intellectual assent to the indignation. While Bakhtin drew upon Scheler's discussion of sympathy in Bakhtin's discussion of "sympathetic co-experiencing" (1990/c.1920, pp. 81-87), there are substantial differences between the two theorists that we should note. Bakhtin and Scheler both dealt with the problem of understanding other minds (an issue that obviously falls in with sympathy) and the body. We will address the problem of other minds in the next section but we will mention that Scheler grounded the possibility of understanding another's mind, sympathy, in universal love of God. Bakhtin, as we will explain in more detail below, treated sympathy differently because he saw it as possible via the body and lived co-experience. In short, Bakhtin retained the role of the body and dropped the religious grounding in favor of community. One of the hallmarks of sympathy for both Bakhtin and Scheler is co-participation in the emotion of another: to be sympathetic is to participate to some degree in the emotional experience of another. When we are writing about inner feeling in Scheler, we are addressing emotional experience, broadly conceived.

Likewise, in Bakhtin there was the same emphasis on inner feeling in reference to emotion (e.g. 1986/1952, p. 84; 1990/c.1920, pp. 81-87). However, it is important to also show how emotion is related to agency and to relationships with others. Bakhtin wrote: "those signs [i.e. language] determine the complex *tonality* of our consciousness, which serves as an emotional-evaluative context for our understanding" (1986/1974, p. 164, original emphasis). When Bakhtin referred to tone, he was using it to

express the idea of an emotional disposition (e.g. 1993/c.1920, p. 33). For instance, one can express a jovial *tone* in all that one does. Bakhtin was addressing the participative consciousness with the invocation of the notion of consciousness in the above quote. What we seek to add is that is that the participative consciousness involves a bodily disposition, a preparedness to act in a particular manner in light of what one experiences as on hand. It should be clear that emotion, which constitutes a disposition towards action, is not treated as a simple nervous system response to the world. Note, for instance, that emotionality is evaluative and involves the expression of judgment about the world (ibid.). One is happy because a situation is experienced as good, and one is sad because a situation is experienced as distressing. Entwined with judgment is the notion of value. Emotionality, for Bakhtin, referred to values and what is important and meaningful to participants in a community. In reference to experience, Bakhtin was referring to the emotional judgment of value and meaning that is part of experience lived in participative consciousness. Such experience thereby involved the body and, as we will discuss in more detail below, language.

For example, one who experiences a jovial tone is disposed to enact a generally jovial style. The one living a jovial tone would look out a window to a rainy street and experience a lovely spring shower in the expression of this disposition. The rain is part of experience that is constituted in the living of an emotional-evaluative tone. Another living a pessimistic tone would look out into the rain to experience something more like depressive grey

drudgery in the living out of the pessimistic disposition. As such, Bakhtin indicated in the quote above that language shapes how this tone is an emotional-evaluative disposition that shapes how we experience and constitute life and how we are disposed to act on the basis of this experience. Each of our imaginary people apprehends something different but it is not by way of individual differences. Rather, the difference would lie in the communities that they participate in. It is because we are disposed to *act* on the basis of emotionality that Bakhtin wrote about the "emotional-*volitional* tone" (e.g. 1986/1952, pp. 79-86; 1990/c.1920; 1993/c.1920, pp. 28-37, emphasis added).

In regards to language, Bakhtin also wrote: "In the actual life of speech, every concrete act of understanding is active: it assimilates the word to be understood into its own conceptual system filled with specific objects and emotional expressions" (1981/c.1937, p. 282). When Bakhtin used terms like "concrete" or "materiality" (Bakhtin, 1984b/1940), he was referring to the body as we described it above. As such, the quote expresses how, in the living of language (i.e. speech), our experience is active insofar as we shape our experience rather than merely talking about it (as in done in social constructionism; see chapters two, four, and five). It is important to note how emotionality was tied in with this linguistic activity of shaping. Bakhtin's linkage of language, thereby also speech genres, with experience entailed a dispositional tone. Thus, expressing oneself from within a speech genre is to express generic vocabulary, oughts, and embodied styles that are

an emotional-volitional experience – both the bodily enactment (e.g. smiling at a friend) and the experiential aspect (e.g. *feeling* joy in the smiling).

In sum, when Bakhtin addressed the body, he addressed our experience of the world in terms of the emotional-volitional tones. A campus bell, for instance, is inseparable from emotionality – perhaps a panic and rushed feeling to act. As such, we draw from Bakhtin how language can be understood to constitute the world that people experience and this experience is communal by virtue of participative consciousness.

Unlike Wertsch, we claim that is that expressing oneself in a speech genre is living a participative consciousness that enacts a world experienced with phenomenological immediacy. This proposal is inspired by Bakhtin's argument that experience of the world involves standards of value lived in our emotional-volitional tones (e.g. 1993/c.1920, p. 33). For example, when a member of a fundamentally religious speech genre finds himself in a pub, Bakhtin would argue that this person, with phenomenological *immediacy,* experiences the bar *as* seedy and lascivious. This person's experience of the world is inseparable from the emotional-evaluative weight that the world possesses at that moment in his lived experience of it. Consequently, the pub *is itself* experienced *as* seedy and lascivious. The implication is that there is a dimension of human experience that is pre-reflective yet inherently linguistic. The experience that comes before a *discussion of* the experience is linguistic[9]. *We accordingly see language as embodied action*.

What we gain from the discussion of sympathy in Bakhtin is that the

experiential immediacy of the world is linguistically constituted. Coming to participate in a speech genre is coming to bodily *enact* a world by virtue of living an emotional-volitional tone. Here we see a potentially different notion of translinguistics and metalinguistics that sets us apart from Wertsch. Language and speech genres are described in these terms insofar as they involve an emotional-volitional tone that is an expression of a community. Hence, the translinguistics and metalinguistics that Bakhtin addressed could be understood in some way other than a mediational tool. Where Wertsch took the terms to refer to repertoires of tools, we take them to address how the pre-reflective experience of the world is linguistic.

The critique that we bring forward is that the notion of mediation presumes the pre-reflective experience of the world that is linguistic. In order to explicate this claim, consider what the notion of a mediating tool implies. For example, consider two notions that Wertsch addressed: communication and self-regulation (2007, p. 181; see also 1985, pp. 61-65, 81). On Wertsch's view, communication becomes possible when a child acquired a word. A child could use the word in the presence of those who know its meaning even though the child could not know what the word means. Over time, through the *use* of the word inappropriately, the child was subject to correction from others. As the meaning of the word was refined, it *functioned* to shape the child's thinking. By way of a communal sign, the word, a child's mind was shaped like others who use the word and the child could then meaningfully communicate with others. The case was similar in

regards to self-regulation. A child could learn a word and internalize it. In so doing, she could use the word to mediate her action. She was able to mediate her thoughts so that they are similar to the caregivers who taught the word. It in this way that mediational tools "implicitly mediate" a child's mental functions that determine action (see Wertsch, 2007, pp. 182-185). Both examples required a background of communal practice. A standard of appropriateness regarding the use of the word must have already been in place for the child to develop. Likewise, there must be a background of communal practices that anchors what kinds of self-regulation would be considered appropriate. Without speech genres anchoring mediational means, such as words, mediational tools would have no meaning or appropriate use.

Furthermore, Bakhtin's already cited comment that "every concrete act of understanding is active: it assimilates the word to be understood into its own conceptual system filled with specific objects and emotional expressions" (1981/c.1937, p. 282), has implications for our discussion of how mediation presumes the communal body. Instead of considering how acquiring language functions to put a child on the same communicative or psychological plane, we propose that acquiring language puts a child in the same experiential world as others. Language does not function as a tool, in our view, because language constitutes the world in which tools are used when it is acquired. Rather than seeing language as a means to communicate and self-regulate, we see it as co-participation with others. That is, our view

is that the appropriate use of the word is inseparable from the experiential world that is lived with it. Likewise, self-regulation would not be about ordering mental functions by way of mediational tools. It would, instead, be about participating with others in the same generic mode of being. Bakhtin offered an understanding of the unity between language and the communal body, giving a thoroughly communal account of agency. As such, *our proposal moves from mediation to participation*.

Wertsch appropriated the notion of speech genres to treat them as a repertoire of tools that can be acquired to enable agency. Wertsch wrote that mediating tools "provide the *link or bridge between* the concrete actions carried out by individuals and groups, on one hand, and cultural, institutional, and historical settings, on the other" (Wertsch et al., 1995, p. 21, emphasis added). Language was treated as mediational tools enabling higher mental functions such as volitional control. Hence, agency was established by way of mediational tools. On Wertsch's view, the tools were appropriated to mediate higher mental functions and the standards of appropriation are also the tools (e.g. Wertsch, 2007, p. 181). We take a different view than Wertsch because he explained the tools in terms of the tools and we are seeking to understand the experience that undergirds a community's use of such tools. That is, by virtue of co-participation, we come to have mediational tools such as words and we do not treat the tools as the explanation for co-participation. The "bridge", which Wertsch addresses, is not necessary on our view because understanding language is to understand

embodied agency that backgrounds tool use. In other words, our appropriation of Bakhtin considers the "actions carried out by individuals and groups" to be the "cultural, institutional, and historical setting". The standards of appropriateness for how tools should be used are accounted for on our view. That is, our appropriation of Bakhtin provides a background that is already presumed.

It is true that Wertsch touched upon the notion of corporeality when he wrote about the "materiality of mediational means" (e.g. 1998, p. 30). However, this discussion pertains to artifacts that, in his terms, constitute

> sign systems, such as maps and mechanical drawings [that] have a clear-cut materiality in that they are physical objects that can be touched and manipulated. Furthermore, they can continue to exist across time and space, and they can continue to exist as physical objects *even when not incorporated into the flow of action*. (1998, p. 30, emphasis added).

This view of materiality is different from our view of the emotional-volitional acting body spelled out by Bakhtin. In fact, Bakhtin could be understood in a way that treats such sign systems as expressions of a community, because they are part of the embodied activities lived as part of speech genres. Part of an engineer's community, for example, involves these signs because she must talk about them with others, they are used to express the world, and she would have an emotional-volitional commitment to these signs being used *appropriately*. Consequently, distinguishing language from material "artifacts" is more difficult than one would first consider and they, again, presume the

linguistic embodied background that we have been discussing.

We will now turn to address development by proposing a view that takes communal bodies as central.

Bakhtin on the Emergence of Individual Agents

Turning to language and its relation to the body enables us to propose a different version of sociocultural developmental psychology, relative to Wertsch. Our proposal is intended to incorporate the embodied immediacy of life. Our discussion will now spell out the implications of our comments on the socio-linguistic quality of emotional-volitional tones and, consequently, communal bodies.

Bakhtin (e.g. 1990/c.1920, 1993/c.1920) addressed early childhood development. He wrote about how the inner and the outer body, respectively emotionally-volitional experience and embodied expressive style, are socially constituted. In one of his early works, made the following comments about early childhood development in this context:

> The plastic value of my outer body has been as it were sculpted for me by the manifold acts of other people in relation to me, acts performed intermittently throughout my life: acts of concern for me, acts of love, acts that recognize my value. In fact, as soon as a human being begins to experience himself from within, he *at once* meets with acts of recognition and love that come to him from the outside – from his mother, from others who are close to him. The child receives all initial determinations

> of himself and of his body from his mother's lips and from the lips of those close to him. (1990/c.1920, p. 46, emphasis added).

We bring up this quote again to emphasize that the most important point, for our purposes, was the pairing of "experiencing himself from within" with others' acts. Here, we see the notion of the participative consciousness and we now turn to the implications that is has for our understanding of child development. Following this theme and demonstrating that we are addressing a theme that remained constant throughout Bakhtin's career, approximately four years before his death he wrote that

> Everything that pertains to me enters my consciousness [i.e. participative consciousness], beginning with my name, from the external world through the mouths of others (my mother, and so forth), with their intonation, in their emotional value assigning tonality. I realize myself initially through others: from them I receive words, forms, and tonalities for the formation of the initial idea of myself. … Just as the body is formed initially in the mother's womb (body), a person's consciousness awakens wrapped in another's consciousness. (1986/c.1970, p. 138)

Emotional-volitional experience was socio-linguistically constituted on Bakhtin's view. He wrote above that the cultivation of one's emotional-volitional tone is inseparable from embodied participation in life with others. This quote shows how Bakhtin radically socialized personal experience. For the present, we are interested in the radical socialization of phenomenologically immediate experience and how a "person's

consciousness awakens wrapped in another's consciousness".

Bakhtin's position on the emotional-volitional tone and the public quality of lived experience has its roots in Scheler (1970/1913), who argued that it is impossible to say that our own individual self and its experiences are ours alone. That is, Scheler argued that the "same experience can be given both 'as our own' *and* 'as someone else's'." (1970/1913, p. 246, original emphasis). He took the argument further to make the case that internal perception – that is one's own emotional-volitional sense of one's self – involved both the self and others. This claim distinguishes us from Wertsch and social constructionists, by virtue of the attention we pay to experience. Consider how Scheler wrote that many of people's experiences are *neither* theirs nor someone else's:

> In other words, a man tends, in the first instance, to live more in *others* than in himself; more in the community than in his own individual self. This is confirmed by the facts of child psychology… The ideas, feelings, and tenderness that govern the life of a child, apart from general ones such as hunger and thirst, are initially confined entirely to those of his immediate environment, his parents and relatives, his elder brothers and sisters, his teachers, his home, his people, and so on. Imbued as he is with "family feeling," his own life is at first almost completely hidden from him. (1970/1913, p. 247, original emphasis)

Scheler thereby brought what is normally treated as *personally felt* experience into the realm of community and argues that "…'intra-mental' self-perception is a complete fiction" (ibid., p. 252). Scheler claimed that the

socialization of personal experience comes through what he called the "vital consciousness". Vital consciousness referred to the way that we have an embodied style of being that we naturally act without a second thought. Vital consciousness was socially constituted because it belonged to the plane of embodied participation in life with others. Scheler argued that it is in movement/expression of the socially constituted vital consciousness in which perception, whether self-perception of otherwise, is acted. For example, he noted how we perceive shame in the blushing that we have learned through participating in a community where blushing is enacted at normatively appropriate instances (ibid., p. 10). Scheler was arguing that we perceive ourselves from *within* the flow of experience of life with others from the moment of birth; as opposed to perceiving ourselves through mediational tools when vocabulary begins to be acquired.

Scheler's (1970/1913) notion of vital consciousness was re-expressed in Bakhtin's (1990/c.1920, 1993/c.1920) notion of the "participative consciousness". When Bakhtin referred to the participative consciousness, he was referring to the way that our own *inner* experience is in our embodied participation in speech genres *with* others. However, Scheler ultimately treated the vital consciousness as the midway point between the body and the metaphysical soul and he grounds this soul in the absolute value of God's love. Bakhtin differed at this point when he wrote about the soul as emergent in communal life (1990/c.1920, p. 101). In this manner, Bakhtin moved away from a metaphysical a priori that was part of Scheler's work on

sympathy.

Regardless of the differences, the similarities between Bakhtin and Scheler grant us insight into the claims that Bakhtin inspires about childhood development. When Bakhtin wrote that as soon as a child "begins to experience himself from within, he at once meets with acts of recognition and love that come to him from the outside" (1990/c.1920, p. 46), he was addressing the participative consciousness as it is cultivated in children. According to Bakhtin, when parents engage in "recognition", they were acknowledging and responding to another. That is, to recognize a child is to respond to her and thereby bring them into participation in life that includes socialization. This recognition involves normative correction that we addressed in the participative consciousness. Bakhtin was, thereby, referring to the children being born into participation in speech genres that constitute worlds of experience lived with others. Like Scheler, Bakhtin treated the embodied activities of a child as activities that are constituted by caregivers enacting speech genres. For example, parents in one speech genre may orient a child in a face-to-face pose and this would shape how the child would eventually engage with others, even in eventual conversation. Caregivers in a different speech genre may orient a child differently and develop a different embodied mode of being. Consequently, our perspective on a Bakhtinian developmental psychology starts from a place where there is no immediate distinction between an individual and community. An individual is social because language is bodily lived in concert with others. That is, people are

social at an embodied level that amounts to a co-participation with others in the same speech genre.

When Bakhtin (1990/c.1920) wrote about children learning to live a language in this manner, this discussion was couched in a discussion of different kinds of sympathy that he drew from Scheler (1970/1913). In particular, Bakhtin (1990/c.1920, p. 16; Poole, 2001, p. 116) drew upon Scheler's discussion of "heteropathic identification", which Scheler classified as an immature form of sympathy enacted by children and distinct from what he considered pure sympathy, which we will discuss below (1970/1913, p. 23). Heteropathic identification involved mergence between self and other where the experience of self or other is such that there is no appreciable individuality. When Scheler wrote about "child psychology" in terms of how "a man tends, in the first instance, to live more in others than in himself; more in the community than in his own individual self" (1970/1913, p. 247), he was describing heteropathic identification. That is, he argued that children are wholly identified with another in a heteropathic manner. Since Bakhtin endorsed the notion of vital consciousness, and he endorsed the notion heteropathic identification, it is quite likely that Bakhtin agreed with Scheler's claims regarding the heteropathic identification of children (Bakhtin, 1990/c.1920, p. 16; Poole, 2001, p. 116).

In Bakhtinian terms, this means that children are initially wholly caught up into languages (i.e. speech genres/communal bodies) lived by caregivers. From birth, children are in the flow of participation with others as we

described above. This claim means that they are socialized into speech genres through the actions of caregivers. Scheler and Bakhtin give us a view of early childhood development that begins by being wholly caught up in speech genres without any individual agency or differentiation.

However, it is necessary that such a sociocultural account of agents can be retained without dissolving them wholly into purely social phenomena, where any form of individuality would be an illusion. That is, heteropathic identification can lead us to a place where we end up with a theory of agency without *individual* agents. This sort of theorizing would run counter to Bakhtin's preoccupation with an individual's unique being as an event (1993/c.1920) and his concern for individual "responsiveness" to another (e.g. 1986/1952, p. 76; 1990/c.1920, p. 60). Responsiveness involved individual agents' unique activities and choices in spite of how people are socioculturally constituted. A problem to which Bakhtin wrote was how to retain unique individuality while not relinquishing either the manner in which agents were communally/linguistically constituted, or the way that communities constitute a world that was experienced.

Wertsch's account of the emergence of volitional control and self-regulation asserted that individual agents emerged through mediation. In his view, a child acquired tools for mediation and transformed them in her own unique manner (e.g. 1991, p. 32). An adequate alternative to Wertsch should also address individuality.

As such, a viable alternative to Wertsch should explain how a child moves

from heteropathic identification to a place of individual uniqueness. Scheler wrote that "[o]nly very slowly does [a child] raise his mental head, as it were, above the stream flooding over it, and find himself as a being who also, at times, has feelings, ideas, and tendencies of his own" (1970/1913, p. 247). The problem that emerges in understanding development of individual agency is one of understanding the emergence of otherness or differentiation. In other words, how does a child move from heteropathic identification to individual differentiation? While Scheler noted that differentiation happens, he does not explain how. Bakhtin does give us insight into how otherness emerged, adding to Scheler, and illuminating our understanding of early childhood development. This illumination is couched in the relationship between language and the body.

To address otherness and the emergence of individual agency, it is necessary to examine Bakhtin's (1984a/1963, 1990/c.1920) notion of polyphony (also termed as heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1981/c.1937). Wertsch described the notion polyphony in terms of multi-*voice*dness (Wertsch, 1991, 1998). In order to present our proposal, we must address our appropriation of Bakhtin's concept of *voice* relative to Wertsch's appropriation of the notion.

It is often quoted that voice refers to a "speaking consciousness" (Bakhtin, 1984a/1963; e.g. Wertsch, 1991). In Wertsch's case, he took "voice" to mean a set of mediational tools that provided "a speaking subject's perspective, conceptual horizon, intention, and world view" (1991, p. 51). However, our

position is that speaking consciousness refers to the notion of participative consciousness that we spelled out in chapter one. In other words, "voice" referred to the expression of the participative consciousness of a speech genre such that it is the expression of a language lived by a community. This means that a voice is not merely "a speaking subject's perspective, conceptual horizon, intention, and world view". To express oneself is to give voice to a speech genre in all its communally embodied richness. Where Wertsch referred to voice as a mediating tool, Bakhtin treated it as a deeply embodied expression of a community. Our goal is to assert how voice is expressive of community, yet also entails individuality.

When Bakhtin wrote about polyphony he was primarily addressing the manner in which society is constituted by a plurality of speech genres expressed in embodied lives, but polyphony also leads to individuation in children and adults (the latter will be described in the next chapter). The fact that there are multiple communities in a society means that there are multiple speech genres that an individual can participate in. For example, a caregiver may live speech genres of a religious community, hockey team, and workplace. The emotional-volitional tones of more than one genre are expressed in a single act because a speaker may express himself in one generic style while the utterance contains overtones expressive of different speech genres. As such, Bakhtin (1984a/1963, 1984b/1940) would argue that each utterance made by the caregiver would be multi-voiced. Consequently, there is never a situation where one speaks from within a

single speech genre in isolation. An example that Bakhtin (1984b/1940) was fond of was humor and irony in the work of Rabelais and it illustrates polyphony even though Bakhtin did not specifically call Rabelais' novels polyphonic. Consider how Bakhtin wrote: "In Rabelais we see the speech and mask of the medieval clown, folk and carnival gaiety, the defiance of the democratic cleric, the talk and gestures of the mountebank – all combined with humanist scholarship, with the physician's science and practice, and with political experience" (1984b/1940, p. 72). He demonstrated how Rabelais expressed multiple speech genres and we would say that Rabelais' work was thereby *polyphonic* in its expression.

What we can draw from the notion of the polyphonic condition is that, for Bakhtin, life was living a situation of commonality and uncommonality. For example, a child may live a common emotional-volitional tone with another by virtue of co-participation with another in a speech genre. Hence, they have an "intuitive" sense of another's emotional-volitional tone (Bakhtin, 1993/c.1920, p. 30). At the moment of interaction, there are uncommon tones from speech genres that are not lived together. This polyphonic condition is important because it provides insight into the kind of participative experience into which a child is brought. We can see how Bakhtin would argue that a child is first brought along in the rhythm of commonality among caregivers. A lack of experience means that a child is initially shielded from the complex magnitude of the "adult" polyphonic world and the many genres that constitute it. This early stage of relative

simplicity would be when a child lives a life of relative heteropathic identification. Regardless of initial heteropathic identification in infancy and early childhood, a child is still born into ongoing polyphony and she does not remain removed from polyphony forever. Eventually, polyphony creeps itself into a child's life as more communities come into play with widening circles of experience (e.g. transition from home to pre-school to grade school). Life transitions from a rather restricted environment to progressively more complexity due to the continuous introduction of more and more speech genres. A caregiver, such as a family member, may cultivate a child's capacity in the speech genre of maleness in a blue-collar labor community that involves the *appropriate* use of foul language while another caregiver, such as a daycare provider, cultivates the expression in a particular tradition that deems foul language as *inappropriate*. As the range of experiences grows, a child's range of speech genres grows. We are seeking to show how this change is what enables the transition from heteropathic identification to unique individual agency.

The expanding range of speech genres brings us back to the notion of dialogue. We can see how dialogue involves the juxtaposition of speech genres and even a single utterance is polyphonic. One can participate in many speech genres that conflict with one another in terms of the meanings of words, the appropriate styles of dress, and ideological positions. Each of these speech genres involves their own embodied compellingness express them. That is, to continue our example from above, a child whose caregiver

cultivates the speech genre of blue-collar maleness is compelled in a manner expressive of this speech genre. Simultaneously, the same child lives a compellingness pertaining to the speech genre that the daycare worker cultivates. Dialogicality often involves tension in the juxtaposition of emotional-volitional tones. We refer to dialogic *tension* because not all speech genres can be brought into harmony[10]. The child is in increasing positions of dialogic tensions because of increasing felt compellingness in different communal bodies.

It is important to recognize that dialogic tension enables a different kind of sympathy than heteropathic identification. Heteropathic identification did not count as "pure" sympathy for Scheler and Bakhtin and they treated maturing as moving beyond heteropathic identification. The kind of sympathy that they saw as necessary for moving beyond heteropathic identification is *two-sided sympathy* (see Scheler, 1970/1913, pp. 8-18). To explain two-sided sympathy, it is important to be clear that we are arguing how sympathy is possible by participation in common speech genres. Without the participation with others, there would be no grounds upon which one could understand another. Sympathizing with another is, in effect, co-participation in a speech genre. Sympathy so conceived is a call for one to act in accordance with another who lives a common speech genre.

Two-sided sympathy in Scheler (e.g. 1970/1913, pp. 8-18) and Bakhtin (e.g. 1990/c.1920, p. 82) was sympathy where one neither wholly overshadows another nor allows the other to overshadow oneself[11]. One

participates in the experience of another through sharing in a speech genre and thereby apprehends another's emotional-volitional tone based on what is commonly lived. There are very few instances where people come upon each other in complete foreignness, such as cross-cultural experiences, activities by missionaries, or early anthropologists. However, even in instances of foreignness, sympathy eventually comes about in the same way. On the basis of something common – for example, a common employment milieu or the need to learn each others' language (as in the missionary example) – there is a point of sympathy. Over time, we learn of the other communities through foreignness that becomes familiar. Over time, there is the establishment of a rhythm among people that brings them more and more into participative consciousness with one another (Bakhtin, 1990/c.1920, p. 120). That is, in time spent together, people can come to apprehend emotional-volitional tones pertaining to speech genres that are not shared.

As such, people can come to apprehend different purviews over the course of their time spent together – a process that amounts to the acquisition of new speech genres. For example, we can imagine a situation where one immigrates to a new country that would involve different speech genres. Even if the new and old country share much in common, there uncommon speech genres lead to faux pas, misunderstandings, and confusion. There can be actions that one does not understand or points where people in the immigrant's new home do not make sense to the immigrant. The immigrant

can come to see the purviews of those lived in the new home as he engages with them. However, the emotional-volitional tones from within which one lives remain (e.g. Bakhtin, 1986/1974, p. 162). Even though the immigrant sympathizes with those in the new home, their actions can simultaneously be experienced as wrong. The immigrant may still experience the emotional-volitional tones acquired in participating in speech genres from the country of origin. As such, sympathy is two-sided insofar as one participates in a speech genre with someone who is present while simultaneously participating in speech genres with others not present. Emotional-volitional tones from past experience are juxtaposed to those pertinent to the I-other relationship; all are lived simultaneously.

Extending this description into a child's experience, a child initially recognizes a difference between herself and another when she stumbles into a situation where someone does not see the world in the same way that she takes for granted. What she takes for granted as an obvious truism is no longer taken for granted by seemingly everyone. However, through time spent together, she learns another speech genre and so apprehends another seemingly obvious truism. She experiences dialogical tension because she retains a sense of the juxtaposed difference between herself and another via the two-sidedness of sympathy. She is compelled to respond in concert with the other and not in concert with the other at the same time. Hence, we can see how Bakhtin would argue that people are always responding to one another (e.g. 1986/1952, p. 94). They respond to what is foreign in addition

to what is shared.

By drawing on Bakhtin, we see how there are many speech genres to which one can feel compelled to respond to. They are embodied by another as well as by oneself. As a child experiences more speech genres, her actions undertaken at the nexus of these demands are experienced as a collision of emotional-volitional world-shaping tones. In other words, she finds herself in a condition where she is compelled to act to satisfy juxtaposed obligations and respond to others in kind. For example, a child would be compelled to respond to the caregiver from a speech genre learned at daycare and be compelled to respond to the daycare worker from the blue-collar maleness speech genre. Each emotional-volitional tone is lived and experienced such that each could apprehend the other as wrong. Children are brought into the full polyphony of others that includes a compellingness to respond to other communities as wrong.

Such moments of multi-sided responsibility constitute experienced tension that is the fertile ground for *individual stylization* (we will expand on this notion in more detail in the next chapter). When Bakhtin (1981/c.1937, 1986/1952) referred to stylization, we propose that he meant the active tailoring of expressive styles of speech genres so that multiple speech genres can be expressed at once. Creativity, and thereby individual agentic responsiveness, is expressed in managing dialogical tension by enacting two or more speech genres in a single expression. For example, a child beginning school in the primary years would express speech genres lived by his

parents. The parents could have cultivated a speech genre where the child expresses how different religions each have an equal claim to truth. However, if the child were attending a religious school sponsored by one particular religion, then a speech genre involving the superiority of one religion would be cultivated. In an effort to express both genres, the child may say something like “all religions are good but some are more good”. In this expression, we see the pluralism of the parents in “all religions are good”. Simultaneously, we see the exclusivity of the school environment in “but some are more good”.

Note that individual stylization does not necessarily mean that tension is definitively resolved. As such, Bakhtin’s vision of individual agency is one where children are compelled to express more than one speech genre, to which they feel compelled; but, the juxtaposed demands are never fully resolved (Bakhtin, 1986/c.1970, p. 147 & 162). Children and adults are continually propelled into individual stylization by the continuous dialogical tension in which we live. *Without dialogue, conceived as expressive of communal bodies, individual uniqueness would not be possible.*

We propose, on the basis of our readings of Bakhtin and Scheler, that a child would retain heteropathic identification if she could not engage in two-sided sympathy. If she were to be unable to sympathize with another, she would see no difference and another would have no otherness. Such a child would remain wholly within the familiarity of few speech genres and not be propelled forward into individual stylization. Such retention of the *status*

quo is a continued enactment of what a child has already known: life wholly lived in the few speech genres of early childhood. In order to get along with others and become an individual agent, sympathy is required in the manner that Bakhtin and Scheler advocate. This two-sided sympathy is one where one experiences commonality with another at the same time as un-commonality via the speech genres one does not live with the other.

Bakhtin leads us to a viable alternative to Wertsch by giving an account of how an individual emerges while not surrendering the strong sociocultural constitution of an agent. Bakhtin gives us insight into the emergence of individuality through individual stylization of embodied action – the stylization of speech genres juxtaposed to each other in dialogic tension – but Bakhtin has the advantage of addressing experiential immediacy and a strong view on the sociocultural constitution of agents.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have sought to propose an alternative to the work of Wertsch by addressing the socio-linguistic quality of experience in Bakhtin. The recognition that sociality is deeply entwined with embodied human development is important, because it brings us closer to the experiential immediacy of life and the kind of embodied cultural psychology that we are seeking to propose. We have argued that a sociocultural psychology requires more recognition that language is embodied. By reviewing some of Wertsch's claims and providing an alternative based on a different

appropriation of Bakhtin, we have made our case. In particular, we proposed that Bakhtin's notion of speech genres provides a way of treating the body as expressive of language, and thereby sociality. In language, people acquire emotional-volitional tones that constitute worlds of experience.

Where this proposal differs from Wertsch is that we see the body as linguistic at an experiential plane undergirding mediation. We have suggested that Bakhtin's treatment of language and speech genres points out how this emotional-volitional tone is linguistically constituted. As such, we differ from Wertsch, who treats agency in terms of volitional control via linguistic mediation. Agency, we proposed, is constituted in language and people do not primarily use language as a tool in a functional sense to be agentic. Rather, they live it. Bakhtin provides an account of the ontogenesis of unique individual agency in light of the embodied quality of language. Ultimately, Bakhtin's notion of dialogue entails dialogical tension that provided the impetus for individual agency in the form of the creative stylization of speech genres. We explore the implications of this claim in the next chapter, when we turn to the issue of authoring a self in adulthood.

Chapter 4

Bakhtin and Faithfulness: Towards a Revised Appropriation of Postmodernism

Introduction

At its most general level, postmodernity is commonly discussed in conjunction with the idea that self is socially constituted to such a degree that there is no socially-independent core or given self. The postmodern critique of a socially-independent core self has found expression in the works of Ken Gergen and his version of social constructionism (e.g. 1991, 1994, 1999b, 2001b). He dealt with the postmodern claim that we live in a multicultural world that opens up new possibilities for self in ways often unrecognized in the psychology of self. That is, he dealt with the observation that there are many different relationships that one can participate in and many different kinds of self that can be performed in these relationships (e.g. Gergen, 1991, p. 139). He reacted against positivist and humanist approaches to self because both of these perspectives, he claimed, rely upon a core self and postmodernity leads to a situation where all that we can ever know about the self is constructed in relational interchange –interactions with others (e.g. Gergen, M. & Gergen, K., 1984, p. 184; 1994, p. 202; 1991, p. 139)[12]. The former treated self as a real property that can be studied as an object, while the latter treated self as a self-contained and bounded whole. There is no use, according to Gergen's line of thought, in addressing a real or core self to

which one should be faithful (authentic) because self is constructed across a range of different social interactions. Notions that were taken to pertain to a real core self, such as commitment to living one particular kind of life over another or faithfulness to oneself, were considered the outcome of relational interchange and futile pursuits, aside from how they can be always opened to reconstruction. The outcome of this rejection of positivism was a view of self where it was constructed as a performance in the midst of a "giddy sense of spiraling and chaotic change" (Gergen, 1999b, p. 195).

However, there is more to the story that needs to be understood because Gergen himself was quick to point out that such resistance to essentialism did not default to an anything goes relativism (e.g. 2001b, p. 423; 2002a, p. 464). He argued that people do not really *live* lives in a full blown "giddy sense of spiraling and chaotic change" because of communal bounds and the bounds others placed on us in our relational interchange (e.g. Gergen, 1994, p. 189). The tension that we see in Gergen's appropriation of the postmodern critique of positivism is that there is supposed to be tremendous freedom in the self on the one hand while, due to communal bounds, such freedom is bounded to the other. Gergen has chosen to emphasize the importance of relational interchange, ergo radical openness, while only giving a nod now and then to communal bounds.

We are not so concerned with ameliorating this tension but rather with considering the implications that follow from exploring the communal side of this tension. This consideration will be done in light of how an

understanding of the communal body, as set out in previous chapters, can lead to a different appropriation of the postmodern emphasis on sociality. Our proposal introduces how self is not as open to continual reconstruction as it would first appear. We share Gergen's critique of individualistic psychology, but we seek to explicate how it is possible to still consider notions like faithfulness to oneself – albeit in a way that is very different from the notion of being faithful to a true or core self. The hope of this project is to open up an appropriation of postmodernism that makes room for faithfulness to oneself without falling back into essentialism that often marks positivistic psychology, which Gergen was also against.

After sketching Gergen's social constructionist view of the self in more detail, we will address two notions pertaining to the work of Bakhtin: dialogue and authorship. Our discussion of dialogue will address how Gergen's view of relational interchange differs from the notion of dialogue that we draw from Bakhtin. Our view of dialogue points out how postmodern life can be understood in a way that is not as open as Gergen's appropriation of postmodernism suggests. We make this claim on the basis of how communal bodies, which are entwined with dialogue, invoke faithfulness to oneself. Our discussion of authorship addresses the kind of implications that follow from the discussion of dialogue. We address how to carry forward the postmodern emphasis on sociality and multiculturalism. In particular, we address how faithfulness to oneself plays out in postmodernity and the kind of cultural psychology that Bakhtin can offer

when it comes to authoring self. We turn to the notion of faithfulness because it is a term invoked by Bakhtin in his early work (1993/c.1920, p. 38), and an elaboration of it helps us come to the new understanding of postmodernism that addresses the experiential dimension of life. This discussion involves offering an approach to the radical multiplicity that is part of postmodernity and how the tensions over being faithful to oneself can be understood. Ultimately, our discussion is intended to bring us further in our proposed cultural psychology, which is aimed at addressing phenomenologically immediate experience.

Gergen's Appropriation of Postmodernism

Gergen was consistently clear that he saw his version of social construction as an appropriation of postmodern critique in psychology (e.g. Gergen, 1991, 1999b, 2001b, 2002a&b; Gergen & Leach, 2001; Gergen & Thatchenkery, 2004). His central point has been that postmodernism offers a substantial critique of the idea that people can access universal truths about psychology in an objective manner. Rather, all that we know about reality, including the reality of our own selves, would be something that was socially constructed in our interactions with others. Hence, he wrote:

> For the constructionist there is, in principle, nothing about what is the case that demands or constrains any particular array of words. … 'Whatever exists' will scarcely resist, determine or constrain the particular sounds of markings we make in its presence. However, once

> we have loosed the social process of making meaning, resistances will emerge, willy nilly, from the reality of witches, archetypes and cognitive processing to evolution and black holes. (2001a, p. 422)

Gergen was reacting against the idea that the world constrains our discourse. There was nothing in reality, he argued, that constrained our speech (e.g. Gergen, 1985a, p. 266). The linguistic categories that organized the world did not come from the world, but were the product of social processes, most notably, the use of language. Gergen has extended this approach to the constructive use of language employed in regards to the self (e.g. 1994, pp. 185-209). This approach meant that there was nothing inherent in ourselves that constrain how we construct them. He argued that our use of language in relationships shapes our selves insofar as we can possibly know them. As such, he offered up the claim that the language people use for self was not anchored in an objective or core self just as our language about reality was not anchored to the objective world.

In taking postmodernism to psychology, Gergen highlighted how self is more capricious than it is generally taken to be (e.g. 1991, pp. 81-110; 1994, p. 260; 1999b, p. 195). All we can know about human action is constructed discourse, and "because discourse exists in an open market, marked by broadly diffuse transformations (Bakhtin, 1981 [sic.]; Foucault, 1978), patterns of human action will also remain forever in motion – shifting at times imperceptibly and at others disjunctively." (Gergen & Thatchenkery, 2004, p. 240; citations of Bakhtin and Foucault are in original). He made the

case that postmodernity involves the radical socialization of knowledge including our own self-knowledge. All that people can ever know about their selves was supposed to come by way of our relationships with others. People cannot get at a true or core real self because all of our knowledge was bound up in a shifting array of discourses and relationships (e.g. 1991, pp. 145-147). There was nothing about a self, he argued, that involved an "inherent demand for identity coherence or stability" (1994 p. 205). He drew the implication that it is futile to consider notions like genuine authenticity or faithfulness to oneself as pursuits in themselves. Instead, he claimed that we can understand self and authenticity *as* discursive constructions. *Hence, his work has argued that the postmodernist sociality of self means that we have the ability to construct whatever self a relational interchange with others will allow. This argument is what undermines the idea of being faithful to oneself.*

While it is tempting to extrapolate from Gergen that people can construct self in a seemingly unbounded way, this is not wholly the case. The construction of self and the theoretical position of social constructionism did not mean that we are dealing with a perspective purporting a situation of radical relativism (e.g. 2001b, p. 423; 2002a, p. 464). Across Gergen's work, there were two interrelated sources of constraint that limit the construction of self. First, he was repeatedly clear that social construction occurs in "relational interchange" (e.g. 1994). By this term, he was referring to the interactions that people have with each other and how these limit the kind of self that is constructed. He argued that one can put forth a particular kind of

self, through narrating an autobiography for example, and whether or not this self took hold as a reality depended upon interaction with the other. If the story was not assented to or if it was challenged, then the narrated self was re-negotiated. It would be tailored and altered through people's discourse with others until a reality of self was agreed upon. Gergen's point was that nothing outside of relationships serves as means of achieving a narrated self. Hence, the self can be re-negotiated within each relationship. Second, Gergen made a point to show that communal conventions also limit the kind of reality of self that people construct (e.g. 1994, p. 193 & 202). To return to the example of an autobiographical narrative, the story that was authored would not be agreed upon if it did not adhere to communal conventions that render the story believable. It would be challenged if it did not adhere to communal standards on the grounds that it may sound unreasonable to another, who may respond that the proposed self is inappropriate.

What are we to make of Gergen's commitment to the ability to shape realities of self in light of the bounds described above? He emphasized the importance of relational interchange over communal bounds in seeking to retain the freedom to construct self. He acknowledged communal bounds of constructing self but downplayed their importance in order to retain the freedom to treat truth, pertaining to the world or self, as performance (1999b, p. 35). This was the very freedom that undermined faithfulness to oneself as anything other than a discursive construction. In emphasizing the

way that community bounds the construction of self we seek to present a view of self that is not as capricious as Gergen claimed in his appropriation of postmodernity.

Our goal is to describe how there could be a different appropriation of postmodernism. That is, it is possible to address faithfulness to oneself in a manner other than it being a discursive construction. This possibility does not rely on a true or core self. We will lay out our proposal by first turning to Gergen's notion of relational interchange in light of Bakhtin's discussion of dialogue. It will be shown how the latter necessitates a discussion of being faithful to oneself because it is tied up with communally constituted experience. As such, our discussion is intended to bring us closer to a cultural psychology that addresses experience.

Living Reality: Dialogue verses Relational Interchange

We start with the notion of dialogue, because it would appear to be a common point of departure between Gergen and Bakhtin. It would seem, on the surface, that relational interchange is synonymous with Bakhtin's conception of dialogue. However, there is a difference between how Bakhtin approached dialogue and Gergen's notion of relational interchange. In order to lay out this difference, we have to be aware how Bakhtin followed the tradition of the Russian intelligentsia and articulated his claims about human life by way of literary criticism (e.g. Emerson, 1997, pp. 8-9). He turned to authors such as Dostoevsky (Bakhtin, 1984a/1963), Goethe (Bakhtin,

1981/c.1930, 1986/c.1937), and Rabelais (Bakhtin, 1981/c.1930, 1984b/1940), because he wrote that their art grants insight into living human experience: the kind of experience that is of interest in this dissertation. In what follows, when we address Bakhtin, we will first describe Bakhtin's literary commentary on dialogue and then interpret it in terms of our discussion of speech genres, experience, and, what we add in this chapter: faithfulness to oneself.

Dialogue Among Heroes in the Novel

Writing about Dostoevsky, Bakhtin wrote:

> Everywhere there is an *intersection, consonance, or interruption of rejoinders in open dialogue by rejoinders in the heroes' internal dialogue.* Everywhere *a specific sum total of ideas, thoughts, and words are passed through several unmerged voices, sounding differently in each*. … The very distribution of voices and their interaction is what matters to Dostoevsky. (1984a/1963, p. 265, original emphasis).

Leaving aside the notion of "internal dialogue" for the moment because it will be addressed below, what Bakhtin gleaned from novelistic aesthetic expression is that dialogue among heroes was crucially important. It is worthwhile considering what heroes were to Bakhtin. By doing this it is possible to gain a sense of what their dialogue expressed to Bakhtin about human experience.

Heroes, to Bakhtin, involved "any point of view on the world fundamental

to the novel must be a concrete, socially embodied point of view, not an abstract, purely semantic position; it must, consequently, have its own language with which it is organically unified." (1981/c.1937, p. 412; see also 1984a/1963, p. 17). This quote resonates with content in earlier chapters where we addressed voices as expressive of speech genres. Here, we are addressing this claim in light of what Bakhtin's discussion of heroes, and eventually authorship, can tell us about the possibility of proposing a postmodern psychology. However, an apparent enigma emerges where Bakhtin wrote:

> The hero interests Dostoevsky not as some manifestation of reality that possesses fixed and specific socially typical or individually characteristic traits, nor as a specific profile assembled out of unambiguous and objective features which, taken together, answer the question "Who is he?" No, the hero interests Dostoevsky as a *particular point of view on the world and on oneself*, as the position enabling a person to interpret and evaluate his own self and his surrounding reality. What is important to Dostoevsky is not how this happens in the world but first and foremost how the world appears to his hero, and how the hero appears to himself. … [W]hat must be discovered and characterized here is not the specific existence of the hero, not his fixed image, but the *sum total of his consciousness and self-consciousness*, ultimately *the hero's final word on himself and his world.* (1984a/1963, p. 47-48, original emphasis)

The apparent enigma lies in how the two previous quotes seem to be in

tension with one another. Bakhtin wrote about heroes in the novels and it could look as if they gave voice to their self-contained solipsistic consciousnesses; yet, he referred to this voice as a "socially embodied" point of view. How can Bakhtin write about a "point of view" and "consciousness" being expressed in the voices of heroes' dialogue while also considering them to be socially embodied? Previous chapters have already hinted at the answer to this question; but, crystallizing it here can bring us to a proposal of how we can approach a postmodern psychology that treats self as experienced and communally constituted.

Unfolding Bakhtin's Approach to Faithfulness: Interpreting Bakhtin's Discussion of Heroes

How terms like "point of view", "consciousness", and "voice" are social can be understood by way of speech genres and we take the position that these involve the participative consciousness – as opposed to a consciousness created in discourse. We discussed how a wide-angle view of Bakhtin's oeuvre reveals, that what Bakhtin (1990/c.1920, 1993/c.1920) referred to as an "emotional-volitional tone", can be treated as an aspect of the embodied moment of speech genres: the communal body. Bakhtin linked emotional-volitional tone with corporeal stylistics, and explaining what we propose Bakhtin meant by the emotional-volitional tone is possible by reviewing this link. Drawing on the phenomenology of Max Scheler, we mentioned how Bakhtin noted that participation in a community involves bodily

participation in activities with others. One participates in a community by corporeally doing the kinds of things that others do. Part of this embodied co-participation with others is the enactment of emotions insofar as communities have ways of enacting emotion that are different from other communities. We can imagine how a given community may enact anger through yelling and screaming. Another may enact anger through enacting restrained anger, showing simultaneously that one is angry yet holding it in by way of a clenched jaw and fists but without yelling or screaming. In short, one enacts an emotion – an experience – in the generic corporeal stylistics of a community.

For Bakhtin, enactment of the corporeal stylistics of emotion socialized people to experience in the generic style of a community. It is in participation with others that we cultivate the embodied know-how involved in experiencing. A good example is the cultivation of emotionality in children. According to Bakhtin (1986/c.1970, p. 138; 1990/c.1920, p. 46), children's participation in the ongoing flow of life with others amounts to socialization into naturally living emotions according to the communal standards of a speech genre. For example, a child learns to laugh at what is funny according to communal standards of appropriateness by participation in situations where other participants in a speech genre laugh at something. Imagine a situation where a child is present with adults, and everyone starts laughing when a joke is made by one of the adults. The child will also laugh *along with* others and participates in the ongoing flow of activity. Here is an

instance of socialization where the child is socialized to naturally laugh at what is generally considered funny by members of the speech genre. This happens, according to Bakhtin, through the subtle acts of correction that take place in such instances. In short, Bakhtin wrote that our experience is communally cultivated in such a way that we *personally* experience what is generic to speech genres.

In an early work entitled *The Author and the Hero in Aesthetic Activity*, Bakhtin described the experience of living from within speech genres:

> The centre of gravity in this world is located in the future, in what is desired, in what ought to be, and *not* in the self-sufficient givenness of an object; in its being-on-hand, *not* in its present, its wholeness, its being-already-realized. My relationship to each object within my horizon is never a consummated relationship; rather, it is a relationship which is imposed on me as a task-to-be-accomplished, for the event of being… (1990/c.1920, p. 98, original emphasis)

And

> A lived experience as something determinate is not experienced by the one who is experiencing: a lived experience is directed upon a certain meaning, object, state of affairs; but it is directed not upon itself, not upon the determinateness and fullness of its own present on hand existence in the soul. I experience the object of my fear as fearful, the object of my love as loveable, the object of my suffering as oppressive (the degree of cognitive determinateness is not essential, of course, in this case), but I do

> experience my own fearing, loving, suffering. My lived experience is an axiological position or attitude assumed by the *whole* of myself in relation to some object; my own "posture" in this position is not given to me. (1990/c.1920, p. 112-113, original emphasis)

These selections of text illustrate that, although it is socially constituted, our life is lived as a world that is *experienced* as real. Bakhtin rarely referred to emotions without a hyphenated extension such as emotional-*volitional* or emotional-*evaluative*. The terms that participants of a speech genre express to shape the world (including those used for their own emotions, which are part of the world itself in their shaping of it) are not separate from ideologies or experience. When people talk with each other, they are not primarily talking *about* the world or the self in our dialogue. Our dialogue with one another is an expression of a community that shapes the world and the self. Such shaping is not just an organization of the world into understandable categories, according to Bakhtin, because ideologies and emotional-volitional tones are bound up in it. We draw on Bakhtin to claim that the world and self is experienced as much as it is understood conceptually. As such, one engages in an act of experiencing the world using terms that one *feels* one *ought* to use. Likewise, the evaluations of one's own actions, the actions of others, and the conditions of the world itself are tied to emotionality so conceived. Emotionality is entwined with terms and ideologies, which amounts to a socially cultivated experience that shapes the world, as participants in a community constitute it.

It is now possible to address the puzzle of how Bakhtin can write about heroes' "points of view" and "consciousness" while still advocating a communal conception of these notions. He argued that heroes were expressive of speech genres in their dialogue (1984a/1963, p. 104; 1981/c.1937, p. 412). Bakhtin understood the voices of heroes as expressions of how life is experientially lived from within speech genres. The "points of view", "voices", and "consciousnesses" expressed by heroes are living expressions of communities. Moreover, he wrote that Dostoevsky did not express his heroes as caricatures of speech genres because "the hero interests Dostoevsky not as some manifestation of reality that possesses fixed and specific *socially typica*l or individually characteristic traits" (1984a/1963, p. 47, emphasis added). Our proposal attends to how Bakhtin wrote about life from within speech genres as he saw it expressed in Dostoevsky's heroes. For Bakhtin, granting the reader the capacity to see through the purview of the hero is to grant the reader insight into how the world itself is constituted and experienced from within a community.

Likewise, consider how Bakhtin treated self-expressions in dialogue as experiential expressions of the speech genres in which people are participants. This meant that the self is a kind of activity that people personally live, albeit socially constituted (we return later to how people creatively individuate). He saw in heroes' dialogue how people experience life, including self, caught up into its livedness. People do not live and see themselves, for the most part, as a caricature or generic social type, but

personally experience selves living in experiential action. While it may be tempting to consider being faithful to a speech genre a choice that one makes to align oneself with a community, we think that there is more to faithfulness than a reflective choice. At this point, we seek to highlight how faithfulness to speech genres is required of us by virtue of how communities, and the experiential worlds constituted within them, are compelling - as if coming from within. The act of living and constituting a world through the communal body is an act of being faithful to the community. Because we are dealing with personally experienced communal bodies, we draw on Bakhtin to claim that lives are lived in faithfulness to what people experience as themselves even though such experience is socially constituted. Being faithful to communities is being faithful to ourselves (below, we will tie this in with Bakhtin's more well known notion of faithfulness to another; e.g. Hicks, 2002, pp. 148-153).

Implications

Gergen relied heavily on relational interchange to address how our knowledge of self is constructed. His concern was to introduce the importance of relational interchange so social psychology and bring about a concern for language (e.g. 1985a&b). Language, as Gergen has addressed it, focused on interchange – that is, talk (e.g. 2001a, p. 805). This notion of relational interchange is treated as synonymous with dialogue, and this practice is not often questioned in Gergen's work. We claim that it is possible

to question this association, because Bakhtin inspires us to propose how dialogue could be different from relational interchange. What we propose has the potential to address phenomenologically immediate experience and thereby open new vistas in cultural psychology. Consider a quote from Bakhtin's work on Dostoevsky:

> Dialogic relationships, therefore, are extralinguistic. But at the same time, they are not to be separated from the realm of *discourse,* that is, from language as a concrete integral phenomenon… These relationships lie in the realm of discourse, for discourse is by its very nature dialogic; they must therefore be studied by metalinguistics, which exceeds the limits of linguistics [as the science of the structure of speech] and has its own independent subject matter and tasks. … Dialogic relationships are reducible neither to logical relationships nor to relationships oriented semantically towards their referential object, relationships *in and of themselves* devoid of any dialogic element. They must cloth themselves in discourse, become utterances, become the positions of various subjects expressed in discourse, in order that dialogic relationships might arise among them. (1984a/1963, p. 183, original emphasis)

In this quote, we see Bakhtin distinguish dialogue from linguistics, but the distinction between dialogue and discourse is what we seek to address. From this distinction, we draw upon the idea that dialogue is distinguishable from discourse, the latter often treated as synonymous with relational exchange. Note how casting dialogue as discourse – that is, relational

interchange – misses the "metalinguistic"/"extralinguistic" quality of dialogue. Bakhtin brings us to a "metalinguistic" and "extralinguistic" notion of dialogue in the following manner:

> …dialogic relationships are a much broader phenomenon than mere rejoinders in dialogue, laid out compositionally in the text; they are an almost universal phenomenon, permeating all human speech and all relationships and manifestations of human life – in general, everything that has meaning and significance. (1984a/1963, p. 40)

Our work in this dissertation has been about a different approach to language than what Gergen has employed and we draw this approach from comments such as those in the previous two quotes. Rejoinders and discourse bears resemblance to relational interchange insofar as it is about conversation. Dialogue, can be treated it as an expression of an entire way of being constituted in community. This way of being is personally experienced such that people live faithful to it. Bakhtin thereby addressed language in a manner that goes beyond relational interchange to the communal body (we will address the "dialogic relationships" in below when we address authorship).

Where Gergen employed dialogue as relational interchange, our proposal draws upon Bakhtin to treat it as an expression of speech genres that are personally lived in communal bodies. Bakhtin brings us to an awareness of the limits of discursive construction of self. We are brought to the recognition of how one cannot construct just any self because people are caught up in

speech genres that already afford experiential worlds that are taken-for-granted. It is experienced as impossible that the state of things could be any other way. It would feel wrong to act in a manner that is unfaithful to what one sees as *obviously* being the case. People's selves are ultimately expressive of speech genres that are experienced as true and compelling.

Where Gergen (e.g. 2003, p. 149) claimed that an utterance about the self has no meaning until another responds in conversation, Bakhtin would say that an utterance is meaningful in its expression of a community. Bakhtin thereby looked at responsiveness in terms of the expression of a speech genre. This is to say that expressing a communal body is a response, but not of the sort we think of in relational interchange. It is a linguistic-embodied response to the world that precedes relational interchange. What we draw from Bakhtin is that people respond in the sense that their action is a response to what is compelled by participation in speech genres. Where Gergen would treat the first utterance in a conversation as an address, Bakhtin would treat it as a response to the community, thus emphasizing the communal dimension of experience. On this basis, we propose that self is lived as part of a world that is deeply experienced such that the world seemingly compels our response.

The issue to which we turn in the next section is how people can resist speech genres in terms of creatively authoring an individual self. The notion of authoring an individual self is something that Gergen put front and center (e.g. 1994). We will now propose an alternative way to address self that the

embodiment of community and so retain the postmodern emphasis on sociality; yet still retain the importance of authoring an individual self.

Authorship: Struggling with Faithfulness to Oneself

We addressed how dialogue differs from relational interchange and how this difference calls for a consideration of faithfulness to oneself. However, Gergen's appropriation of postmodernism highlighted the impact of increased multiculturalism. He pointed out how postmodernism involves the claim that there are many different communities, small-c cultures, which we can be part of and a different kinds of self can be performed in each (e.g. 1991, p. 145). We turn to Bakhtin's notion of authorship because it revolves around such plurality that is entwined with multiculturalism. If the self is constituted in community then multiple communities could mean that there are difference selves to be faithful to. Bakhtin was aware of this issue. We will propose that his notion of authorship is about the apparent paradox of being faithful to oneself when the communities in which one participates could very well involve different selves. We will first describe Bakhtin's comments on the author and then interpret them in light of our goal of providing a cultural psychology that accounts for the phenomenological immediacy of experience. We are seeking to further this goal by proposing an understanding of authoring a self in light of the body described above.

Bakhtin on the Author

One of the most well-known claims that Bakhtin makes about the novel revolved around the relationship between heroes and the author:

> Dostoevsky, like Goethe's Prometheus, creates not voiceless slaves (as does Zeus), but *free* people, capable of standing *alongside* their creator… *A plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices is in fact the chief characteristic of Dostoevsky's novels*. What unfolds in his works is not a multitude of characters and fates in a single objective world, illuminated by a single authorial consciousness; rather a *plurality of consciousnesses, with equal rights and each with its own world*, combine but are not merged in the unity of the event. (1984a/1963, pp. 5-6, original emphasis)

This quote was an echo of a less well-known comment that he made earlier in his career:

> In creating the hero and his world, the author is guided by the same values as those that the hero follows in living his life. The author is in principle not richer than the hero; he does not have any additional transgredient moments for his creative work that the hero could not have in living his life; the author, in his creative work is, simply continues that which is inherent in the hero's life itself. (1990/c.1920, p. 163)

We could interpret these comments by stating that authors do not act as overarching taskmasters marshaling heroes to convey a single message.

Bakhtin reacted against thinking of an author as a creator that dictates what heroes do and say for the sole purpose of serving to convey an author's message. Bakhtin was at pains to reject this view that heroes are passive conduits used as mere tools to convey what an author wants to say. For example, the quotations from above assert that Dostoevsky expressed human experience but he did not do so by orchestrating all of the heroes towards a single authorial vision.

This claim may seem strange because it is obvious that it is authors who write their heroes. However, Bakhtin has inspired us to claim that heroes are expressive of speech genres and the novel, in its expressive realism, is an expression of heroes' living speech genres. It could be possible to see authors as passive conduits who re-present speech genres around them in the mouths of their heroes. This is not what Bakhtin had in mind because

> the author utilizes now one language, now another, in order to avoid giving himself up wholly to either of them; he makes use of this verbal give-and-take, this dialogue of languages at every point in his work, in order that he himself might remain as it were neutral with regard to language, a third party in quarrel between two people (although he might be a *biased* third party). All forms involving a narrator or a posited author signify to one degree or another by their presence the author's freedom from a unitary and singular language, a freedom connected with the relativity of language and language systems… (1981/c.1937, pp. 314-315, original emphasis)

The work from which this quote is taken is one where Bakhtin referred to speech genres and "social languages". When he wrote about the author utilizing one language and then another, he was referring to the expression of different speech genres in the voices of heroes. There were also instances where Bakhtin made claims such as the following: "the coincidence of the author and the hero is, after all, a *contradiction in adiecto:* the author is a constituent moment in the artistic whole, and as such he cannot coincide, within this whole, with the hero, who represents another constituent moment of that whole" (1990/c.1920, p. 151, original emphasis). We interpret this comment as follows. Authorship involves switching from voice to voice, but it does not mean that heroes and authors can be equated. Equating heroes with authors would be misguided because an author can switch speech genres and use them in a biased manner[13]. For Bakhtin, authorship was a notion that is distinguishable from heroes yet the author has no privileged position over and above them. In not "coinciding" with the heroes, the author is present n the whole of the work. Eventually we seek to interpret what this difference means in terms of understanding lived experience. Interpreting the significance of the claim that authors are distinct from heroes, yet never greater than them, will lead us to a view of cultural psychology that addresses the sociality of self in the face of multiculturalism. Moreover, as we will argue, this proposal does not diminish the idea of being faithful to oneself.

Unfolding Bakhtin's Approach to Faithfulness: Interpreting Bakhtin's Concept of Authorship

For Bakhtin, an author was never above heroes because he exists on the same plane as them. We interpret this claim to mean that authors never go beyond expressing speech genres. There is never an expression that is wholly individual or non-social. An author must speak as one who is also within speech genres in the sense that his world of experience is communally constituted. Bakhtin wrote that there is no experiential purview that is a-social or removed from life and one cannot escape the communal body. In other words, Bakhtin's observation that authors never go beyond heroes resulted in his claim that people never escape the sociality of communal bodies. However, authorship is still distinct from the actions of heroes. To articulate how this is so requires that we address two preconditions for authorship: polyphony and dialogical penetration.

Preconditions for Authorship: Polyphony & Dialogical Penetration. We established above how authorship means to compose an aesthetic expression where there are many "consciousnesses" expressed. In keeping with the notion of consciousness as an expression of speech genres, the *poly*phonic novel involves the expression of the many communities that constitute society. For example, while Bakhtin did not call Rabelais' novels polyphonic, aspects of them were discussed in a way that is very polyphonic. Bakhtin noted that Rabelais' novels were an expression of the Renaissance upheaval

where a dominant speech genre became recognized as one speech genre situated among others (1984b/1940, p. 471). The Renaissance was a time when multiplicity of speech genres came into contact and the Roman Catholic Church came to be seen as one enacted speech genre among others. This expression of the *societal* condition of polyphony is what Bakhtin addressed with the terms polyphony and heteroglossia.

Polyphony denoted how there are many speech genres that constitute society and Bakhtin referred to the juxtaposition of speech genres in a way similar to how Gergen addressed the plurality of communities in which we can be participants. However, we must expand the notion of dialogue and point out how it also involves the juxtaposition of speech genres. Dialogical relations “must cloth themselves in discourse, become utterances, become the positions of various subjects expressed in discourse, in order that dialogic relationships might arise among them” (1984a/1963, p. 183). This point meant that dialogue involves the engagement of people from different speech genres in discourse (later, we will explore how it also involves a person’s engagement in multiple genres; we must first cover dialogical penetration in more depth). That is, underlying discourse is the expression of communal bodies to which one is faithful in relation to another who lives a different communal body.

On this basis, consider how Bakhtin addressed dialogue following excerpt from *the Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics*:

In Dostoevsky’s artistic thinking, the genuine life of personality takes

> place at the point of non-coincidence between a man and himself, at this point of departure beyond the limits of all that he is as a material being, a being that can be spied on, defined, predicted apart from its own will, 'at second hand.' The genuine life of the personality is made available only through a *dialogic* penetration of that personality, during which it freely and reciprocally reveals itself. (1984a/1963, p. 59, original emphasis)

Our position is that such a commentary aligns with social constructionists, including Gergen, insofar as dialogue opens up new possibilities for the self. However, our proposal differs insofar as we are interested in embodiment. From this interest comes a different view of dialogue that involves juxtaposed communities. What is penetrated in dialogue so conceived? Bakhtin is writing about a speech genre as seen by someone who is not part of it when he referred to "a being that can be spied on, defined, predicted apart from its own will". Living a speech genre from within means that the social quality of a speech genre sinks into participative consciousness and it is simply lived (e.g. 1990/c.1920, p. 43). Compare this to the outsider who, not being a member of a particular speech genre, does not live it from within but sees it from without (1990/c.1920, p. 51). An outsider sees another's enactment of a speech genre as an instance of a community and consequently, sees another as enacting predictable generic actions. Bakhtin was playing on how dialogue involves one seeing another from an outside purview – a purview from "outside" of a speech genre.

Bakhtin argued that it is possible to come to such outsideness in regards

to oneself by way of sympathizing with another (e.g. 1990/c.1920, p. 59). Points of difference provide a window upon some aspect of what one lives in a taken-for-granted manner. This means another has a different purview and does not take for granted what *I* take for granted but *I* can come to sympathize with her purview. Just like we described in the case of children, such sympathy comes by way of participation in life. In living life with others, faux pas and misunderstandings happen when different speech genres are at play in dialogue. Working out these misalignments amounts to normative correction that socializes people into one another's participative consciousnesses. Where there are points of difference between self and other, the proverbial *seeing through the eyes of an-other* allows one to apprehend one's own speech genre from the outside: making it un-natural. On the basis of our appropriation of Bakhtin, we claim that *it is one's own natural living of a speech genre that is penetrated in dialogue*.

We propose that dialogic penetration of the naturalness of speech genres comes from being faithful to another. First, it is necessary to address what is involved in faithfulness to another and then return to dialogical penetration. In regards to the former, Bakhtin wrote that understanding another involves apprehending the "emotional-volitional tone of a once-occurant actual consciousness [which is] conveyed more aptly with the word *faithfulness* (being true to)" (1993/c.1920, p. 38). This quote addressed how one is faithful to another in terms of grasping the emotional-volitional tone of another: sympathy[14]. When Bakhtin wrote about sympathizing with another,

he wrote about learning another speech genre that includes how life is experienced from within the speech genre in question. Being faithful to another is to be sympathetic to what another lives experientially and its most pure form would be living the same response such as crying when another cries. Since another's feeling are expressive of a communal body, being faithful to another involves being faithful to a speech genre from within which another lives. Hence, being faithful to another is similar to being faithful to oneself.

Being faithful to another brings about a condition of tension. For example, in his discussion of Dostoevsky's authorship and the heroes, Bakhtin writes that

> …since a consciousness in Dostoevsky's world is presented not on the path of its own evolution and growth, that is, not historically, but rather *alongside* other consciousness, it cannot concentrate on itself and its own idea, on the immanent logical development of that idea; instead, it is pulled into interaction with other consciousnesses. In Dostoevsky, consciousness never gravitates towards itself but is always found in intense relationship with other consciousnesses. Every experience, every thought of a character is internally dialogic, adorned with polemic, filled with struggle, or is on the contrary open to inspiration from outside itself – but it is not in any case concentrated simply on its own object; it is accompanied by a continual sideways glance at another person. It could be said that Dostoevsky offers, in artistic form, something like a sociology

> of consciousnesses – to be sure, only on the level of coexistence.
> (1984a/1963, p. 32, original emphasis)

Note how a “sideways glance” in dialogue is directed towards another in the form of an apprehension of a different speech genre. Even though one can sympathize with another and have a sense of faithfulness to what another lives, the experiential weight of other speech genres do not disappear. Hence, we take Bakhtin to have been claiming that sympathizing with another enables a tension because one experiences commitment from within one speech genre while simultaneously apprehending that another lives a different commitment. Such commitment is also now personally experienced by virtue of being faithful to another. Of course, such tension is being faithful to different selves. It is a personally experienced two-sided faithfulness that comes out of living different communal bodies. One simultaneously experiences tension due to the simultaneously lived emotional-volitional experience of more than one speech genre. This is how, we suggest, people are caught in tension among faithfulness to self and others.

Presumably, such tension comes from one’s own movement through life. As we age and cultivate competency in more speech genres, our actions from the past also come into new light. Engagement in life with others brings about potential juxtaposition relative to one’s own past. One must answer to another and to oneself-from-the-past. In being compelled to answer on these multiple fronts, one comes to a nexus of tension at the crossroads of juxtaposed speech genres.

In sum, Bakhtin treated the notion of polyphony as an expression of society and so the polyphonic condition is a societal condition where there are multiple speech genres juxtaposed to constitute society. Via sympathy, such a condition leads to the opportunity to apprehend another's socially constituted purview. The gift of sympathy is to look back upon oneself in a new light. Thus, the natural livedness of a speech genre is penetrated insofar as it is seen from an outside purview.

In terms of the notion of internal dialogue, it is now possible to offer up an understanding of how Bakhtin inspires us to think about internal dialogue. He expressed the experience of tension that emerged in dialogic penetration of naturally lived speech genres. Rather than primarily writing about internal dialogue as a series of private statements formed in terms of talking to oneself, we can understand it in a broader sense drawn from Bakhtin's work on speech genres. As such, we consider internal dialogue to be personal experience of the tension resulting from faithfulness to different speech genres.

Such a claim fits well with the multicultural aspect of postmodernity. The polyphonic condition of society resonated with Gergen's observation that one can participate in multiple communities. We differ by drawing on Bakhtin and the way that he offers an interesting view of the psychology of socially constituted experience in light of polyphony. He makes visible for us how people come to personal tension via calls to be faithful to different communities when their natural lived-ness is penetrated in dialogue. This

amounts to an experience of struggle over what it is to be faithful to oneself. The acuteness of this experience in the postmodern – or as we intimate above, polyphonic – condition is what makes Bakhtin offer something of value. Precisely what is at stake in postmodernity is the problem of being faithful to selves and others in terms of I/other alterity. With that said, we can now turn to the notion of authorship and more fully unfold what Bakhtin was dealing with in his discussion of authors being distinct from heroes.

Authorship as Distinct from Heroes. What has been left unresolved is how authorship is distinct from heroes and the implications that we can draw about lived human experience. A theme that we have addressed is that Bakhtin saw all aspects of aesthetic activity as expressive of human life, including authorship. He claimed that authors such as Dostoevsky (1984a/1963, p. 27) and Rabelais (1984b/1940, p. 471) expressed human experience in their novels. Authorship itself is an expression of an aspect of human experience.

When Bakhtin referred to authors, he referred to them as creative. However, he did not refer to heroes in this manner. For example, in one place he referred to authors as follows:

> An author is not the bearer of inner lived experience, and his reaction is neither a passive feeling nor a receptive perception. An author is the *uniquely form-giving energy that is manifested not in a psychologically conceived consciousness*, but in a durably valid cultural product, and his

> active, production, reaction is manifested in the structures it generates – in the structure of the active version of the hero as a definitive whole, in the structure of his image, in the rhythm of disclosing him, in the structure of intonating, and in the selection of meaning-bearing features. (1990/c.1920, p. 8, emphasis added)

The quality that distinguishes authors from heroes is the former's creative capacity. Discussing the "form-giving energy" that distinguishes authors from heroes is a discussion of this creative capacity and it is for us to interpret what Bakhtin meant by this phrase. In the words of two well-known Bakhtinian biographers and commentators: "For Bakhtin… [t]o live is to create, and the larger, more noticeable acts we honor with the name *creative* are extensions and developments of the sorts of activity we perform all of the time" (Morson & Emerson, 1990, p. 187). At a very general level, it is possible to say that authors' creative activity is just like the creative activity that people engage in throughout their lives. For Bakhtin, all people were authors insofar as they created themselves in the articulation of themselves. What exactly is created?

Bakhtin's commentary on aesthetic action of authors could be seen as the aesthetic creation of an individual self (e.g. 1990/c.1920, pp. 36, 45, 122). Although this claim resonates with Gergen's social constructionism, we differ by highlighting that Bakhtin pointed to how an author creates individuality in the midst of differing calls to faithfulness. That is, we differ insofar as we make experiential tensions primary. To unfold how this is so, consider

Bakhtin's discussion of authorial consciousness:

> Aesthetic consciousness… is a consciousness of consciousness… In the aesthetic event, we have to do with a *meeting* of two consciousness which are in principle distinct from each other, and where the author's consciousness, moreover, relates to the hero's consciousness not from the standpoint of its objective makeup, its validity as an object, but from the standpoint of its subjectively *lived* unity… (1990/c.1920, p. 89, original emphasis)

We see here the idea that the author does not relate to the heroes by writing them as caricatures of speech genres. He expresses them as they live their lives within speech genres. However, where heroes' consciousnesses are expressive of speech genres, authors' consciousnesses are different. This quote gestures to a point of difference lying in how authorship involves the "meeting of two consciousnesses". Presumably, this phrase refers to the meeting of consciousnesses conceived as the meeting of expressed speech genres: dialogic penetration of the naturalness of speech genres. To put it another way, if the aesthetic expression of heroes' consciousness is the expression of an experiential purview lived from within a speech genre, then authorship involves an awareness of the juxtaposition of such lived experiential purviews (see also 1981/c.1937, p. 314).

Authorial consciousness involves the kind of consciousness that comes about in struggle with faithfulness. When people experience dialogical penetration of the naturalness of speech genres, they become aware of

themselves insofar as they come to awareness of speech genres lived relative to other speech genres. Authorship involves awareness that comes about in the juxtaposition of speech genres and thereby places the author in a position of tension. Bakhtin certainly saw this aspect of experience in authors like Dostoevsky whose work is full of the juxtaposition of speech genres in the voices of the heroes. In fact, Bakhtin quotes a Russian scholar named Kirpotin who comments that: "'Dostoevsky thought in psychologically wrought images, but he thought socially.' This correct understanding of Dostoevsky's 'psychologism,' as a mode for visualizing, objectively and realistically, *a contradictory collective of other people's psyches*..." (1984a/1963, p. 37, emphasis added). As the author, Dostoevsky was conscious of the juxtaposition of speech genres, and Bakhtin saw Dostoevsky as expressing this experiential tension in his work.

Our proposal is that Bakhtin's position was that human experience is the same insofar as we come to self-awareness at points of tension in our internal dialogue. This self-awareness is the eruption of awareness of the lives that we naturally live as enactments of speech genres. Bakhtin's distinction between authorship and heroes is his way of articulating how we can live within speech genres without reflection (i.e. live only as heroes) and how we can come to points of tension that set the stage for awareness of juxtapositions (i.e. authorship). Like authors, we are always expressive of speech genres but polyphony and internal dialogue means that we can apprehend multiple speech genres simultaneously. While never going

beyond sociality or language because there is nowhere else to go in our phenomenologically immediate experience, people are also never enacting a single speech genre. The polyphonic condition brings about a situation where there is possibility of liberation from any single speech genre.

From such awareness we can have the freedom to modify the expressive style of speech genres to act in a way that satisfies juxtaposed speech genres. Consider how, at the point of tension, action involves an implicit judgment of speech genres that are personally experienced. As we introduced in the previous chapter, Bakhtin saw how much of life was not so simple, and people could not easily choose one genre over another. Therefore, we can see how internal dialogue brings about an opportunity to find a way of to express personally experienced tensions in the actions we take. It is important to note that this resolution comes in the form of action because one is dealing with personally experienced commitment to *kinds* of action grounded in different speech genres. It is our claim, following Bakhtin, that dialogue leads to self-stylization as an enacted judgment of tension among speech genres.

It is in the enacted judgment within dialogue that individuality emerges from communities. A Bakhtinian notion of individual-stylization means to tailor the expressive style of speech genres such that the expressions thereof are individualized (Bakhtin, 1986/1952, p. 75). For this reason Bakhtin writes about “a mixture of two social languages within the limits of a single utterance, and encounter, within the arena of an utterance, between two different linguistic consciousness” (1981/c.1937, p. 358) and that the

"clearest and most characteristic form of an internally dialogized mutual illumination of languages is *stylization*" (ibid., p. 362, original emphasis). One can express oneself in the style of a speech genre but this expression can be an individualized expression and, as such, counter one's own speech genres or those of another. As such, one can *use* a speech genre insofar as it is stylized and recognized as generic to a community so as to remain faithful. However, it can be different enough to be recognized as faithful to another speech genre; perhaps, it can be recognized as an individual idiosyncrasy or eccentricity by one not familiar to the speech genre. Any individual stylization is also thereby polyphonic because more than one speech genre is expressed simultaneously.

While expression is always unique and unrepeatable due to the uniqueness of an event and the people present, it is nevertheless also *generic* in its faithfulness to communities (e.g. Bakhtin, 1993/c.1920, p. 2). As such, individual stylization involves enacting a kind of self that is simultaneously unique and generic. Take the following as an example. Imagine a religious fundamentalist who lives within a speech genre that compels him not to swear and use words such as "fuck". Simultaneously, he may participate in secular communities such as a construction site where the term is used often. As a means of satisfying both communities this person can stylize the expletive in a manner that is not *technically* swearing by shouting "frick!!" when he hits his thumb with a hammer. The expletive is a stylization that satisfies both communities. Rather than condemning one or the other, he is

able to stylistically express both communities in his stylization. He is able to participate in both communities by stylizing his expression of each.

It is along these lines that authorship can be thought of as a kind of "form-giving energy" (Bakhtin 1990/c.1920, p. 8). When Bakhtin addressed authorship in terms of "energy" we interpret him to have been writing about how authors express potential for individuality as an aesthetic expression born out of internal dialogue. Authorship in the novel involved the expression of heroes and also their lived tension that enables individual stylization. For example, Dostoevsky was an embodied human who lived from within speech genres, but also lived in dialogic penetration. Bakhtin saw Dostoevsky as expressing the author's own life. As such, Dostoevsky's social psychology is expressed in his art, just like people express social psychology in their aesthetic acts of individual stylization. To think in Bakhtinian lines of authorship is to think of it as a *creative capacity* born out of polyphony and internal dialogue. Hence, we can see how dialogue bestows upon oneself a capacity to stylize speech genres; but it does not bestow a capacity to step outside of speech genres as a whole. When Bakhtin wrote that authors never go beyond heroes, he is advocating that we never escape the worlds of experience that are constituted in communities. When Bakhtin described authors as distinct from heroes, he was not describing authorship as indicative of a distinct entity. Instead, he was pointing to the creative capacity of individual stylization in the face of a struggle to remain faithful to speech genres.

Implications

Authorship, from Gergen's perspective, was treated substantially different from how we have treated it above. In his view, authorship involved putting forward a claim about self and, in this way, authoring a self-narrative (e.g. Gergen, M. & Gergen, K., 1984, 2006; Gergen, 1994, 1996, 1999a). Such a narrative was then negotiated with another in relational exchange, which makes the authorial activity relational. That is, people were taken to engage in talk with others who have different perspectives to eventually negotiate one's knowledge-of self. This perspective on authoring involved the other in negotiation and, consequently, involved the give and take of address and response. Gergen resonates with our proposal insofar as it involves alterity. For Gergen, relational interchange involved reaching a communal ground and, in the case of self, a joint-authorship of self. The success – that is, the self-narrative stood – depended upon the rhetorical skill of the author. Gergen thereby wrote about authoring as a rhetorical activity where knowledge-of self is jointly authored in relational interchanges.

In contrast, authorship in a Bakhtinian sense requires a different approach to this notion. Authorial consciousness belongs to the plane of speech genres insofar as it would be the expression of experiential purviews lived within communities. Instead of treating authorship as a perspective/position from which a narrative is given, we could see it as the living judgment of experienced tensions emergent in the polyphonic

condition and the dialogical penetration of the naturalness of speech genres. Authorship entails lived action bound up with the experience of struggle with faithfulness to oneself and another that seems to be part of postmodern pluralism. The consequence is that authorship involves tensions where one is pulled towards another and away from another simultaneously. As such, Gergen's notion of authorship, which involved the meeting of a common ground, can be contrasted to our proposal, which involves tension and rupture. Such tension and rupture comes about in authoring a self when what one takes for granted is exposed in dialogic penetration.

While a Bakhtinian view of struggle to be faithful to communities directly addresses experience, it becomes hard to conceive of tension when Gergen only really dealt with it in terms of rhetorical disagreement and the knowledge-of self. If we follow Gergen, we may lose sight of the lived tension that can be *experienced* as very difficult. Gergen goes so far as to explicitly take a stand against experience in favor of describing how it is dealt with when performed (e.g. 1994, pp. 222-223). For example, he addressed how emotions are of interest in terms of how they are socially constructed to serve the needs of individualistic psychology. He wrote that emotional language was significant by virtue of its "function in social interchange" and that "emotion terms have largely served political purposes within professional psychology" (1996, pp. 61-62). In order to move away from individualist psychology, Gergen has moved away from experience. There are also instances, such as the following, where he wrote "what one takes to

be real, what one believes to be transparently true about human functioning, is a by-product of communal construction" (2001b, p. 806) and goes on to deride any concern with human experience other than it's rhetorical construction (ibid.). While we sympathize with Gergen and his attempt to move away from an individualistic fixed self, we do not think that it is necessary to do away with experience in terms of authoring self. There is little in relational exchange that demands our faithfulness, if we take Gergen's perspective. Such is the implication of dealing with knowledge-of experience and not with the phenomena of lived struggle itself. A notion of language and dialogue that is embodied, such as what we present herein, enables us to propose a cultural psychology of experiential self.

Conclusion

Bakhtin brought personal experience into the picture (thereby bringing us closer to the phenomena as lived) and treated this experience as communally constituted. Internal dialogue, in our reading of Bakhtin, is about personally experienced tension that is born out of I/other alterity. Instead of arguing that struggle is something that we construct knowledge-of, he argued that it is expressive of ways of living that are socially constituted yet personally experienced. Moreover, he allowed for the struggle that people have with their embodied sense of self with his notion of authorship. Taking Bakhtin's view means that we extend Gergen's view of self to consider how personal experience involves socially constituted lived struggles of

faithfulness. Thereby, we could deemphasize rhetorical juxtaposition and attend to experiential concerns of faithfulness to self and others.

From this emphasis, we gain new insight in the notion of creativity that is central to Gergen's work (e.g. Gergen, 2001a, 2002b; Gergen & Thatchenkery, 2004; Gergen & Zielke, 2006). Where he took self to be a free creation that opens up new possibilities, we follow Bakhtin's vision that recognizes how struggle with faithfulness to oneself becomes the impetus for creativity. Our view attempts to open up new understanding on the social constitution of the self yet retains both faithfulness and unique individuality.

Our goal in this dissertation has been to work out an approach to cultural psychology that deals with phenomenologically immediate experience. We have sought to outline this proposal by addressing speech genres through the lens of Bakhtin's early work. Our discussion of expressive realism addressed how a novel expresses naturally lived speech genres and enables readers to apprehend their own naturally lived experience in a new light. We then proposed a way to approach human development and authorship of self. Authoring a self touches upon the notion of giving an account of oneself. The next chapter deals with how researchers can approach the interpretation of accounts of self.

Chapter Five

Speech Genres and Accounts of Self: Bakhtin and Garfinkel on Interpreting Accounts of Self

Introduction

The issue to which we turn in this chapter is how cultural psychologists could research a self that is authored by our research participants. In particular, we are interested in addressing how accounts of oneself could be researched. To propose some detail on how to engage such research, one place to start is with the work of Jonathan Potter and Derek Edwards, psychologists associated with Loughborough University, Department of Social Sciences. These authors regularly publish together and have been developing a mode of research called "discourse analysis". Their general approach is known as discursive psychology (e.g. Edwards, 1997; Edwards & Potter, 1992, 2005; Middleton & Edwards, 1990; Potter, 2005; Potter et al., 1993; Potter & Hepburn, 2005; Potter & te Molder, 2005; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Although these researchers have unique programs, there are nevertheless common threads that underlie their work and we will deal with these common threads throughout this chapter. They have endeavored to put human interaction and sociality at the center of their research program. Discursive psychology highlighted that it is possible to approach what participants say in terms other than the degree to which accounts of themselves are representational of an objective reality. Edwards and Potter

claimed that people's talk about any psychological topic, such as the self, involved more than neutral descriptions of mental states. They made this claim because such accounts of self involve topics of concern for participants that are rhetorically structured. Self has been seen as social, from this perspective, because it is rhetorically constructed in discourse. In establishing itself as a strong critic of mainstream cognitive psychology, discursive psychology has thereby made room for an arguably more cultural approach to psychological research. Our task of unfolding a Bakhtinian mode of research, as we see it, is to take a lead from discursive psychology in terms of the rejection of cognitive psychology and the emphasis on sociality.

In particular, we are interested in how the accounts of self could be approached by addressing the techniques a cultural psychologist could use to research accounts of self. Bakhtin addressed such a task in notes entitled *Toward a Methodology in the Human Sciences.* Unfortunately, he died before fleshing out his ideas in detail (see 1986/c. 1970, pp. 103-170). This chapter is about the kind of research technique that could be appropriated for a Bakhtin-inspired approach in cultural psychology[15]. We will begin by addressing Bakhtin and the notion of researching accounts of self in order to address how the idea of working out an approach to research would conceivably fit with a Bakhtin-inspired approach. Namely, how research techniques should reveal communal practices and experiences that are naturally lived.

However, the there are two critiques of discursive psychology that

highlight aspects of it that are not amenable to a Bakhtin-inspired mode of research. First, discourse analysis has emphasized the construction of accounts and thereby neglected wider social discourses that constrain and enable in situ talk (e.g. Hook, 2001, 2005; Wetherell, 1998; see Potter's (2005, p. 741) acknowledgment of this critique). That is, discourse analysis has been accused of emphasizing dyadic interactions in a way that neglects communal practices of the sort that have been a concern throughout this dissertation. Below, it is outlined how this critique can stand even though discourse analysis seems to address communal practices (e.g. Edwards, 1997; Edwards & Potter 2005; Middleton & Edwards, 1990; Potter, 2005; Potter & Hepburn, 2005; Potter & te Molder, 2005). In order to redress the critique that discourse analysis, as a research technique, neglected communal practices, we turn to Conversation Analysis (CA), which is inspired by Garfinkel's ethnomethodology (1967). CA and ethnomethodology have undergirded and inspired the way that discursive psychology approached research (e.g. Edwards & Potter, 1992; Potter, 2005; Potter & Hepburn, 2005; Potter & te Molder, 2005; Wooffitt, 2005). However, ethnomethodology and CA offer a way to understand communal practices and how to approach the task of studying them, even though such practices have been neglected in discourse analysis. Drawing on these approaches justifies the retention of the kind of technique – that is, the detailed interpretation of conversation – used in discourse analysis and CA. As such, we will advocate the use of such techniques and propose alternative analytic interests relative to discourse

analysis.

Second, discourse analysis has been critiqued for downplaying experience (e.g. Baerveldt & Verheggen, 1999; Cromby, 2004; Soffer, 2001). We will unfold how this critique stands even though discursive psychology claimed to address embodiment (e.g. Edwards, 1997; Potter, 2005). In previous chapters, we showed that Bakhtin leads us to recognize the communal quality of experienced life. A Bakhtinian inspired approach to accounts of self would involve both a broader notion of sociality than in situ dyadic interactions and it would consider experience. The problem is that ethnomethodology and CA give us a technique for interpreting communal practices but they do not treat *experience* as a communal practice – likely due to different analytic interests that we address below. As such, the second part of this chapter turns to Bakhtin and how experience is a communal practice. We discuss how the claims made in previous chapters mesh with Garfinkel and CA. We will also show how communal bodies can add to ethnomethodology and CA. The result is that we propose a way to approach the interpretation of accounts of self that includes communal practices and experience. We include an illustration of what interpretive techniques enable us to apprehend what was previously naturally lived.

Bakhtin and Research Technique

Near the end of his life, Bakhtin took up the problem of interpreting life in a very direct way, where he had previously addressed human experience

through the discussion of art. The shift is not as broad as it might seem because he wrote about authoring self as an aesthetic act. Moreover, in a collection of notes later entitled *Toward a Methodology in the Human Sciences*, Bakhtin was working towards the interpretation of human action (1986/c.1970, pp. 103-170). In note form, Bakhtin wrote the following:

> Understanding. This dismemberment of understanding into individual acts. In actual, real concrete understanding these acts merge inseparably into a unified process, but each act has an ideal semantic (content-filled) independence that can be singled out from the concrete empirical act… The interpretation of contextual meanings cannot be scientific… (1986/c.1970, pp. 159-160)

There are two interesting points about these comments. First, in these notes, Bakhtin primarily wrote about the interpretation of human action and not about the interpretation of art. This is a text that was directly concerned with how we would approach the task of interpreting human action. Secondly, Bakhtin wrote in the above quote, and throughout the entire set of notes, that the task of understanding human action is not a natural-scientific one (note that the notion of "natural" here does not refer to the tacit quality of speech genres and we indicate so with the attachment of the adjective "scientific"). This text focused on directly approaching human activity through an interpretive framework that could stand as an alternative to the natural-scientific model. He pointed out that the systemic approach to human action is possible and that such an approach would not be subject to

the flaws of treating humans as natural things: interpretation of human life should not fall into the reductionism of natural sciences. One reason for this claim was that he argued the subject matter in the case of interpreting human action is not thing-like in the way that a component of a machine must be. For within the natural-scientific mode

> there is only a *voiceless thing*. Any object of knowledge (including man) can be perceived and cognized as a thing. But a subject as such cannot be perceived and studied as a thing, for as a subject it cannot, while remaining a subject, become voiceless, and, consequently, cognition of it can only be *dialogic*. … The activity of one who acknowledges a voiceless thing and the activity of one who acknowledges another subject, that is, the *dialogic* activity of the acknowledger. (1986/1974, p. 161, original emphasis; see also p. 159)

On Bakhtin's view, researchers should not interpret human action as a thing-like component because it "speaks" – it expresses and constitutes the whole rather than acting as a component of the machine that can be replaced when broken without changing the machine. The vision that Bakhtin had of interpretive work in the human sciences is one that avoids reductionism by recognizing the active quality of the individual in light of speech as the whole of communal action, including the body.

Recognizing the voices that researchers study means that interpretive techniques are not standard prescriptions that uncover some independent reality. Instead of approaches uncovering independent facts of reality, they

can be addressed as a means for interpreting accounts of self in order to bring to light what is lived by communities. Rather than uncovering some independent reality, we are addressing life veiled to us in its natural character – as in the tacit living of speech genres[16]. Comments like the one above, which advocate avoiding reductionism, highlight how Bakhtin was interested in developing techniques that allow naturally lived speech genres to come forth in a more explicit manner. Interpretive work, as a kind of artisan craft, should enable lived realities to be made available for discussion where they were previously unseen.

Hence, Bakhtin's notes indicated that he was beginning to formulate an approach to research that is reminiscent of his approach to art. Bakhtin was detailed in the interpretation of art in his early work where he talked about the techniques that an author can employ (1990/1924, pp. 257-326). Bakhtin used the example of the construction of a building as an example of the role of technique in interpreting art:

> But all this technical work carried out by the artists and studied by aesthetics (without which there would be no works of art) does not enter into the aesthetic object created by contemplation, that is, into aesthetic being as such, into the ultimate goal of creativity: all is removed at the moment of artistic apprehension, just as the scaffolding is removed when a building is completed. (1990/1924, p. 295)

Scaffolding surrounds a building and enables it to be built but when the building is finished, the scaffolding is not sufficient for appreciating the

architecture of a building. So it is with the techniques, such as the use of words and structure of the text, in the interpretation of art. We can consider the techniques of research in much the same way. They can be means of making visible and expressing what is naturally lived. A research report may ultimately not address all of the activities that a researcher engaged in, but it can illustrate some of them. This enables the researcher to author an account of the research participants. In our case, we will address the sorts of techniques that can be involved in research. Through research techniques, it is possible to come to an understanding of participants and then articulate this understanding, like the final work of art.

The problem is that Bakhtin left us with a promissory note. He did not fully flesh out his vision for the techniques of approaching such interpretive work. *Towards a Methodology in the Human Sciences* was in note form at the time of his death. Unlike his discussion on art (e.g. 1990/1924, pp. 257-326), Bakhtin did not specify techniques of systemic inquiry. For example, he wrote about the "dismemberment of understanding into individual acts" – effectively breaking up human action to look at the parts of the whole in order to return to the whole with new understanding – but he did not specify much about how to do so. Our task is to spell out systemic inquiry in line with his vision.

In art, different techniques can be used at different times for different purposes. Bakhtin (1990/1924), for example, discussed techniques used in Pushkin's poem *Remembrance* (Pushkin, 1962/1828) and he discussed

different techniques used by Rabelais (Bakhtin, 1984b/1940). Different techniques are involved in the creation of these works of art, but both are ultimately forms of aesthetic expression. We will take Bakhtin's lead in the sense that different research projects could involve different kinds of techniques. Our proposal is one kind of research technique and it is not intended to preclude others. That is, we will propose an approach to researching accounts of self, but we are not claiming that it is the only conceivable approach demanded by our forgoing discussion. A research technique is appropriate so long as the approach allows researchers to avoid the natural scientific mode in regards to humans, includes communal practices, and includes experience.

Discourse analysis would seem like a good direction to take because this perspective rejected the conventional practice of approaching accounts through a natural scientific mode (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Potter & Edwards, 1992; Potter et al., 1993). Specifically, they claimed that accounts of self should not be understood only in terms of how accurately they represented reality. Such accounts were not simply referential-designative utterances because, as discursive psychologists pointed out, such accounts were used to construct versions of reality.

Far from being a neutral and representative tool, accounts of self were treated as being *employed* as social action. Any account, on the discursive analytic view, would be action insofar as it is focused on the "enormous range of practical, technical, and interpersonal tasks that people perform" (Potter &

Edwards, 1999, p. 448). The reason for such a focus is that discursive psychology has claimed that people have a stake or interest in what is constructed over the course of a conversation. This action-oriented focus meant that accounts are *oriented* to interlocutors and the consequence was that "discursive psychology is an approach that considers psychology as an object *in* and *for* interactions" (Potter & te Molder, 2005, p. 2, original emphasis). Accounts of self were, then, resources that could be rhetorically employed (e.g. Edwards & Potter, 1992, 2005; Potter, 2005; Potter & Edwards, 1999). Bound up in such a rhetorical employment of accounts is the idea that people were *accounting for* themselves. That is, people's responsibility for accounts of themselves was coupled with the way that accounts were rhetorically oriented towards interlocutors. Relative to a referential/designative conception of accounts, discursive psychology brought forth a richer conceptualization in its recognition of them as forms of social action. This perspective therefore overlaps with Bakhtin's notion that we are not dealing with a voiceless object, but rather with an active person.

Discursive psychology offers this common ground with Bakhtin, but, as we will outline below, it does not deal with two issues that have been addressed throughout this dissertation: communal practices beyond dyadic interactions and experience. Therefore, where Bakhtin aligns with the action-oriented approach in discursive analysis, discursive analysis does not align with the vision of communally situated agency that we draw from Bakhtin. The misalignment means that discursive psychology is not sufficient when it

comes to dealing with research involving culturally situated agency, which requires both community and experience. We will endeavor to propose an alternative action-orientation approach to the discursive approach that still involves similar techniques of interpretation. Our proposal will not fall prey to the two points of critique. The result is an alternative approach to research that involves similar techniques but different analytic interests.

Critique One: Neglect of Communal Practices Beyond In Situ Talk

Some authors have pointed out how discursive psychologists downplay the role of communal practices: sociality beyond dyadic interaction (Hook, 2001, 2005; Wetherell, 1998; Willig, 2001). Hook wrote "many methods of discourse analysis separate the analysis of discourse from the broader (and 'extratextual') analysis of materiality, from the consideration of history, and from the conditions of possibility that 'underwrite' what counts as 'reasonable knowledge'"(2005, p. 4). Hook pointed out that, while discursive psychologists emphasize the use of accounts in a conversational situation, they deemphasize the wider picture that includes historically situated communal practices that enable the efficacy of such in situ accounts. For example, accounts involving the "hand of God" would be reasonable and rhetorically compelling to those who share communal practices of a protestant evangelical community; whereas, they would not be so among other communities such as liberal arts university departments. In general, the point was that accounts of self were situated in historical practices, which

exist beyond the immediate "text" of the interpreted account. These communal practices have been downplayed in discursive analysis and we will explain how this is so by addressing how Potter and Edwards attempt to address communal practices.

Hook's critique could seem unjustified in light of how discursive analysis addressed several notions that seem to point to communal practices. Examples included notions such as institutions (e.g. Middleton & Edwards, 1990; Potter, 2005), shared knowledge (e.g. Edwards, 1997), normativity (e.g. Edwards & Potter 2005; Potter & te Molder, 2005), cultural and ideological themes (Middleton & Edwards, 1990), context (Potter & Hepburn, 2005), and so on. It is possible to see how the critique still stands if we look closer at the how such notions were investigated by Edwards and Potter. In the words of Middleton and Edwards, for example, communal practices "are *worked up,* illustrated*, used*, and commemorated by participants as part of the *pragmatics* of speaking" (1990, p. 24, emphasis added). The examples listed above all addressed these notions as *topics* to be rhetorically employed in conversations. That is, while communal practices were addressed, they were addressed as topics *about which* interlocutors talk and not as practices extending beyond a given dyadic interaction into a community. The critique that communal practices are downplayed still stands because the approach to communal practices taken by Edwards and Potter reduced communal practices to in situ rhetorical resources.

The problem is where to look for guidance in researching communal

practices as expressed in accounts of self. One of the most prominent influences on discursive analysis' technical praxis was Conversation Analysis (CA) and discursive analysis explicitly drew on this research tradition (e.g. Edwards, 1997; Edwards & Potter, 1992, 2005; Potter, 2005; Potter & Hepburn, 2005; Potter & te Molder, 2005, Wooffitt, 2005). CA, in turn, has its roots in Garfinkel's (1967) ethnomethodology (Heritage, 1984; Sacks, 1995; Wooffitt, 2005). CA and ethnomethodology can aid in redressing this communal critique of discursive psychology because CA and ethnomethodology approaches explicitly focus on communal practices (Button, 1991; Garfinkel, 1967; Hilbert, 2001; Wooffitt, 2005). Even though discursive psychologists downplayed communal practices outside of in situ discourse, CA and ethnomethodology placed broader communal practices at the forefront. However, they still use research techniques similar to discursive analysis.

In his manual on CA, ten Have made the case that the "ultimate 'results' of CA are a set of formulated 'rules' or 'principles', which participants are demonstratably oriented to in the natural interactions" and that its aim in each analysis was to uncover "some a priori rule or principle that is oriented to by participants in various instances of natural interaction." (2002, pp. 135-136). He argued that conversation analysts find regularities in talk that point to communal practices taken-for-granted by interlocutors. However, what he meant by communal practices differs from a conventional notion of norms involving some sort of propositional code of conduct (for a full discussion on

this point see Hilbert, 2001). Ten Have argued that it is misleading to treat communal practices as having the status of codified propositions that, when internalized, serve as a mental codebook (see also Button, 1991; Francis & Hester, 2004; Garfinkel, 1967; Hilbert, 2001).

To understand why it would be misleading to treat communal practices as codified propositions, consider how ten Have wrote that practitioners of CA try to "explicate the inherent theories-in-use of [a group] members' practices as lived orders, rather than trying to order the world externally by applying a set of traditionally available value concepts, or invented variations thereof" (ten Have, 2002, p. 32). If we explicate what he meant by the phrases "theories-in-use" and "practices as lived orders", then it is possible to see how communal practices are not a priori in the mental codebook sense described above. He was drawing attention to how people have "theories" that are lived without the sort of consultation or reflection required in the case of a mental codebook. People come to a situation with communally constituted tacit expectancies as to how things should unfold, but such expectancies are only realized in their enactment. The way that these "theories-in use" do not stand apart from the practice of living life as antecedent codes is what we will explore by looking to ethnomethodology.

Ten Have's position was based on Garfinkel and the latter made the claim that:

> A [community's] members encounter and know the moral order as perceivably normal courses of action – familiar scenes of everyday affairs,

> the world of daily life known in common with others and with others taken for granted… The member of the [community] uses background expectancies as a scheme of interpretation. With their use actual appearances are for him recognizable and intelligible as the appearances-of-familiar events (1967, pp. 35-36).

Garfinkel emphasized that appropriate actions are taken as natural as per their taken-for-granted nature. That is, when people come to a situation, they do not come upon a completely foreign experience. He thereby argued that the practice of living taken-for-granted social order involves living "everyday affairs" in a natural way that is communally constituted. This quote from Garfinkel pointed out how communal practices are people making sense of life.

However, the importance of the immediate circumstances is not diminished. Garfinkel conceived of the manner in which such normative practices are neither an a priori propositional code nor inseparable from the vicissitudes of life:

> The properties of indexical expression and indexical actions are ordered properties. These consist of organizationally demonstratable sense, of facticity, or methodic use, or agreement among 'cultural colleagues.' Their ordered properties consist of organizationally demonstratable rational properties of indexical expressions and indexical actions. (1967, p. 11)

Garfinkel's use of the term "indexical" referred to the way that activities, including giving accounts, are located in a particular situation, and they make

sense in light of such particularity. For example, if one states “he is late again”, we only understand what “he” means in reference to the particular circumstance where the phrase is expressed. While community may involve natural familiarity that affords us expectancies as to how things should unfold, communal practices are concrete practices in an ever-unique situation. This is because each account, of self or otherwise, is brought forth in a particular situation with particular interlocutors and each event of such accounting is unique insofar as interlocutors constantly find themselves in an ever-changing flow of life. The different people with whom people live embody different relationships with different kinds of interpersonal obligations. There are things that one would account for in one way to one’s mother and another way to an old friend. Garfinkel (1967) noted that this is because there are different background expectancies that are part of social groups. There are communal standards in terms of how one should respond to people with different roles and positions in society. Garfinkel pointed out that people still enact indexical actions in a generic way that was tailored to the immediate specificities and it is for this reason that he referred to the “demonstratable rational properties of indexical action”. In the uniqueness of the situation, people are faced with the task of accomplishing communal practices that are generically recognizable. Garfinkel therefore claimed that the people in the immediate situation achieve communal practices. That is, they *achieve community*. If we are going to research communal practices, it behoves us to do so in a way that treats them as in situ accomplishments of

community not as an objectified a priori codebook.

Garfinkel's vision of communal practices had implications for the kinds of claims that researchers could make. Investigators can make the error of taking the step of setting up formal propositional "properties" of accounts as codified antecedents rather than achieving community. In Garfinkel's view, these *shoulds* and *oughts* were taken-for-granted and accomplished in the immediacy of life. Codified causal antecedents were, in Garfinkel's view, attributions forced upon informants by investigators that are descriptive of the investigators' presuppositions and not that of the participants (e.g. Garfinkel, 1967, pp. 277-279).

Moreover, even the ways in which participants accomplish communal practices are not definitive and cannot, thereby, be described in terms of definitive rules. Rather, they are plastic so that the pursuit of definitive propositional codes of conduct is unfruitful and impossible, even when dealing with seemingly objective codes such as laws. Garfinkel wrote

> When members' accounts of everyday activities are used as prescriptions with which to locate, to identify, to analyze, to classify, to make recognizable, or to find one's way around in comparable occasions, the prescriptions, they observe, are law-like, though they are spatiotemporally restricted, and "loose." By "loose" is meant that though they are intendedly conditional in their logical form, 'the nature of the conditions is such that they can often not be spelled out completely or fully'" (Garfinkel, 1967, p. 2; citing Helmer & Rescher, 1958).

According to Garfinkel, the activities that participants enact to establish communal practices gave us a sense of generic sorts of actions that were "loose" rather than absolutely definitive. Those giving an account of self do not consult a propositional code because their accounts themselves are endeavors to accomplish what was done as "perceivably normal courses of action". Even texts like laws and creeds are open to qualification and modification in the moment. Therefore, law-like descriptions by researchers and participants thereby remain necessarily "loose", because such "laws" are constituted in the specific expression of an account that is never completely definitive or free of potential qualification.

In order to apprehend the accomplishment of accounts, Garfinkel wrote "one must either be a stranger to the 'life as usual' character of everyday scenes, or become estranged from them" (1967, p. 37). He thus claimed that one must somehow breach the way that communal practices were naturally lived in order to study them, and he did this in his "breaching" studies. He deliberately breached communal practices by doing something that was unnatural and attended to the accounts that people gave in light of the breach. Garfinkel drew attention to the way in which participants accounted for a breach by explaining the abnormal behavior through articulated rationales for its enactment. He argued that taken-for-granted communal practices became evident in the way that participants would attempt to repair or account for the breach.

CA followed Garfinkel in terms of the emphasis upon breaching communal

practices. The crucial difference between CA and Garfinkel's initial formulation of ethnomethodology was that CA was less interested in large-scale breaches. Practitioners of CA argued that small-scale breaches regularly occur in the common course of interaction; and, a researcher did not need a large-scale breach to interpret communal practices (ten Have, 2002; Wooffitt, 2005). If a speaker breached others' expectations by not enacting a familiar pattern or asked for an explanation for what is familiar to others, interlocutors recognized and accounted for the breach in the course of their achievement of communal practices. For example, if two participants in a social group are describing the characteristic of the social group and the participants come upon a point of disagreement, they would find a way to explain away – that is, account for – or reconcile discordance. Practitioners of CA looked at the many small-scale breaches that occur during a conversation and the explanations/accounts that were brought forward with regards to these breaches. Attending to such features in a conversation pointed to the "theories-in-use" about taken-for-granted communal practices.

Implications

Potter and Edwards have pointed out that discursive psychology often uses the same "apparatus" (Potter & Hepburn, 2005, p. 85) –that is, procedural techniques – as CA and ethnomethodology. Discursive psychology was nonetheless analytically distinct in terms of what it looked for. Potter and te Molder wrote "[u]nlike conversation analysis and

ethnomethodology, discursive psychology has developed largely within (social) psychology and has addressed psychological issues from the start" (2005, p. 20). Conversation analysis and discourse analysis were similar in terms of technique and how they approached interaction; however, they have had different aims. Our position is similar insofar as the techniques used in these approaches goes. However, we are interested in enriching what emerges when we practice these techniques. We are interested in presenting an alternative approach that involves such techniques being used like an artist would employ aesthetic techniques and addressing communal practices is central in this alternative (a more detailed discussion on this topic in found in Appendix B).

In its effort to focus its attention of providing an alternative approach to cognitive psychology, discursive analysis has neglected how the detailed interpretation of speech can point to communal practices. Our approach differs from discursive analysis insofar as we are not as interested in reacting against cognitive psychology as we are in proposing how to approach speech to research communal practices. We have turned to CA to justify that the techniques used by both CA and discursive psychology can be employed in regards to interpreting communal practices. CA and ethnomethodology address how we are not dealing with a priori norms, yet we are also not dealing with in situ rhetorical *talk about* communal practices. When interpreting accounts of self, we look to small-scale activities in a conversation in order to see the accomplishment or expression of communal

practices. Instead of focusing on the in situ constructions, CA can bring us to a discussion of the generic kinds of communal practices that members of a community naturally enact. We would be able to interpret in situ action as an expression of communal practices through CA and fall in line with Bakhtin. Moreover, communal practices are accomplishments enacted in light of culturally constituted expectancies and we do not lose the action-orientation that is central to Bakhtin.

Illustration

At this point, an illustration of implications will be provided by examining a single extract from an interview that was collected as part of another project[17]. We are not going to outline an entire project here because the focus of this dissertation is theoretical (Appendix B addresses how excerpts could be selected and Appendix C addresses the issue of evaluating the quality of such a project). The excerpt involves three people: an interviewer and two participants. First, we will address how the excerpt would be approached from a discursive analytic approach. Second, we will illustrate what a return to CA brings to bear on the interpretation. Doing this work requires that the interview be transcribed in a way that allows such attention to detail. Accordingly, the excerpt was transcribed according to the Jefferson transcriptions conventions that are listed in Appendix D:

Excerpt 5.1: FxMFeb1 (16:15-19:30)

Turn Speaker

1	Jim:	yeah . why do y'think it's important . for the Chinese way BE be passed on? (1.5)
2	Linda:	simply because . I GREW up in uhm in th' . CHINese culture in'the Chinese community .
3	Jim:	uhum
4	Linda	'cause I . I moved here . uhm eighteen years ago.
5	Jim:	ok
6	Linda:	s' I was already an adult when I moved [here
7	Jim:	[umhm
8	Linda:	so it is still t-the root where y'came from I think it BUILD up . deep (.5)
9	Jim:	I'sorry . it's build up you said?
10	Linda:	yeah it's'all . that's where I BUILT myself up from
11	Jim:	ahhh ok
12	Linda:	an' it's the ROOT (2)
13	Jim:	s'kinda WHO you [are I-
14	Linda:	[yeah wh'I
15	Jim:	-is Chinese first
16	Linda:	who I am is a-an' where I got my education an' where I grow up.
17	Jim:	umhm
18	Linda:	I'seems it's a BIG part I can't DENy it .
19	Jim:	right (1) s'does that imply tha' . your CHILDren if they are more Canadianized are denying . a'big part of you? (1.5)
20	Linda:	well uhm (1) i-in away that (1.5) when they started school.
21	Jim:	umhm
22	Linda:	they . woul' mix with a group of other people.
23	Jim:	umhm
24	Linda:	s'to THEM it's um . well I'm Canadian. it's more more than the wor'tha' . oh I am Chinese.
25	Jim:	umhm (1)
26	Linda:	so then . -w-w-when I came to Canada. I jus' thought about oh ok I am here in Canada I'm going to do everything like a CaNADian . but actually no I can't .
27	Jim:	ok
28	Linda:	'cause it's the background.

29	Jim:	uhuhh . s’y’ COULdn't .
30	Linda:	y-you can't jus’ change over night a’ all
31	Jim:	ahah
32	Linda:	OK . out’of that culture into another culture.
33	Jim:	yeh
34	Linda:	no you can' . gradually get into the other culture . but .the the BASE is still FIRM .
35	Jim:	umhm
36	Linda:	inside .
37	Jim:	I see . whadda you think?
38	Paul:	I think tha’s probably true uhm . ‘cause li- like you said your sons . they speak Cantonese but they don't WRITE like that's exactly like me I ca- I SPEAK Cantonese but I’can't write it .
39	Jim:	[ok
40	Paul:	[‘cause uhm I’m’not sure WHY I can't write it jus’ because I was’never taught maybe ‘cause there is no PRACTical value to me? but in Canada we DO write an’ speak in English.
41	Jim:	yeh
42	Paul:	I’also find tha’my parents yes uhm . it's’a deep part of who they are an’ I still fin’ myself having to tell my parents like . you’re no’ in China any more this is the way we do it in Canada (.5)
43	Jim:	ok
44	Paul:	an’ then . actually n’tha’I’think of it it really opens my eyes HOW like I’m getting a differen’ point’o view now . an’I can see WHY it's so important to them so . to WHY they wanna do stuff a certain way.

Discursive psychology has merit because does not deal with its subject matter as a “voiceless thing”. The vision that Bakhtin had of interpretive work in the human sciences is one that recognizes the active quality of the individual in light of the constitution of the whole of communal action. In turn one, the dissertation’s author (Jim) calls the participants to account for

themselves and we have grounds to make this claim because Linda gives an account of her self (all participant names are pseudonyms). The two participants in the interview were recruited as people who had either emigrated from China themselves or had parents who had emigrated from China. This selection criterion was set for the prior research project. Jim calls for an account from Linda, the participant who was born in China, when he looks at her and asks her to explain why it is important for the "Chinese way" to be passed on. The phrase "Chinese way" is a phrase that Linda had used previously in the interview.

Discursive psychologists would attempt to show how Linda's account of her self is rhetorically structured and how such structure makes her account acceptable to the other participants in a conversation. Likely, this approach would look at the first part of the account as action and not as a description of her childhood (lines 2-16). Note, in turn two, how her account of growing up in China is presented as "simply" being the reason that passing on the Chinese way is important. The "simply" could be taken to orient the participants in the conversation to how the account is not complicated. The explanation is presented as a mundane common fact that is akin to a self-evident truth. Because the explanation is presented as self-evident, it is presented as something that should easily be accepted. The discursive approach would thereby attend to how spending childhood and adolescence in China is presented as *obvious*. Namely, the *simple* causal significance is presented as explaining why she would want the Chinese way to be passed

on (lines 2-7). The audience is oriented to her claim as being obvious and this action thereby places responsibility on the audience to acquiesce.

However, in turn eight, Linda would be interpreted as orienting us to the way that growing up in China is not the *direct* cause of placing importance on passing on the Chinese way. A discursive approach would likely highlight how Linda's account of growing up in China set the stage for the construction of her self. This approach would point out how an account of growing up in China orients the audience to a justification for a psychological claim that Linda begins in line eight. By invoking the use of "myself" in line ten, she presents growing up in China as being the "root" and what "built" her self up. When she puts forward this presentation, a discursive approach would likely attend to how she uses the notion of "deep" and it is this that orients us to her claim about her self. That is, "deep" could be seen as orienting us to her psychological claim that what she gained from growing up in China is something that is within her. Likewise, repeating herself and re-emphasizing the terms "root" and "built" orients us to how her claim is being advanced. Self is being constructed as founded upon growing up in China and this, in turn, is presented as resulting in a property of self that is "deep" inside her.

A discursive approach, furthermore, would likely argue that Linda is orienting us towards an account of her self by way of reference to Jim's response in turn thirteen. Jim's comments in line 13 would be seen as illuminating how Linda's claim is indeed about the construction of a psychological claim. He acknowledges that she is talking about the creation

of a self with "who you are", after Linda, in line 10, talked about "building" a self. In line 14, Linda repeats Jim's words and confirms his response as being about the self she is presenting. Discursive analysis would approach this interaction as a negotiation that established the veracity of Linda's account that her self was built up by growing up in China. Having had her account validated, a discursive approach would point out that she is then able to use this account of her self to justify her actions. In line 18, Linda states that childhood experiences that built this self are a large part of her. Consequently, she could be seen as presenting the audience with an account where her self is dominated by what she learned as a child (lines 2-6, & 16): she is dominated and thereby cannot "deny" it. Her explanation is that her self is built up by growing up and being educated in China. Once this claim is accepted, she can then justify her actions and she does so by claiming that she cannot do otherwise. That is, a discursive approach would be interested in how she sets up her psychology in such a way that she could not do otherwise, even if she wanted to. Overall, such an interpretation would involve showing how Linda's self is a resource that justifies her actions because it is talked about as a compelling force that accounts for why she does what she does.

A discursive approach illuminates in situ action that Linda and Jim are naturally undertaking, but the grounds for this natural flow are not addressed. Specifically, it illuminates how Linda manages the account of her self to justify her behavior by way of an appeal to a self. Linda's self is

understood in terms of account that establishes her self and it is thereby something that is talked about. This focus illustrates how discursive psychology is interested in self as a topic of in situ conversation. As a technique for research, discourse analysis makes visible for us what Jim and Linda are doing in the conversation in terms of rhetorical actions. While this analysis may reveal something that would otherwise naturally be done, there is little concern for wider social phenomena beyond the interaction. That is, while discursive analysis may be able to reveal naturally lived life to us like art, there is more to be revealed insofar as communal practices are not addressed. The understanding that discourse analysis offers is that the participants have a stake/interest in their rhetorical construction being established as true. What we do not see in this approach is precisely what we are interested in: an understanding of how such a stake/interest could come to be. We claim that there is more to be understood by way of communal practices.

CA, in contrast, is marked for its fine-grained analysis of conversations in order to address how communal practices are accomplished. By looking at the structure of conversation, CA attempts to make plain the minutiae of techniques people use to accomplish a communal way of life. For example, ten Have pointed out how the organization of conversation makes visible the "inherent theories-in-use of [a group] members' practices as lived orders" (2002, p. 32). There are many organizational features of talk that CA could possibly attend to, but we will only address two for the purposes of our

demonstration: turn-taking and conversation sequence.

Ten Have wrote "the idea of 'turn-taking' as an organized activity is one of the core ideas of the CA enterprise" (2002, p. 111). Generally, one person speaks at a time and the change of turns happens in a relatively seamless manner with little overlap. CA is interested in the how participants manage the change of speaking turns. For example, in the extract above, half of the turns end with either a pause or a rising intonation (22/44 turns). The rising intonation at the end of a turn signals a question and thereby signals the end of a turn. Likewise, the micro-pauses or longer pauses also signal the completion of a turn so that another can continue. We can see how the participants in a conversation orient to this activity when they do indeed provide an answer or change speakers. Note in the excerpt how, of the turns endings where there is no pause or a micro-pause, 13 are short utterances that prompt the previous speaker to continue (e.g. lines, 3, 5, 17, and so on). Turn taking is coordinated through the use of rising intonation, pauses, and short continuing utterances. Considering the patterns in such organizational activities can give us insight into communal practices.

Were we to examine other extracts and look for patterns, it would be possible for us to examine the patterns of the short utterances that prompt a participant to continue. In the demonstration excerpt, most of the short utterances are expressed by Jim (15/21). Of the short utterances that Jim expresses, the majority are with Linda (12/15) and this means that fewer are expressed with Paul (3/15). If we saw a similar pattern across other

excerpts, we could say that it is a technique for accomplishing different kinds of participants. There are two participants in the interview: one born in China and immigrated to Canada while the other was born in Canada to parents who had emigrated from China. We would not take these two classifications for granted, but look at what is done in interview to see if two different kinds of groups are achieved (after all, the selection criteria could come from a speech genre that researchers live and it could easily be irrelevant to the participants themselves). If, across other interviews, Jim expresses such short utterances with participants who are born in China more than with participants born in Canada, we can see how two groups are constituted by virtue of how the interactions were different. The use of short utterances could be a technique that establishes two different groups. Likewise, the way in which the participants respond to the interviewer can constitute a group as well. We could see patterns in how some participants would follow-up on the short utterance, like Linda does, and continue talking. Other participants may not do this and the difference between the two sets of responses would illuminate a technique to accomplishing different groups of participants. Such would be the way that we would examine turn-taking from the CA approach and how this approach could lead to an understanding of communal practices (of course, such a case would not be based on one single pattern, but, rather, on other features of the interaction that point in a similar direction).

In terms of the conversation sequence, CA often addresses “sequential

organization" (ten Have, 2002, pp. 113-116). Examining sequential organization in a conversation is based on the idea that "sequences are *patterns* of subsequent actions, where the 'subsequentiality' is not an arbitrary occurrence, but a realization of locally constituted projections, rights, and obligations" (ibid. pp. 114-115). That is, comments and responses often follow a pattern and this pattern is the accomplishment of communal practices. For example, in turn one, Jim ends the turn with a rising intonation and a pause. The rising intonation is a common technique that presents a question and we know this to be such because Linda responds by treating it as such. In turns one and two we see a question-response sequence that the interlocutors are demonstatably oriented to. Sequence organization is how such pairs of utterances unfold into others. Note how Linda's response is then followed by a short utterance from Jim when she leaves a micro-pause at the end of her expression. Once Linda begins her account in line two, Jim does not stop it with his next available turn and he coordinates with Linda to continue her turn.

One kind of sequence that we see in the excerpt commences with what ten Have refers to as a "pre-sequence" (ibid. p. 114). In turn two, we see Linda's response to Jim's request for an account of her self and this response is a general statement devoid of much detail. She only says that her reason for wanting the Chinese way to be passed on is that she grew up in the Chinese community. For more detail, the next response from Jim is one that requests more specificity be added to the general gloss that she just gave.

Following Jim's acknowledgment, Linda proceeds to add more to the general gloss. It is this general gloss that could be seen as pre-sequence going before an account of her self and it amounts to a signal that a longer explanation is following. Consider, in contrast, the interaction between Jim and Paul in lines 37 and 38. Paul does not use a pre-sequence in response to Jim's request for an account. Furthermore, Paul does not respond to Jim's call for an account of himself and he does not give a unique account of himself. Rather, Paul reiterates Linda's account. We see the following sequence in response to a request for an account: Participant A pre-sequences gloss ---> Participant A Elaborates on pre-sequence gloss ---> Interviewer requests account from Participant B ---> Participant B does not present a pre-sequence but re-iterates A's elaboration.

If we look at several extracts from different interviews and saw similar sequential organizations, we would see the constitution of communal practices. For example, if the above sequence was typical, it would mean that some participants are constituted as giving more detail than others. One group could constitute itself by way of pre-sequences with Jim while the other group, as expressed in Paul's utterance, may not use the same pre-sequence and subsequent unfolding. The group who enacted the pre-sequence could be established as the experts on whatever topic was being addressed. Conversely, the group who did not coordinate the pre-sequence and subsequent unfolding would be constituted as those who do not normatively speak on behalf of why the Chinese way should be passed on.

Supposing the excerpt with Linda and Paul is a typical one, those in the role of participant A would be participants born in China while participant B would be those born in Canada. We would see the accomplishment of these two groups through the sequential organization. Part of this coordinated action would establish a communal practice that Participant A, the participants born in China, as *experts*. These are the sorts of interpretive techniques that enable us to make visible how participants can accomplish communal (generic) practices. *In our case, it could be the constitution of how those born in China are the established as a distinct group and how the participants' actions establish them as the ones who speak for a community: experts.*

This interpretation can give us insight into the stake that Linda has in giving her account of her self. The participants in this conversation, including the Jim, all coordinate together to establish Linda as the expert on why the Chinese way should be passed on. In other words, the communal practices that we can imagine being established such that Linda is the one who *should, as an expert,* give the explanation. CA affords us a technique that allows us to apprehend what the participants naturally did and it offers insight into how stake/interest would be constituted. Had we not looked at the conversation in this manner, we would not have apprehended this communal practice and we would not have been able to penetrate the naturally lived practices in the way that we have. A researcher, in our view, would then be able to articulate the constitution of such stake/interest in a research report. It opens up a

new understanding that we may not have apprehended before.

However, CA and ethnomethodology do not deal with experience, which is part of our proposed cultural psychology. In order to propose our alternative to discursive analysis, it is necessary to propose how experience comes to play and how revealing what is naturally lived can be appropriated in research. Addressing the second critique of discursive psychology, that it neglects experience, can aid in these regards.

Critique Two: Discursive Psychology and the Neglect of Experience

It has been pointed out that discursive psychologists' approach to accounts of any sort, including that of self, is insufficient to understand why people are committed to their accounts (Baerveldt & Verheggen, 1999; Cromby, 2004; Soffer, 2001). Those who raise this critique claim that people are often engaged in life and accounts cannot be reduced to knowledge that is socially constructed in situ. The critique is that accounts of any sort are bound to experience that cannot only be something that is just constructed in situ. Thereby, such critics address how the rhetorical employment of accounts is not the sole issue involved in what shapes accounts, including accounts of oneself. Embodiment must also be considered according to this critique. However, discursive psychologists have explicitly pointed out that they deal with "embodiment", ergo experience (e.g. Edwards, 1997, pp. 230-262; Middleton & Edwards, 1990, p. 10; Potter, 2005, p. 741). In order to offer our proposal, it is necessary to address how discursive psychology's

approach to experience is insufficient.

A closer look at the discursive perspective reveals that this critique still stands. When Edwards addressed experience, he described how "people deploy what we might call *referential* experientialism, which means that bodily experience offers a basic set of metaphors, and other devices by which things are described" (1997, p. 248, original emphasis). Throughout his discussion, he referred to "conceptual categories" when he addressed experience and pointed out how experience is a resource to be rhetorically accounted for in talk (e.g. ibid, p. 235). When Potter addressed embodiment, he wrote that it "comes through situated *constructions of* the body" (2005, p. 741, emphasis added). He cited Wiggins as an example that deals with embodiment in this way. Wiggins indicated that she looks at experience, such as pleasure, to show how "embodied practices are constructed in the sequence of conversation" and how "the body is constructed as being extra-discursive in participants' talk" (2002, p. 314). These theorists were concerned with understanding how personal experience is constructed *as a topic* to be addressed when one gives an account of oneself. Experience itself is not addressed because discursive psychology concerned itself with what people say *about* experience. The concern purported by discursive psychologists is that they address how people talk about experience as a way of avoiding pre-linguistic experience or reality (e.g. Edwards, 1997, p. 231).

We sympathize with this concern and have striven to offer an understanding of experience that is neither pre-linguistic, yet not also

something that is just talked about. Where we separate from discursive psychologists is that we do not equate language only with discourse (chapters two and four). Language, we have proposed through our appropriation of Bakhtin, is embodied and so immediate phenomenological experience is socio-linguistic. In keeping with the vision that we have drawn from Bakhtin and set out in previous chapters, we argue that accounts of self experientially matter to people in the sense that they involve struggle to be faithful to speech genres. The implication is that experience prohibits the pragmatic employment of rhetoric in just any manner.

The problem is where to go from this point. CA and ethnomethodology provide techniques for interpreting communal practices, but they are not generally concerned with experience – communally constituted or otherwise. We find this especially enigmatic given that Garfinkel drew extensively on the phenomenology of Alfred Shutz (e.g. Garfinkel, 1967, pp. 272-279). Instead of addressing experience, Garfinkel addressed rationality and knowledge. Issues like faithfulness, commitment, and authenticity were treated as matters of knowing that is involved in being a competent member of a community, who would be judged as rational to other members in terms of the experience at stake. Since we are not familiar with Shutz other than his role as a phenomenologist, we cannot comment much beyond saying that the exclusion of experience is a curious one and it likely came from Garfinkel's concern with what is taken-for-granted as *rational* in a community. The emphasis on personal experience, be it socially constituted or otherwise, was

simply not an issue for CA and ethnomethodology.

The case that we have made, by drawing on Bakhtin, is that personal experience is a communal practice. By discussing how Garfinkel overlaps with Bakhtin, we can bring forward a Bakhtin-inspired interpretive technique and add the dimension of experience. Overlap between Bakhtin and Garfinkel would mean that the interpretive techniques of CA are appropriate for interpreting communally embodied practice. This discussion enables us to deal with the problem that discursive analysis neglects embodiment.

Demonstrating the overlap between Bakhtin and Garfinkel begins by considering speech genres. Bakhtin invoked a very rich notion of "speech" that is different from the production of utterances in a merely phonologically stylistic manner. To speak, for Bakhtin, meant to embody, in the fullest sense described above, the expressive generic style of a community. A speech genre is lived as if it were the natural way of living. For example, people laugh at jokes that count as appropriately funny in their communities because they personally feel that the joke is funny and naturally laugh. People do not laugh at a joke because it meets specified propositional criteria or norms for what counts as funny. They are caught up in laughing at the experienced funny-ness of a joke. Yet the funny-ness of a joke is constituted in communal standards. Of course, it may look as if there are individual differences in what people find funny, but Bakhtin leads us to believe that these idiosyncrasies and eccentricities are a matter of unique stylization of speech

genres. People still feel like they should act in a particular way or take a particular ideological stance because they are socialized into a world lived with others where such naturally lived feelings are cultivated.

For Bakhtin, cultivating the ability to naturally enact a speech genre, and experience the feelings of a speech genre, was rooted in living life with others. He addressed how the "inner" and "outer" enactment of a speech genre is a communal practice. For example, Bakhtin pointed to the cultivation of a child's linguistic competence, where a child is in the midst of constant ongoing socialization (1986/c.1970, p. 138; 1990/c.1920, p. 46). He claims that, when a child uses a word, parents correct the child through means ranging from direct instruction to subtle implicit cues, such as repeating the word in the correct manner, smiling at the proper use, ignoring the utterance, and so on. Parents correct a child because a child's expressive style is taken as simply inappropriate relative to their own speech genre. His example addresses how socialization is a largely tacit affair that occurs in the ongoing flow of life with others. This means that a child is cultivated to appropriately express herself and parents or any other "cultural colleagues" often do not spell out a set of propositional rules about action.

In other words, time spent with others affords people an embodied disposition towards life that is a felt expectation as to the generic kind of way life should unfold. People rarely come to a situation with a specific propositional script in mind; but they do come with an embodied disposition of how things should unfold in their participation in speech genres. That is,

while people do not know the exact unfolding of the countless communal rituals that they engage in life, they have an embodied dispositional sense of the generic kind of way they should unfold. The world does not seem like a foreign place, yet it is not experienced in terms of stringently executed rote, because people have cultivated an embodied kind of know-how in participation in speech genres. For example, we do not know exactly how a waiter should come to the table and take an order, but we do feel offended when the waiter treats us in the kind of manner that feels unbefitting. There is freedom in how a speech genre is realized because one has a sense of the kind of things that should unfold.

Even though we claim that action is compelled in the communal body, this does not mean that we are putting forth something like a linear process model where social experience leads to embodied communal practices that in turn lead to concrete action. This sort of linear understanding would be inappropriate, because action is the very embodied communal practice of living life with others. For Bakhtin, living is always done in rhythm with others in the ongoing flow of life: participative consciousness (1990/c.1920, pp. 112-132). Much like parents correct a child, participants in a community correct each other's embodied speech in the ongoing flow of life together. Engaging in life together leads participants in a community to constantly engage in mutual cultivation of a generic style that amounts to a taken-for-granted communal body. Just like Garfinkel did after him, Bakhtin treated communal practices as in situ achievements in a context of mutual

attunement with others. In Bakhtin's vision, one comes to naturally embody a speech genre in and through such engagement in life with others.

It is in the actual in situ action that what-is-expected takes on any kind of specificity. Bakhtin would agree with Garfinkel, because Bakhtin would likely agree that a speech genre is only "achieved" in the very moment of its enactment (e.g. 1986/1952, p. 60). It is for this reason that we refer to an embodied disposition. People are bodily disposed to a generic kind of action, but it is only at the point of action that community exists. In their specific enactment, the practices that demarcate a speech genre are an embodied attunement to others with whom we participate in life. Participation in life with others is a constant expression of mutual attunement to community. The few propositional codes that do come to play, such as law or religious codes, are appropriated to the situation where such attunement takes place. Hence, we do not live by propositional codes – no code could ever cover the complexity of a situation – but by embodied dispositions to act in a generic *kind* of way that gains unique specificity in a moment of lived life.

It is here that we can see parallels between Bakhtin and the CA/ethnomethodology tradition. To give an account of oneself, for Bakhtin, would mean to express an experiential purview in and towards the world that is lived in concert with others. It is here that we can see that expressing oneself, in terms of giving an account of oneself or otherwise, is a communal practice. Rather than simply reflecting reality, accounts of oneself are expressions that people feel personally compelled to give (even though such

an account is communally constituted). As such, the communal practices that are of interest in ethnomethodology and CA could be seen as expressive of communal bodies or experience.

Garfinkel echoes Bakhtin in seeing accounts as expressive of communal practices – except that Bakhtin treats them as *embodied,* being lived in community. People cannot express just any account of the world, because they are caught up in speech genres that already afford particular embodied experiential purviews. It *feels* impossible that the state of things could be any other way and it would feel wrong to give an account that is unfaithful to what one sees as obviously being the case. This notion of faithfulness fits well with Garfinkel's notion of membership competence. According to Garfinkel:

> In everyday situations what he knows is an integral feature of his social competence. What he knows, in the way he knows it, he assumes personifies himself as a social object to himself as well as to others as a bona fide member of the group (1967, p. 273).

This statement echoes the sort of natural confidence that is addressed in the notion of speech genres. Faithfully living speech genres means that people live within the phenomenological immediacy of their embodied dispositions and not codified apprehensions of this embodied disposition. Bakhtin and Garfinkel agree insofar as communal practices are not usually spelled out as propositional codes, nor does Garfinkel differ from Bakhtin's insistence on the in situ achievement of community. As such, Garfinkel's discussion of

"background expectancies" meshes nicely with Bakhtin's claims. Bakhtin adds to our understanding of accounts by illuminating how they can be interpreted as expressions of an experiential disposition cultivated in participating in life with others.

Implications

We discussed how ethnomethodology and CA are compatible with Bakhtin's notion of speech genres and they thereby offer justifiable techniques for Bakhtin-inspired research. Garfinkel and Bakhtin lead us to a way of addressing two critiques leveled against discursive psychology and thereby give us an alternative approach for our proposed cultural psychology. We propose a different direction than discursive psychology by ceasing to look at the rhetorical use of psychological language in accounting for self. The actual techniques that are used in discursive psychology are much like CA. However, the analytic direction is different. Where discursive psychology has taken the techniques from CA/ethnomethodology and used them to illuminate the rhetorical employment of accounts, we seek to use similar techniques to address communal practices and experience. In what remains of this section, we seek to spell out some details regarding the kind of interpretive frame that could be derived from Bakhtin's work.

Instead of framing accounts in terms of the rhetorical management of stakes and interests, we claim that people act from an embodied dispositional (emotional-volitional) sense of what generic kind of action,

including their speech, would be an appropriate kind of action. People are generally caught up in the flow of naturally living speech genres to the degree that they cannot see their actions as communal, because they are simply lived as natural. That is, people do not, in themselves alone, need to give an account of their selves, because they simply go on living in accord with community. Bakhtin wrote "[a]ny organism simply lives, without any justification *from within itself,* for the grace of justification can descend upon it only *from outside*" (1990/c.1920, p. 51, original emphasis). He thereby asserted that people do not need to give an account of themselves unless they see themselves from a perspective that is not within the natural living of a speech genre. That is, at the dialogic penetration of the naturalness of speech genres, there is the possibility to see oneself from an outside perspective. At this point, people may give an account of themselves. Bakhtin also wrote "I must stand axiologically *outside* of my own life and perceive myself as an *other* among others. … Such seeing presupposes an authoritative axiological position outside of myself, for it is only in a life perceived in the category of the *other* that my body can become aesthetically valid…" (1990/c.1920, p. 59). These comments are dealing with authorship as we discussed it in the previous chapter. The authoring of a self is the time when people see themselves from the outside and they engage in the creative act of stylization – that is, make the self "aesthetically valid". When we use CA as a technique of interpretation, we must bear in mind that a situation that requires an account of oneself is one where one is outside the natural enactment of a

speech genre and thereby able to uniquely stylize oneself.

The dialogic penetration of naturally lived speech genres is echoed in manner that Garfinkel and CA addressed the necessity of breaching. Bakhtin wrote about the importance of "outsideness" that comes from dialogic penetration of speech genres and this was almost 50 years before Garfinkel (Bakhtin wrote about outsideness in the early 1920's in *The Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity* and Garfinkel announced ethnomethodology in 1967). Acquiring another's speech genres provides for dialogic penetration because new purviews are possible where one can look back upon the natural livedness of a speech genre as an outsider. Any instance involving a clash of communities sets up the conditions where such penetration of the naturalness of speech genres becomes possible. Since there are innumerable speech genres, people will always have the opportunity to acquire new purviews. As such, Bakhtin spelled out how dialogue with others brings potential for dialogic penetration of the naturalness of speech genres and simultaneous participation in multiple speech genres.

For example, it is possible to reinterpret, along Bakhtinian lines, what happens in the minutiae of talk that is of interest to practitioners of CA. Consider the countless breaches and faux pas that occur in the course of our dialogue with our participants. These regular occurrences in dialogue could be interpreted in terms of how we come to dialogue with embodied dispositions as to how life should unfold and what certain terms mean, but we come into points of confusion or misunderstanding where our

dispositions are inappropriate as they are no longer are taken-for-granted by everyone. The small breaches and repairs in conversation could be understood as the "bumps in the road" that occur in the juxtaposition of communal practices. Such breaches are followed by working them out in order to achieve communal order, or intensified in recognition of difference.

How does such dialogic penetration of the naturalness of speech genres inform our interpretation of people's accounts of themselves? The dialogical nature – that is, the juxtaposition of speech genres – of accounts of self has implications for what kind of account of oneself can be is given. What people are compelled to account for and how these accounts are enacted are relative to the other with whom people are in dialogue. That is, people's own embodied disposition to enact community comes to light relative to particular others. Presumably, just like dialogue outside of the research situation, this experience occurs for both our participants *and researchers*. Therefore, there is no general or overall state of outsideness for a researcher to ever take because taken-for-granted generic communal practices are brought to light relative to another. Aspects of a speech genre that one accounts for are continually shifting with the ongoing movement of life in our dialogue with others; this dynamic holds for participants as well as researchers.

In terms of the situation in which we find ourselves engaging in research, it is well known that anti-foundational notions pave the way for the deconstruction of traditional forms of authority that spell out taken-for-

granted ontologies – including those of researchers. Unproblematic alignment relative to one dominant authority is not possible in a cultural psychology that takes pluralism seriously. As such, researchers are not speaking as authorities but as those also giving an account of themselves and what they apprehend in relation to participants. It is in the interaction we have with our participants that they, and us, meet challenges to the naïveté of the communal bodies that we would otherwise naturally live. This means that researchers can also gain dialogic penetration in regards to their own speech genres when working with CA.

Bakhtin-inspired research, being dialogical, is about our community in-relation-to those speech genres we study and not about either independently (e.g. Bakhtin, 1990/1924, p. 274). It is important to note that such an approach does not make visible qualities of discrete speech genres. Bakhtin wrote

> a domain of culture should not be thought of as some kind of spatial whole, possessing not only boundaries but an inner territory. It is located entirely upon its boundaries, boundaries intersect it everywhere, passing through each of its constituent features. ... Separated by abstraction from these boundaries, it loses the ground of its being and becomes vacuous, arrogant; it degenerates and dies. (1990/1924, p. 274)

In other words, all that we can hope to apprehend is what happens on the boundary of speech genres and address the stylization of speech genres in-relation-to one another. Our interpretive endeavors are focused upon

accounts as expressions that are, personally experienced, unique to the situation, and yet generic to communities in-relation-to one another. As such, we can describe patterns and regularities in accounts, but we cannot make claims with definitive certainty or with mechanically determinate antecedent codes or descriptions of discrete speech genres. Researchers can look at accounts of self using techniques such as those in CA and ethnomethodology, but they are still expressions situated in the dialogical relationships among our participants and us.

Before moving on to our illustration, it is necessary to make a comment about dialogic penetration of the naturalness of speech genres in light of the authorship of self. In the case of authorship and the giving of an account of oneself, faithfulness to speech genres is at play for participants. The expression of self is an expression of tension experienced in being faithful to speech genres. Self-stylization was described above as the outcome of this tension where dialogic penetration reveals what was naturally lived as an expression of speech genres. That is, we have appropriated Bakhtin to make the claim that self-stylization is an aesthetic act that emerges from dialogical penetration of naturally lived life. In our research, this tension would be manifest in the disagreements and dissentions that occur. The subtle acts that align people with one another and, conversely, differentiate themselves from one another make these tensions visible.

We have reviewed these claims from our discussion on authorship because we claim that this sort of aesthetic vision holds for act of research

and producing a research report. Bakhtin wrote that a scientific research report is an utterance that is similar to the kinds of utterances that people make in everyday life (1986/1952, pp. 60-63). A research report is thereby expressive of tension emergent in being faithful to different speech genres. We interpret this claim to mean that research involves being faithful to participants – that is, in being faithful to the speech genres we acquire in the course of our research – and to other genres that researchers are part of, such as academic communities. As such, the authorship of a research report is an instance of individual stylization in its expression of multiple speech genres. This means that it reveals what is naturally lived in speech genres of participants and researchers. Techniques like CA are techniques that make visible what is already naturally lived by researchers and participants.

Illustration

So far, according to discursive analysis, Linda's account of her self involves an account *of* experience. The experience is treated as a resource that can be drawn upon to justify her actions. According to the CA approach, we gain insight into naturally lived communities by way of interpreting how communal practices are coordinated and accomplished. In itself, this technique reveals communal practices that would go unnoticed. By revealing how Linda's account of self is supported by communal practices that constitute her as the expert who should give such an account, we gain insight into the participants' lives. What is shown to us is how Linda's account of

herself is a participatory activity with others. This work also enabled us to apprehend how stake/interest is established. At this point, we hope to show how a Bakhtinian inspired approach would enhance CA and make it more akin to aesthetic expression, which involves experience.

Experience, as we conceive of it through Bakhtin, is accomplished in interaction and this means that we are not attempting to show how an "inner" experience can be accessed through methods. Consider Linda's account or her self, where we see the emphasis of words like "Build" in lines 8 and 10. A discursive analysis would lead us to an analysis of the rhetorical action but we propose that this is an expression that accomplishes an experience *in which we also participate as we examine it*. For example, if we could watch the video of the interaction, we could see how Linda waves her hand in a motion that resembles piling items when she expresses the notion of "Build". We see the bodily pantomime of piling in the expression of the word and we see the bodily activity of it. Moreover, our own present engagement with these terms as we examine the conversation is one that enables us to recognize Linda's action. As those interpreting the conversation, we also rely on our own experience in language. Understanding Linda is about recognizing how she is articulating an experience in the sense that she is accomplishing its realization in conjunction with Linda, Jim, Paul, and us. We, like Jim in the interview, likely participate in communities that understand what it means to "build" and we resonate with the act of building that is expressed by Linda. However, it is not a definitively named

experience because there are other expressions like "root" and "deep" are used in the effort at articulation. Taken together, we see Linda articulating an experience and thereby working at constituting it. Our understanding of the words, if we take our lead from Bakhtin's perspective on language, requires that we also participate in it.

Such activity is participatory in the interview and we see this in line 13 where Jim introduces "who you are" as articulation of this experience. Before Jim has finished the statement, Linda agrees with him and expresses the phrase herself (turn 14). Linda joins with Jim in the line 14 when she repeats his expression in a way that leaves no pause between speakers. Jim finishes the phrase and Linda repeats it as if it was one person repeating his or herself. What we see here is a coordinated accomplishment of experience and we have evidence for this claim because the conversation then moves on to new topics. In particular, Linda appropriates Jim's articulation of her experience and expands upon it, which illuminates for us how they establish common sympathetic ground: co-experience. Had the participants not achieved the coordination of the experience, the conversation would conceivably have cycled back to the notions of "root" and being "built up" until some sort of resonance had been achieved that allows the participants to move on. Alternatively, Linda could have said "no" to Jim's statement and this would have meant that sympathetic experience was not accomplished. This coordinated act of expression is what we propose brings Linda's experience of self into being.

Moreover, to us who contemplate it now, this interpretation reveals actions that were naturally done. The speed and flow of the interaction illustrates how Jim and the participants are achieving natural attunement. For example, the follow-up utterances after a micro-pause and the running of one phrase into another (lines 13 & 14) illustrate co-participation of the sort we address in the communal body. To those in this instance of dialogue, their actions were natural. To us, who read it now and employ these research techniques, such actions are apprehended in a different light. Before our discussion, these turns in the conversation may have gone unnoticed because they were so natural. Now, they are apprehended in a different light because our techniques allow us to apprehend what was naturally lived and would have likely gone unnoticed. Hence, what is lived by Jim and the participants can be expressed in our research report in order to make it less natural to us. Accordingly, our own talk and co-participation can be opened up. Perhaps, for example, the next time we hear someone say "who you are" it will strike us and stand out as un-natural.

We do not know what speech genres are being expressed by Jim, Linda, Paul, or us. Perhaps, by looking at the entire interview, we could confirm that Linda does not naturally use the phrase "who you are" and Jim introduces this expression. The phrase expressed by Jim could be expressive of a speech genre not normally part of Linda's life, but it is presumably still close enough to Linda's experience that it is appropriate for her because she appropriates it. In Linda's appropriation of the phrase, she expresses more than one

speech genre simultaneously. This authoring of a self by Linda involves Jim's phrase such that the phrase is stylized a "boundary phenomenon" where speech genres lived by Linda, Jim, and Paul meet with ours.

The CA technique of research leads us to the kinds of practices that would accomplish communities. However, they reveal stylistic expression of speech genres in-relation-to one another. For example, through examining turn-taking and sequential organization, we could apprehend how some participants were established as experts while others were not. Such regularities would be interpreted as expressions of speech genres in relation to one another and not as indicative of discrete speech genres. Moreover, our activities as researchers who interpret the interview are also activities that are boundary phenomena. Our interpretation itself is a stylistic expression of speech genres as they meet as the readers, the writers, those engaging in CA, and so on. The claims that we are making and those that would be made in a research report would be boundary phenomena, according to our understanding of Bakhtin.

Moreover, the turn-taking and sequential organization constitutes some participants as experts on the experiential reason for why the Chinese way should be passed on. This expertise could be seen as experiential insofar as one group of participants, those born in China, feel it while the other does not. For example, Jim and Linda coordinate to constitute Linda's self and the experience of being built up. Different actions come to play when it comes to Paul. In fact, we can see Paul's resistance to sympathizing with the others in

line 42. He agrees with Linda that *his parents* are like her. He quotes Linda and Jim's expression when he expresses how the Chinese language and traditions are a "deep part of who they [his parents] are". These actions naturally express himself as not being like them or her. That is, if we saw a sequential pattern like the in this excerpt, we could imagine how the Participant B role is one that does not speak for the experience that compels one to pass on the Chinese way. This role would be someone who does not express the community in question[18] and thereby does not experience the sentiment.

One of the central ideas that come to bear in our Bakhtin-inspired interpretation is that of dialogic penetration of speech genres. Dialogic penetration involves outsideness because one apprehends one's speech genres as an instance of community. Outsideness would be emergent juxtaposition when we see accomplishment of agreement as well as the failure to do so. Our approach would pay attention to activities that enable participants to be on the inside insofar as they jointly constitute experience. However, there would also be attention paid to activities where participants are on the outside of such participation. That is, interpreting action would involve looking for instances where we see dialogical tension accomplished. Consider how Jim initially calls for an account and this presents himself as outside or as someone from an outside perspective that does not understand (turn one). Together, the activities of constituting experience bring him into the inside perspective when he and Linda find resonance. Consider Paul's

comments in lines 38-44 and how he enacts resistance that amounts to an outside purview. We can see Paul enacting a purview from the inside where he expresses understanding of why his parents would act the way that they do (line 44). However, in his previous turns (38, 40, and 42), he enacts an outside position. He explains why he would not need to continue the Chinese way that includes speaking Cantonese. In line 42, his confrontation puts him outside of the experience constituted by Jim and Linda. We propose that looking for such activities in talk would be central in a Bakhtinian approach because they express a style that involves resistance to the participative consciousness of speech genres.

The issue of resistance leads us to address faithfulness. A Bakhtinian inspired approach would be concerned with faithfulness, but not as something that people have. Rather, faithfulness is accomplished or not accomplished together. When Jim gives the expression “who you are”, it is not the case that just any summary would have found resonance with Linda or have been natural to Jim. Note for example, how Linda does not resonate with the second part of Jim’s summary in line 15, where he says “Chinese first”. The idea of being “Chinese first” is not picked up as part of the expression but the articulation of “who you are” is. We see faithfulness to the experience where Linda’s authorship of self is stylized to include some aspects and not others. Where discursive psychologists would see this as a rhetorical activity, we see it as the give and take that is indicative of participants endeavoring to be faithful to themselves (in the sense that we

discussed in the previous chapter). In addition to examining where resonance is achieved, we would attend to the places that it not achieved and we see to what people are establishing themselves as faithful to.

Consequently, what would naturally be considered the give and take in conversation can be understood as resistance involving faithfulness. Where Jim and Linda accomplish the experience of "who you are", Paul can be said to be resisting it when he does not participate in the account of self that Linda put forth. This technique brings us into more acute awareness of how Linda's account of self is constituted and undermined at the same time by Paul. We may never have seen this tension had we not employed the techniques that we have. Thus, they reveal something about lived experience of tension that was previously unrecognized in its natural quality.

Conclusion

We were interested in spelling out how we could take Bakhtin's lead in developing a technique of research. He left some comments about how this could be done by we were required to flesh out the ideas in more detail. Discursive psychology's assertion that talk is action makes it a good place to start. However, it neglects communal practices and experience. In order to redress the first of these problems, we turned to CA and ethnomethodology. They offer a means to think about and approach the study of communal practices, even though such are practices neglected in discursive psychology. There we found precedence for dealing with communal practices. The

problem is that ethnomethodology and CA interpret communal practices but do not treat *experience* as a communal practice. As such, we returned to Bakhtin and how experience is a communal practice. We discussed how Bakhtin meshed with Garfinkel and CA and how communal bodies can be approached using techniques put forward by these perspectives. The result was that we proposed a way to research communal practices and experience. This proposal enables us to conduct research into the kind of cultural psychology that has been central in this dissertation and it is aesthetic in the sense that naturally lived communal practices are made visible.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Faced with the need to both humanize and socialize its subject matter, the discipline of psychology is challenged to provide an adequate understanding of culturally situated agency. In general, we illuminated how social constructionists do not offer a cultural psychology that addresses experience because their aims have not involved bringing experience together with community.

This dissertation is an attempt to fill in where there exists a need in current approaches in cultural psychology: a need for a cultural psychology that offers an understanding of culturally orchestrated experience. We proposed an approach to cultural psychology, selfhood in particular, which places experience of culturally situated agency front and center. By covering earlier works written by Bakhtin, it was possible to introduce how living a communal style is central to his concept of speech genres. We were able to appropriate Bakhtin's discussion of speech genres to open up a unique understanding of the link between sociality and the body. Through participating with others, the communal standards as to what constitutes the expressive style of a speech genre is naturally acquired in practical consciousness. Bakhtin lays the potential groundwork for a psychology of culturally situated agency that accounts for immediate phenomenological experience of everyday life in its experiential richness and complexity.

Specifically, we have recounted Bakhtin's approach to aesthetic expression

in order to pave the way for a uniquely Bakhtinian version of the Dialogical Self. We also proposed an alternative approach to development that brings us closer to the experienced phenomenological immediacy of life. Bakhtin's notion of speech genres provides a way of treating the body as expressive of language, and thereby sociality. In language, people acquire emotional-volitional tones that constitute worlds of experience. The body is thereby understood as linguistic at an experiential plane supporting notions like mediation. Rather than addressing agency in terms of volitional control via linguistic mediation, it can be understood as constituted in language and not used as a functional tool. Bakhtin provided us with an understanding of ontogenesis of unique individual agency.

We then moved from development to authorship of self that is part of adulthood. Instead of arguing that struggle with being faithful to oneself is something that people construct knowledge-of, we proposed that it is expressive of ways of living that are socially constituted yet personally experienced. Bakhtin's vision recognizes how struggle with faithfulness to oneself becomes the impetus for creativity. Our view attempts to open up new understanding on the social constitution of the self yet retains both faithfulness and unique individuality.

Having offered a unique proposal that opens up new possibilities in cultural psychology, we turned to the issue of how to do research. By justifying and enriching the use of conversation analysis, we were able to propose and illustrate a unique analytic framework. Our discussion of

expressive realism addressed how a novel expresses naturally lived speech genres and enables readers to apprehend their own naturally lived experience in a new light. We offered a means to think about and approach the study of communal practices in a way similar to the novel. This proposal enables us to conduct research into the kind of cultural psychology that has been central in this dissertation.

The result of this theoretical work is an unique approach to cultural psychology that (1) addresses how the body and sociality are entwined, (2) moves us away from a functional approach to language in development, (3) illuminates the communal yet experiential weight involved in postmodern authorship of self, and (4) offers a unique approach to research that addresses both community and experience. As such, our proposal overcomes limitations of previous work that has not addressed experienced life.

Endnotes

1. We agree with Stam (2001) that the moniker "social constructionism" can cover such a wide range of perspectives that its meaning is somewhat elusive. For our purposes, we use the term to denote those who are inspired by Berger & Luckman (1966) who generally either fall within the traditions of (1) Ken Gergen (1985a), (2) scholars from, and influenced by, members of the department of Social Sciences at Loughborough University (e.g. Michael Billig, Derek Edwards, and Jonathon Potter), (3) sociocultural developmental theorists such as James Wertsch, or (4) those inspired by Hermans' notion of the Dialogical Self. These traditions cover many of the central claims held in common by theorists who refer to themselves as social constructionists (see Burr, 1996). As the dissertation unfolds, we will address each of these variants of social constructionism in their own right.
2. We would like to point out that there is a link between Bakhtin's description of practical consciousness and similar ideas found in other authors. For example, both Merleau-Ponty and Polanyi discuss the idea of an unreflective tacit consciousness expressed in embodied action rather than in theory. The convergence of these authors indicates that there is a common theme in their work that runs

counter to an over-discursified account of human conduct. Such an exploration goes beyond the scope of this project but opens up an interesting avenue for future work.

3. We would like to note a parallel between our interpretation of Bakhtin and some interpretations of Wittgenstein (e.g. Taylor, 1997; Williams, 1999). Although a full discussion of the parallel patterns of misunderstanding of Bakhtin and Wittgenstein are beyond the scope of this dissertation, the topic does deserve attention because it points to a possibly systematic critique of social constructionism in its current form.

4. Bakhtin explains how mastery of speech genres means that "the better our command of genres, the more freely we employ them, the more fully and clearly we reveal our individuality in them" (1986, p. 80). As such, mastery is not about mastering propositional rules. Mastery requires acquiring what Bakhtin denoted as a certain aesthetic ability to simultaneously express individuality and conformity. Apprehending this complexity can only be done in a participatively conscious manner after investing much time mastering the practical skills of the sort that Bakhtin described in his essay on speech genres. Because a propositionally based form of embodiment would be merely a copy, it would be inherently inauthentic. We would also like to note that the centrality of authenticity sets Bakhtin at odds with the social constructionists who have rejected the notion of authenticity as

a form of essentialism (see Baerveldt & Voestermans, 2005).

5. Hermans also claims to draw upon William James and American pragmatism (e.g. Hermans & Kempen, 1993). Exploring American pragmatism in addition to Bakhtin would take the dissertation too far afield. The sole comment that we make is that such an exploration would be potentially fruitful because, just like Hermans has missed aspects of Bakhtin; other work has shown a neglect of themes found in American Pragmatism (e.g. Barresi, 2002).
6. The "expressivist" moniker is one we found in Charles Taylor (1999) who uses the phrase to summarize the view of philosophers such as Hegel, Herder, and Humboldt (to name only a few). These are theorists that Bakhtin deals with throughout his work and he deals with them in much the same way as Taylor. Taylor addresses how expression is not about expressing a subjective state. Rather, it is about the expressive style of a community constituted in language. This address resonates with Bakhtin.
7. Wertsch is paraphrasing Vygotsky here.
8. It is beyond the scope of the chapter to comment on the implied hierarchy of language and culture over psychology or how such a hierarchy emerged phylogenetically. Rather, we would like to focus on a more relevant point, which is that Wertsch is indicating that a child is immersed in language.
9. We realize that it is possible to treat language as a super-organic

entity that "uses" people. A full treatment of this topic lies beyond the scope of the dissertation but the topic does need a brief comment. We do not think that this option is also possible because language only exists in its enacted use and has no ontological presence apart from its actual use. Thereby, it cannot stand beyond people as a super-organic entity that uses them as puppets.

10. The term that Bakhtin (1984b/1940) used to address this tension was translated as "ambivalence" - for the sake of conceptual clarity, we have avoided using "ambivalence" because of the associations with psychoanalytic theory and a host of other psychological theories that don't pertain to the current discussion.
11. The question of what enables two-sided sympathy is a bit of an enigma in Bakhtin. Bakhtin would likely argue that it is an outgrowth that emerges from the polyphonic condition of life. As we indicated above, children must learn two-sided sympathy in order to function and get along with others. However, it is possible to conceive of a minority of cases where a child cannot move to two-sided sympathy and Bakhtin does not comment on these. Likely this lack of comment is rooted in his firm commitment to the power of the polyphonic condition to pull children out from heteropathic identification. By way of speculation, we suspect that it is possible to reconcile aberrant cases with our proposed ideas. There could also be speech genres themselves that are a-sympathetic and these could conceivably be

expressed in fringe groups such as extreme fundamentalists of various sorts. Indeed, Bakhtin's discussion of social languages (i.e. speech genres) that seek to shut down other perspectives would support our supposition (e.g. 1981/c.1937, p. 344). Regardless, this is an issue that requires further work in its own right and we must leave our ideas as suppositions.

12. One line of critique that we do not pick up in this chapter is that Gergen deals with the knowledge-of self that is socially constructed. It is not necessary to review this critique here because we dealt with it in chapter two when we dealt with Hermans. The critique that we level against Hermans would adequately apply in the case of Gergen's version of social constructionism as well.
13. The idea of an author *using* the heroes may seem at odds with what we have addressed in chapter three. We will show later in this chapter how the notion of 'use' is not the same as the functional approach. That is, rather than approaching language or speech genres as something to use, we argue that Bakhtin approached them as being able to be stylized. The use of speech genres and so on means to stylize them and this claim will be tied to faithfulness below.
14. One of the enigmas that we have not understood in Bakhtin is the negative side of faithfulness and sympathy. Bakhtin seems to address how one aligns with another and ignored the times when sympathy can be used to be brutal. For example, Scheler repeatedly writes

about how sympathy with another can give one the tools to deeply hurt another (Scheler, 1970/1913). Bakhtin is strangely silent and optimistic in regards to faithfulness and sympathy.

15. Bakhtin's later work, where he spelled out the interpretation of human action, relied heavily upon terminology drawn from a hermeneutic perspective. For example, he talked about the part-whole dialectic of the hermeneutic circle (1986, pp. 159-160) and addressed Wilhelm Dilthey, a significant figure in hermeneutics (e.g. 1986, pp. 161-162). Our dissertation is not about developing a Bakhtinian hermeneutic approach and it would be a different project to spell out a Bakhtinian hermeneutic approach. We will stick with our goal of spelling out a cultural psychology of phenomenologically immediate experience in this chapter when we address techniques for research. However, we do so with the proviso that there is room for a different project dealing with Bakhtin's hermeneutics. Such a project would involve addressing the relationship between phenomenology and hermeneutics in light of Bakhtin's work. This project is too large in scope to include in this dissertation.
16. This sentiment is echoed in Heidegger's (1993) notion of "poesis".
17. This text was collected for a Second Year Research Project completed in the dissertation author's second year. We selected the text precisely because it is one that illustrates the principles that we seek to discuss in this demonstration and not because it is intended to

demonstrate to principles' veracity in a logical-positivist sense.

18. Here is where we see the notion of centrifugal and centripetal forces. Bakhtin wrote "every concrete utterance of a speaking subject serves as a point where centrifugal as well as centripetal forces are brought to bear. The processes of centralization and decentralization, of unification and disunification, intersect in the utterance; the utterance not only answers the requirements of its own language as an individualized embodiment of a speech act, but it answers requirements of heteroglossia as well; it is in fact an active participant in such speech diversity" (1981, p. 272). Hence, the achievement of experience and the resistance of that experience are expressive of the idea of centrifugal and centripetal forces.

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Appendix A: Timeline of Bakhtin's Writing*

English Title		Original Composition**	Russian Pub.	English Pub.
Towards the Philosophy of the act		Early 1920's	1986	1993
Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays				
	Art and Answerability	1919	1919	1990
	Author and the Hero in Aesthetic Activity	1923	1979	
	The Problem of Content, Material, and Form in Verbal Art	1924	1975	
Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics		1929; Revised Ed: 1963	1963	1984
The dialogic imagination: Four essays by M. M. Bakhtin				
	Epic & the Novel	Early 1930's	1975	1981
	From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse	Early 1930's		
	Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel	Early 1930's		
	Discourse & the Novel	Late 1930's		
Rabelais and his World		1940	1965	1984
Speech Genres and Other Late Essays				
	Response to A Question from the Novy Mir Editorial Staff	1970	1970 & 1979	1986
	The Bildungsroman and its Significance in the History of Realism	1936-1938	1979	
	The Problem of Speech Genres	1952	1979	
	The Problem of Text in Linguistics, Philology, and the Human Sciences: An Experiment in Philosophical Analysis	1938	1979	
	Notes Made from 1970-1971	1970-1971	1979	
	Towards a Methodology for the Human Sciences	1974		

* This does not include disputed texts that were attributed to Bakhtin. There is much debate about which texts are authentically Bakhtin. For the purposes of our work, the conservative use of texts directly known to be Bakhtin's is sufficient.
**Much of Bakhtin's work was published long after it was written. Tracing his development requires looking at the date of composition.

Appendix B: Selecting Extracts

Introduction

Faced with an overwhelming amount of material that a single interview can provide, we are faced with the problem of how to deal with it in manageable bits. We need a way of breaking down interaction in order to cope with the overwhelming quality – then returning to understand the whole. In these reflections, we address how to go about this task. Bakhtin took up the problem of interpreting life in a very direct way near the end of his life where much of his previous work revolved around interpreting human life via interpreting art (1986). In particular, he left a series of notes entitled *Toward a Methodology in the Human Sciences* where he was working towards interpretive techniques for understanding human life. In this text he talks about the interpretation of action and understanding people – not art per se. For example, he states in note form:

> Understanding. This dismemberment of understanding into individual acts. In actual, real concrete understanding these act merge inseparably into a unified process, but each act has an ideal semantic (content-filled) independence that can be singled out from the concrete empirical act. … The content of a true symbol, through mediated semantic coupling, is correlated with the idea of worldwide wholeness, the fullness of the cosmic and human universe. (Bakhtin, 1986, pp. 159-160)

There are two points that make such statements interesting. First, Bakhtin is primarily writing about the interpretation of human action and not about the interpretation of art. This is a text that is directly concerned with how we would approach the task of interpreting human action as it is lived.

Second, Bakhtin writes in the above quote, and throughout the entire collection of notes, that the task of interpreting human action is a hermeneutic one and not a natural-scientific one. This text is focused on directly approaching human action through a hermeneutic framework that could stand as an alternative to the natural-scientific model that so predominates the discipline of psychology. He points out that the systemic approach to human action is possible and that such an approach would not be subject to the flaws of treating humans as a natural thing. This approach is marked by his claim that the interpretation of human life should not fall into the reductionism of human sciences because the whole of communal action cannot be analytically reduced to component parts. He argued that the subject matter in the case of interpreting human action is not thing-like in the way that a component of a machine must be. For within the natural-scientific mode

> there is only a *voiceless thing*. Any object of knowledge (including man) can be perceived and cognized as a thing. But a subject as such cannot be perceived and studied as a thing, for as a subject it cannot, while remaining a subject, become voiceless, and, consequently, cognition of it can only be *dialogic*. … The activity of one who acknowledges a voiceless

> thing and the activity of one who acknowledges another subject, that is, the *dialogic* activity of the acknowledger. (1986, p. 161, original emphasis; see also p. 159)

We cannot interpret human action as a thing-like component because it "speaks" – it contributes to the whole rather than acting as a component of the machine that can be easily replaced when broken. The vision that Bakhtin had of interpretive work in the human sciences is one that avoids reductionism by recognizing the active quality of the individual in light of the whole of communal action.

The problem is that this promise is left to us as a promissory note. He did not fully flesh out his vision for the techniques of approaching such interpretive work and the text we have been quoting from was in note form at the time of his death. That is, unlike his discussion on art (e.g. 1990), Bakhtin did not specify techniques of systemic inquiry and he only spelled out the outline of a tantalizing vision. For example, he writes about the "dismemberment of understanding into individual acts" – effectively 'breaking up' human action to look at the parts of the whole – but he does not specify much about how. Our task is to spell out systemic inquiry in line with this vision and one way to do this is to look to his work on art and where he was very specific. In *Towards a Methodology in the Human Sciences*, Bakhtin refers to one of his earliest works that focuses on the task of interpreting poetics in his essay entitled *The Problem of Content, Form, and Material in Verbal Art* (1990). In this early work he is specific about the interpretation of art and argues that phenomena outside art should be understood through an aesthetic approach (1990, p. 271). Hence, we can look at the way that he systematically approached the interpretation of art and generalize this back to the way that Bakhtin would systematically approach the interpretation of human action. By looking at what he writes about the interpretation of art we can gain some insight into how to engage in the systemic interpretation of lived life, as opposed to reductionist or epistemic approaches to discourse. We will first discuss Bakhtin's approach to art and draw four conclusions that we will generalize to the interpretation of human action.

Interpreting Art: Content, Form, & Material

Bakhtin deals with aesthetic interpretation by examining three moments: content, form, and material. He refers to the need to develop a "methodology" of aesthetic interpretation throughout *The Problem of Content, Form, and Material in Verbal Art* and explicitly sets about the task of meeting this need. All the while, he explicitly endeavors to avoid the reductionism inherent in the approach to poetics taken by the Russian Formalists, a Russian version of structuralism. He endeavors to provide a hermeneutic alternative to the Formalist reduction of poetics to the mechanical relations among component parts. While his debate with the Formalists is not central for our purposes, his hermeneutic approach that critiques their overall way of working and how he conceived of interpretive

methods is. Because the terms 'methods' and 'methodology' are often associated with a "cookbook" approach entailing applying a recipe to produce results (Polkinghorne, 1993, p. 3), it is difficult to use these terms and avoid these assumptions. Quite simply, Bakhtin was writing to an audience that did not have all of the same positivist baggage. To avoid such baggage, we will outline each of the moments he describes in the interpretation of art and refer to the means of interpretation as 'interpretive techniques' instead of methods.

On the Inclusion of 'Content' in Interpretive Work

When it comes to interpreting human action, a moment of aesthetic activity that Bakhtin describes is "content". He considered it important to attend to the content of a work of art in terms of what the aesthetic expression is about. However, he did not treat content as synonymous with 'topic' because he wrote that the content of poetics is not just a topical issue. Consider Alexander Pushkin's "Remembrance" to which Bakhtin alludes in his essay:

> When the noisy day is stilled for mortal man, and the translucent shadow of night, and sleep, the reward of the day's toil, descend upon the city's wide and silent streets, then hours of tormenting wakefulness drag on for me in silence: in the blankness of night, remorse, like a serpent's bite, burns more fiercely in my heart; fancies seethe; a throng of oppressive thoughts crowds my mind, weighed down by anguish; memory silently unfolds its long scroll before me; and, reading the chronicle of my life with loathing, I tremble and curse, and complain bitterly, and shed bitter tears, yet I do not wash away the sorrowful lines. (Pushkin, 1962)[1].

Bakhtin engages in some interpretation of this poem but does not say that the content of the poem is the topic of remembering. Rather he conceives content as referring to "any particular domain of a culture taken as a whole, whether it is cognition, ethics, or art…" (1990, p. 274). As we outlined in chapter two, aesthetic activity is an expression of a communal way of life and the content of this poem is that way of life. Interpretation of Remembrance involves interpreting it as an expression of an experience of remembering lived by people instead of a single individual's description. Bakhtin treated the interpretation of content in art to be an interpretation of the whole of a communal life expressed in the art.

When we engage in the interpretation of content, Bakhtin argues, we should attend to a moment of content that he calls "cognition." He distinguishes cognition from "psychology" by describing how the latter refers to the study of idiosyncratic mechanisms within the subject[2]. Cognition, for Bakhtin, is not subjective self-contained phenomena or processing mechanisms and we see this claim in the way that he referred to cognition as a "domain of culture" in the short quote above. Cognition is a social phenomenon in Bakhtin's view. Such experience refers to the communal practice of what people take to be irreducibly true and obvious. Just as we

described such experience, Bakhtin describes how cognition finds nothing on hand as "valid beyond it". Cognition is an expression of what is taken as true.

Hence, the interpretation of 'Remembrance' involves interpreting what is taken for granted as true by a community. Perhaps what is taken for granted in the poem is that there is a distinction between mortal and immortal man or that remembrance involves the "chronicle" – the sequential retelling – of one's life and not an isolated or fragmented moment separated in forlorn isolation. A participant in an atheist community may see the distinction between mortal and immortal humans as a naïve commitment to some sort of Judeo-Christian ideal or a participant in a radical postmodernist community may see the idea of a sequential life chronicle as a naïve expression of modernist ideals.

Bakhtin also wrote that interpretation of content involves the examination of the "ethical" action as a moment of content. A community, he argues, acts from within cognition that pertains to the present but they also act towards an "ought-to-be reality" (ibid. p. 278). Attending to ethical action involves interpreting the teleology of poetics in terms of what is taken for granted in terms of what "ought-to-be" (of course, the direction may never be realized but it is nevertheless active in this directedness). Hence, interpreting Remembrance involves asking about the directedness of the art. Perhaps, we could look at the "anguish" and "throng of oppressive thought" in Remembrance and how, even in spite of it, the "sorrowful lines" are not washed away. This tension may express the sentiments of community that one ought-to-be rid of remembrance yet cannot. Of course, Bakhtin's distinction between cognition and ethical action is a fine-grained one because our taken-for-granted purview on the present is basis from which we act towards a taken-for-granted ought-to-be reality. The interpretation of content refers to interpretation of life expressed in art and that this life is part of an ongoing engagement in community, whether it pertain to the cognitive or ethical moments. By looking to these moments, we can see the kind of tension that is lived by a community. Remembrance makes visible to us something about a community that we may not have seen prior to our interpretation of his poem.

Content, cognition and ethical action, is a matter of socialization into an embodied way of being that has been discussed throughout the dissertation. We described before how participation in life with others brings us to a place where our own inner experience is coordinated with others. For example, in chapter three, we addressed how an infant's participation in life with others resulted in being socialized into the lived emotional-volitional tone of a community. In terms of ethical action, this means that we are socialized to live an embodied disposition to enact a particular ought-to-be reality. Likewise, in terms of cognition, we are socialized to think about and evaluate the present in a manner that is dispositional socialized into our very embodied mode of being

An important feature of Bakhtin's analysis is that interpreting content is

not about discovering the core propositions of an isolated and singled-out community:

> However, a domain of culture should not be thought of as some kind of spatial whole, possessing not only boundaries but an inner territory. It is located entirely upon its boundaries, boundaries intersect it everywhere, passing through each of its constituent features. … Separated by abstraction from these boundaries, it loses the ground of its being and becomes vacuous, arrogant; it degenerates and dies. (1990, p. 274)

In other words, it is only relative to other communities that we can interpret content. In the case of interpreting the content of Remembrance, what we learn about a community is understanding of the boundaries between communities, never the core properties of one in isolation. To return to our brief interpretation of the cognitive moment of the poem's content, we apprehend the implicit distinction between mortal and immortal and the implicit acceptance of the notion of a life chronicle because *we* participate in a community often suspends its belief in the efficacy of immortality and deals with the decentering of the self that is marked by postmodernity. That is, we participate in the academy and academic psychology and this participation means that we see a point of difference between life expressed Remembrance and the life we live. The interpretation of content is thereby a double-edged sword because it leads to an apprehension of the relation between communities and not information about one or the other.

It is important to consider why Bakhtin thought that the interpretation of content is the interpretation of such boundary phenomenon. The chief reason for his position is that he saw art as a kind of activity such that interpreting art involves looking at what it *does*. In chapter two, we have addressed above how art brings forward new understandings of the life we tacitly live. An example would be how Remembrance brings forward both the tacitly lived presumption of a distinction between mortal and immortal man *and* the tacitly lived presumption that this distinction is an unwarranted presumption. The poem thereby brings forward something of us in relation to another. We are dealing with an activity on the boundaries between communities that makes visible what would not be seen otherwise. As such, Bakhtin treated the interpretation of the content of a work of art to be the interpretation of a reactive or responsive voice: reacting and responding to the relationship between the life expressed in the art and the life lived by the one who reads the poem.

If we were to turn the interpretation of art towards distilling core propositional descriptions of content, then the activity of the art is lost and so is the content. To create such core propositions, Bakhtin argued that we would simply bring our interpretation out of the realm of interpretation and onto the plane of cognition and ethical action. We would be bringing another into the fold of our own community and covering over their voice. Our claims would be and expression of what we take for granted and our relationship to another would be lost. We would be shutting down the action of art on the

boundary because we would be subjecting it to the determinateness of our own way of being where content, in Bakhtin's vision, is alive precisely in its indeterminateness as a boundary phenomenon. In our creation of a core propositional property, we would separate content from action and thereby actually denude ourselves of the content.

On the Inclusion of Material and Form in Interpretive Work

"Material" is another important moment in the interpretation of art for Bakhtin. When he referred to material, he was referring to the concrete specifics such as sentence structure, phonics, words, and their relation to each other in their organization. However, it is over the role of material in aesthetics that Bakhtin took issue with the prime targets of his essay: the Russian Formalists. Russian Formalism was a school of thought closely related to Saussure's structuralism and their work is what Bakhtin referred to as "linguistics" (1990, 1984a). Bakhtin described the Formalist approach to the interpretation of poetics as concerning itself almost exclusively with the material of a work of art. He charged the representatives of this school with never going beyond the sentence insofar as they focused solely on the relation between elements of the sentence. The problem he saw with this approach was that one must go beyond the organization of material to interpret poetics.

Bakhtin wrote that the interpretation of material is an important part of the interpretive activity but aesthetic activity cannot be reduced to material. While we need to consider the material aspects of aesthetic expression (1990, p. 297), focusing solely upon material leads to interpreting the work in away that is devoid of content. A materially oriented interpretation of poetics is lacking because the whole world of experience lived by a community is needed in addition to the material to interpret art. Bakhtin uses the example of the construction of a building as an example of the role of material in interpreting art:

> But all this technical work carried out by the artists and studied by [material] aesthetics (without which there would be no works of art) does not enter into the aesthetic object created by contemplation, that is, into aesthetic being as such, into the ultimate goal of creativity: all is removed at the moment of artistic apprehension, just as the scaffolding is removed when a building is completed. (p. 295)

Scaffolding surrounds a building and enables it to be built but when the building is finished, the scaffolding is not sufficient for appreciating the architecture of a building. So it is with material in the interpretation of poems like Remembrance. We can look at the material organization that was used to structure the poem but material in itself alone becomes mute when it comes to the interpretation of the poem itself. At the moment of engagement with a work of art, it is not the material that is important because it is the kind of content-laden activity that is accomplished in the aesthetic *use* of the material.

It is the relationship between the material and content that matters and Bakhtin refers to this relationship as the "architectonic form" of the poetic work. When it comes to interpreting art, Bakhtin argues that we should attune ourselves to the way that material is used to express content: "The novel's form, having become the expression of the author's attitude, creates the architectonic form, which orders and consummates the event, independently of the unitary, invariably pure event of being." (1990, p. 315) and "[a]rchitectonic forms are forms of the inner and bodily value of aesthetic man, they are forms of nature – as his environment, forms of the even in his individual-experiential, social, and historical dimensions, and so on." (ibid., p. 270). In Remembrance, material is ordered and shaped into stanzas, lines and some words are chosen by the author to be used over others in one place over another. Remembrance begins with the "noisy day," leads us into the evening marked by the "translucent shadow of night," and then to the "city's wide and silent streets". The material progression of a poem is an expression of the progression of time in this instance. We could look at this in material terms or we could see it as an activity accomplished by Remembrance. Even our own description of it 'leading us' is an expression of the activity, as opposed to organization, of the poem. As such, the technique involved in this organization is an expression of architectonic form insofar as the moments of material are related to each other in such a way that the art becomes an activity that we live: we live through this progression of the day. Mere organization does not 'lead us', but the relationship of the material organization to the content of our lives is what 'leads us'. We live a communal practice (content) of moving through from the day into eventual night and its Pushkin's expression of this practice in the material organization makes it architectonic form.

Consequently, the interpretation of architectonic form does not refer to just material because it involves the expression of content into which such art extends. Content and form are inseparable because content depends upon the form of art to find expression. Our lived experience of moving through the day is expressed through the use of material to shape an architectonic form that expresses this lived experience. Without the form, there is no expression of content, making form and content inseparable moments of aesthetic interpretation.

Recall that content of art is expressed in terms of the relationship between communities. As such, the architectonic form of an artistic expression expresses the lived life of communities (content) in relation to one another. Bakhtin states:

> I must experience form as my own activity, axiological relationship to *content*, in order to experience form aesthetically: in form and through form, I sing, recount, and depict; through form, I express my love, my affirmation, my acceptance. … So long as we simply see or hear something, we do not yet apprehend artistic form; one must take what is seen or heard or pronounced and expression of one's own active, axiological

> relationship, one must *enter as a creator into what is seen, heard, or pronounced*, and in so doing overcome the material, extracreatively determine the character of the form, its thingness. (ibid., p. 305, original emphasis).

Thereby, form is also a boundary phenomenon and the lived life of one interpreting art comes to bear upon the interpretive practice. The architectonic form of a poem is an organization of material that expresses both the content known and lived by an author and the content known and lived by us who read the poem. In its architectonic form, a poem such as Remembrance is able to express the life of many communities simultaneously. There may be points of difference between the theist and atheist but there also points of resonance such as the common experience of living through the day into eventual night. Each may live the experience of the "oppressive thoughts" that "drag on in silence".

It is in this manner that the form of the poem moves the author and reader through the boundaries of their relationship, in and out of commonality. It is precisely the boundary quality of aesthetic expression that enables the reader to "overcome", as Bakhtin puts it, the art. By "overcoming" Bakhtin is referring to the way that the whole poem is not a complete expression of the life that one lives and his notion of overcoming runs parallel to his notion of "outsideness" that we discussed in the dissertation. In the case of our imaginary readers, the atheist and the theist, there are parts of the poem that resonate with the life they live and these recede into the obscurity of the life that they take for granted. There are portions that they do not resonate with and they feel foreign. As we move with the form of the poem, we move in and out of the familiarity of tacit livedness. At the points where we do not resonate with the poem, we are "outside" of it in the sense that we are not participating in the expression of life at the moment. We see this expressive moment of a poem as an outsider looking into a different form of life.

Just as we discussed in terms of content, outsideness is a two-sided sword. We can come to see ourselves from an outside perspective just as we see another from an outside perspective. Points of difference are revealed and it is at such points that we can see ourselves. We may not think of ourselves as atheistic until the moment that the implicit distinction between immortal and "mortal man" beaks upon us. We then see ourselves in light of our relationship to another. Hence, the "mastery" that is accomplished is one of breaking out of the tacit livedness of life in the interpretation of the poem: seeing, through relationship to another, what we usually live.

In sum, there are four general conclusions that can be drawn from Bakhtin's discussion of the interpretation of art.

1. *The analysis of content refers to the interpretation of action practiced by communities*. This implication stands in contrast to the general practice that the analysis of content would be about distilling propositional descriptions of a community. Interpretation of content

refers to the interpretation of the kinds of actions lived by a community and interpreting what is being done in the expression of content.

2. *The interpretation of content is about the interpretation of relationships among communities*. This interpretive task stands in contrast to the practice of discovering something about a distinguishable other. Bakhtin's interpretation of content shows us that we are interpreting a relationship and not an objectified other.
3. *The analysis of content is essential for understanding*. If we cease to attend to the community that is expressed in an instance of art, we cease to recognize the whole that stands in relation to the particular instance. We would cease to apprehend the axiological significance of what we are trying to understand.
4. *In order to study content we must also study form*. These two moments are inseparable from each other in the act of understanding that takes place in interpretive activity. As such, translating implications one through three into the interpretation of human action involves the inclusion of form.

These are conclusions about the interpretation of art that we will generalize to the interpretation of human action in the next section. In what follows, we hope to show that they open the door to approach the interpretation of human life in a manner that neither falls prey to reductionism nor discursive knowledge constructions.

From Art to Human Action

In the remainder of these reflections, we will address the implications of Bakhtin's interpretation of poetics and bring these implications to the plane of technique – the systematic *doing* of interpretation in a way that allows us to address lived experience while neither falling into a reductionist mode nor into an epistemic discourse analysis. Specifically, we will outline the implications of the foregoing in reference to standard and well-known qualitative techniques: Grounded Theory (Strauss, 2003) and Conversation Analysis (ten Have, 2002). If we engage in the interpretation of human action in line with the Bakhtinian vision spelled out above, such interpretive techniques are not standard prescriptions that uncover some independent reality. Instead of talking about techniques that uncover an independent object, we can approach them as a means for interpreting content and form in order to bring to light what is lived by communities in relation to one another.[4] As such, we are endeavoring to engage in the interpretation of lived life as opposed reductionist principles or discursive knowledge constructions. Our discussion will be organized by addressing each of the four conclusions spelled out above. Discussion of the first three will involve the notion of finding reductive explanatory principles and discussion of the fourth with turn to the problem of looking for discursive constructions of knowledge.

Implication One: The Analysis of Content Refers to the Interpretation of Action Practiced by Communities

As in the interpretation of art, the interpretive task regarding human action revolves around uncovering the life that people live as an expression of communal practice. This means that the task of interpreting recorded interviews is not about trying to discover some shared conceptual representation of life held by research participants. The interview would be treated by Bakhtin as an expression of life and not as a source of information that can be analyzed to decode shared conceptual categories. The embodied activity in the interview itself is an expression of the communal way of life lived by all involved and it is this lived expression that is to be interpreted. It is the familiar non-conceptual life that they and we live that is of interest.

Part of the problem faced in such an interpretation is breaking from within the familiarity of the life that is tacitly lived. Researchers are participants that are engaged in a dialogue in the flow of the interview and in the course of the examination of the recorded interview. An interview is just like poetic art in its simultaneous expression of more than one community. Drawing on Bakhtin, we approach this simultaneity as a "resonance" that is achieved among the participants insofar as they achieve mutual understandings (1990, p. 114-115). Take the following excerpt from an interview that is as an example of what is entailed in resonance:

Excerpt from MxFJune30 (3:23; lines 17-27)

Turn	Speaker	
1	Olga	it says? she took-a first an a half of an accounting certificate a- Grant MacEwan? an- then she switched to U of A an [((undecipherable))]
2	April	[oh SHE SWITCHED to micro]biology
3	Olga	yeah
4	April	oh she did switch >right-away<
5	Olga	so-i'looks like she wanted to go into medicine [she]
6	April	[hmm]
7	Olga	tried account[ing]
8	Grover	[yeah] izza a big DIFFEREN (hhh) fe-yeah
9	Olga	((indecipherable)) do [medicine]

10	April	[oh yeah] i see (.5) i'din- misunderstood that part so then lika again she if she wanted t- pursue medicine (.8) part? like >depends on what her goals are like he said he-if she wants that se- that< (.5) uhm (2.1) that sstability kno::wing tha she's gonna find a job for sure either here or in: in Chilee.
11	Olga	>um hmm um hmm<
12	April	the' she should go ahead an:: try-an pursue medicine (.5) an maybe not se- not settle for the second (.6) her second choice
13	Olga	s' kinda work harder?
14	April	work harder [t'do wha she]
15	Olga	[((undecipherable))]
16	April	really wants
17	Olga	umhmm (1.1) Okay s'you mentioned tha if she's goin t'be looking for a job in Chillay that's one thing whadda about i'she's gonna work in Canada?
18	Grover	I dunno-
19	Olga	how [((undecipherable))]
20	Grover	[i have not] experience about that i am jussa studen [here]
21	Olga	[ah ok]
22	Grover	so i cannot h-anther you about that [but I]
23	Olga	[what if she came t']
24	Grover	THING my my -uh general appreciation uh is that in Canada eh you ha- more work opportunities for women for sure
25	Olga	righ-
26	Grover	than i-in Chilay tha's for sure. bud i'm not sur- r-r-really sure becooz (.hhh) I ha- not experienced yet (.8) nex'year >I will be lookin for a job< here.

The participants are discussing a fictional girl who cannot decide upon her career choice that was described in a vignette presented to the participants. April tells Olga (the interviewer) and Grover in turn 12 that the fictional girl should not settle for a second choice if she wants the security of a medicine degree. Olga follows by suggesting that the girl should work harder but Olga's suggestion ends with a raised intonation that marks a question. This

phrase, "work harder," is a phrase introduced by Olga but it is appropriated by April when the latter repeats the phrase without the questioning intonation. Olga offers prescriptive advice that is affirmed by April who adds that the fictional girl should work harder at what she "really wants". The notion of "working harder" was not mentioned by anyone before this point but it becomes part of the prescription for the fictional girl. The prescription is not wholly Olga's nor is it wholly April's but it marks a resonant space jointly enacted by them. It is an example of how people work together to establish a resonance insofar as they can be on the same plane with speaking from different speech genres. Such resonance, however, is a task of living that is done without a second thought. As researchers in an interview and as interpreters later, we are brought along with the resonance flow just as we are brought along with portions of a poem. Points of resonance are not noticed because the feel appropriate insofar as we are not outside of them.

Such resonance is an expression of the activity of living life that we are interested in instead of reductionist properties or discursive constructions of knowledge. The kinds of systemic interpretive techniques that we need are ones that break the familiarity of resonance to gain outsideness. We will describe how it is possible to modify Grounded Theory (GT; Glaser & Straus, 1967; Straus, 2003) in order to approach it as an interpretive technique that enables outsideness and our ability to see the achievement of resonance. Generally, it is applied as a method for uncovering the shared concepts and mechanical relations among these comments that structure whatever a researcher is using for data (Neuman, 1997). The "fracturing" of data through coding comes about by coding a text such as an interview transcript or some other medium to denote core categories in the medium. In line 12, for example, a grounded theorist would say that there are categories involving 'trying to pursue a profession', 'settling (or not) for second choices', and the 'vocation of medicine'. The coded categories would be treated as representations of components of a structure shared by the research participants. By looking at how such categories relate to each other and how they fit together, a GT analyst attempts to develop a conceptual picture of this structure that is representationally shared by the participants. As such, the purpose of GT is about first uncovering such conceptual categories that organize and structure life. This approach is not about gaining outsideness because it is aimed at circumventing biases of the researcher and the participants in order to find the structure of a reality independent of the researcher.

We do see merit in the notion of systematically 'fracturing' interaction because this kind of activity is one that can bring about outsideness. We mark the interview transcript like one would code categories in the initial stages of GT but we did not make the same assumptions as one does in GT. Where GT involves searching for categories, we looked for *architectonic moments*, themes that are moments of a larger whole (in keeping with the notion of a whole constituted in moments, we retained the notion of

architectonic). We treated these moments as themes that are lived and achieved. As such, they are dynamic, changing, and non-discrete moments of life as it is being enacted by the participants and by us as researchers. Noting of such moments and the ones around them enabled us to act like one reading and contemplating a poem. Like a contemplator looks at art to see life in a new way, we look at life to see in a new way that we have not seen it before by looking for architectonic moments. The act of combing through the interviews and marking such moments brought about outsideness to the life we were interested in interpreting. For example, a moment that we noted was entitled 'terms introduced by the interviewer' and turn 14 in the above extract was noted. Instead of just participating in the flow of the conversation again when we watched the interview, listened to the dialogue, and read the transcription, noting this moment provided a means by which we could look at the action in a new light. The phrase "work harder" became something that stood out in a way that let us look at it in a new light: as a participant achievement of resonance. Had this phrase not been marked as a moment in an architectonic whole, we would not have noticed it and continued along with the flow of the interview.

Implication Two: The Interpretation of Content is About the Interpretation of Relationships Among Communities.

As we alluded to in chapter two, the realism in art is due to its faithful expression of the embodied style of a community, a speech genre. We wrote about how every action is a social practice of community that is so deeply embodied that it is personally felt. Setting art aside, our discussion illuminates how human action is expressive of community and so our interpretation of particular action in situations like recorded interviews is an interpretation of it in light of a whole community. For example, Grover's comment in turn 8 that there is a big difference between medicine and the other careers that the fictional girl tried was a architectonic moment that was not only expressed by Grover. Several participants, unrelated except for the fact that they a part of an immigrant community, all commented on the degree of change from one career to another. It was not just his own individual opinion that was being stated because he expresses a common sentiment. Likewise, April's comment that she should pursue a career that she "really wants" (turn 16) was expressed by many unrelated participants while Grover's comments that finding employment is easier for women in Canada (turns 24-26) was only common among people who had immigrated from Chile. In other words, such comments were expressive of a community of people who grew up in Canada or a community who had family from Chile, respectively. Their comments are expressive of communal practices and we see this by how the comments emerge in participants personally unrelated yet participating in the same community.

Moreover, we described above how Bakhtin saw art as expressive of content as boundary phenomenon. Art expresses lived life of more than one

community in its expression and interpretation of art brings such into account. Likewise, we suspect that an interpretive approach to human action also recognizes that what we interpret is also boundary phenomena. The above discussion of the phrase "work harder" points in this direction. The phrase does not belong to either of the participants but it is a notion that is accomplished together in their interaction. As we just explained above, such an achievement is not just a radically individually situated achievement. It is instead expressive of the kind of resonance that can be accomplished in light of individuals enacting communal ways of being. Both Olga and April find resonance insofar as the notion of "working harder" is an appropriate synopsis of April's prescription in turn 10. It is a sensible synopsis from within the communities that Olga speaks because she understands April from within such practices. It is also a sensible synopsis insofar as the communities from within which April lives because she assents to it.

What is missing in techniques such as GT is that the activities involved in interpretation pertain to relations among communities. For example, GT is often touted as a method by which our own biases can be overcome in order to better understand another (Strauss, 2003). The systemic methods are aimed at reducing bias in order to uncover a real world of *another* separate from human intentions. Such biases cannot be simply removed through methods in the hermeneutic tradition that Bakhtin worked within: "with *comprehension* there are two consciousnesses and two subjects. There can be no dialogic relationship with an object. And therefore explanation has no dialogic aspects (except formal rhetorical ones). Understanding is always dialogic to some degree." (1986, p. 111). The task of an interpreter/researcher is to see such 'biases' in relation to another's. There is never a place of certainty reached where all biases are revealed and another is understood as an object over against and separate from us. Our goal stands in contrast to GT because it is to treat interpretive techniques as means by which we can understand another *in relation to* us. As such, the architectonic moments that we described above are not indicative of us or another but of us in relation to another. They are dialogic in the sense that they involve trying to capture the foreignness of another in a manner that is both sensible to the community from within which we act and that of our participants.

One of the most important implications is that the way that we think about a research report changes. In GT, a research report represents the synthesis of categories into a general theory about another. Our approach treats the research report as boundary phenomena that are itself an architectonic expression much like a work of art. Like a work of art, a research report involves elements of a community from within which we, as researchers, participate as well as that of our participants. It involves an expression of the techniques employed to interpret the participants to be examined and critiqued; a description of participants; a description of the purposes of the research; procedures for collecting, storing and recording interviews;

assurances that ethnical approval was obtained; a discussion of related literature; and so on. Such moments of a research report belong to the communal practices of researchers and this is attested to by their repeated and frequent discussion in dissertation guidebooks, methods handbooks, and methods textbooks (e.g. Berg, 2007; Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008; Knowles & Cole, 2008; Merrick, 1999).

Our report is also an expression of our participants' communal practices as well. We endeavour to find a way to discuss our work in a way that is faithful to the researcher community of practice and appropriately expresses life lived by the participants. For example, by casting research practices in the light that we have in this paragraph, we put them in relation to communities that do not do such. It is not common for people to obtain ethical approval from a large institution in order to have a conversation with someone. If we have a question or concern outside the community of research practice, we call our friends and meet for a coffee.

Implication Three: The Analysis of Content is Essential for Understanding.

When Bakhtin argued for the inclusion of content in the interpretation of art, he argued for including it in two related senses. In one sense, he argued that the interpretation of art involved a discussion of life as it is lived in communities. This non-conceptual sense of content involves the discussion of tacitly lived life that was expressed in art itself. This notion transfers clearly to the task to which we have set ourselves throughout this dissertation: dealing with life as it is lived on the plane of being. For example, consider how April said "right away" in turn four of the abstract above. She utters this phrase quickly relative to much of the other talk. We could interpret this quick expression of the phrase as expressive of the activity itself. To act "right away" is to act quickly and it is uttered in the manner in which it is done: quickly. In April's utterance there is an expression of an embodied style as it is lived.

There is another sense of the inclusion of content in interpreting art that we would like to address: the inclusion of the content of our lives as researchers. Recall that Bakhtin argued that art should be interpreted by way of including the experience of the one doing such interpreting. The interpretation of action likewise involves including our own experience as part of the interpretive task. That is, it is important to recognize the role of personal experience in the interpretation of human action. We recognize how the way that uttering "right away" is an expression of a way of doing life because we also feel it as we participate in the conversation. Interpreting April and her action involve our own experience as much as hers. In order to interpret life as it is lived, we need to retain personal experience of the researchers rather than endeavouring to forsake it.

However, it is important to review what personal experience involves. We explained in chapters two, three, and four that, from a Bakhtinian perspective, the personal is not distinguishable from the social. The

implication of this stance is that personal experiences we live in the act of interpreting our research participants are expressions of a community – a social body in which we are participants. We can understand April and feel the life involved in "right away" because we already participate in communities that put us on resonant experiential planes (1990, p. 285). It is in coming together towards such resonance that interpretation even becomes possible and, if we are to interpret life as it is lived, then personal experience so conceived becomes absolutely crucial.

There is an apparent paradox buried in this interpretive mandate. On the one hand, we are describing how interpretive work involves addressing life as it is lived and thereby emphasizing the experiential plane. On the other hand, we also must write a report that amounts to an expression of the cognitive and ethical moments of content. If we step out from personal involvement, we step onto a plane where the analysis is no longer about life as it is lived. It is on this latter plane that the cognition and ethnical moments of content can take over and we cease to involve the other in favour of living out what we normally take for granted. It seems as if research activity is doomed to continual submission to researchers' content.

Bakhtin recognized the same problem in regards to the interpretation of art and he pointed out that interpretation involved what he called an aesthetic consciousness. Aesthetic consciousness was Bakhtin's way of describing a balance between outsideness and flowing along with lived life. An artist is able to faithfully express the life lived by communities yet still reaches a degree of outsideness in the course of his artistic expression. That is, it must both feel familiar and foreign in order for us to see the life that we normally live when we engage it. We think that the same balance is required for a research report. The research report itself should be a boundary/dialogical expression wherein (1) the researcher and readers experience both familiarity and foreignness and (2) the participants themselves see familiarity and foreignness.

GT implicitly distinguishes the personal from the social because it approaches an individual as an element that can describe aspects of the structure in which she participates. As noted by Rennie (2006), GT is generally not interested in personal experience as part of the task of interpretation. It is a method that aims at stepping beyond personal experience because such experience is treated as bias that distracts the researcher from uncovering underlying reality. However, we claim that the act of noting architectonic moments can be treated as interpretive techniques that involve personal experience. We are not trying to understand human action primarily on the basis of abstract categories. Rather than abstract categories, architectonic moments that we noted in the interviews are expressions of a life that we feel. On the basis of our embodied understanding of life, we name and identify the moments inherent in talk. Such action also breaks us into outsideness by virtue of the micro-analytic attention that is required for such work. In the course of noting architectonic

moments we are forced to look at interaction in a manner that is different from usual. Where we could usually go along with flow of a conversation we now look at it in a slow careful manner and try to distil moments that otherwise flow together in the resonance of life. Such interpretive techniques allow us to see what is already there but taken for granted in its livedness. Our interpretive work is based on our experience yet it still pulls us into outsideness to allow a balance like that of aesthetic consciousness.

Implication Four: In Order to Study Content We Must Also Study Form

In Bakhtin's discussion of the interpretation of art, we addressed how he argued that content and form could not be separated from each other. This meant that the way in which an artist used material enabled content to be expressed. That is, Bakhtin thought that interpreting art involved paying attention to how life is expressed in the material of the art itself. The same mandate is necessary in the interpretation of human action insofar as content is interpreted by studying form: *how* content is expressed. When we look at the architectonic form of human action, it involves architectonic moments such as those we noted above but it also involves the grammatical style of utterances.

Our aforementioned discussion could leave the impression that it is enough to modify GT in order to interpret life but this is not the case. As in the case of the example discussed in the last section, form is important for understanding content. The form that we discussed was the way in which "right away" was expressed. We discussed the manner in which material was stylized in order to express lived experience by pointing out how the words (material) were said quickly in a manner that expressed life. The words were formed in their expression to be an expression of life and we experienced it in our participation with this form. In the above discussion, the form of April, Grover, and Olga's expression was implicitly brought in. The mission at hand, if we desire to find a Bakhtinian approach to the interpretation of human action, is to include form in our interpretive technique. Like we desire to find outsideness in regard to content by noting architectonic moments, we also desire to find such outsideness in regard to form.

It is also possible to tailor a well-established approach that has traditionally been concerned with how people interact and the *way* that they do so: Conversation Analysis (CA). CA is marked for its fine-grained analysis of what people do in conversations. Drawing on Ethnomethodology, as we explained in the chapter five, CA is concerned with how communal practices are accomplished in the course of a conversation. That is, it is already concerned with the notion of communal practices in the particular situation so it already fits with the Bakhtinian hermeneutic we described above. This concern also differs from the practice of examining the discursive construction of knowledge that we addressed in chapter five. By looking at the employment of words and the way that they are said, CA attempts to make plain the minutiae of techniques people use to express a communal

way of life. For example, our transcription above is done according to the conventions used in CA and it notes the detailed ways in which utterances are made. Such detail allows us to examine the form of April's comment "right away". Furthermore, we can also grasp the manner in which Grover orients the audience towards the idea that the different careers tried by the fictional girl are very different and that this difference is significant; all by virtue of how he loudly states "difference" in turn 8. With its emphasis in the notion of breach and repair of breaches that we addressed in chapter five, CA is already well suite to the idea of interpreting the achievement of resonance as we described above.

Any of the forgoing discussion of the first three implications would not be possible without interpretation of form through the partnership between GT, as we have tailored it, and CA. We argue that it is possible to approach a discussion of form and content by drawing on CA and using GT as a technique in the way described above. We can note architectonic moments and then select some to attend to in fine CA detail in order to apprehend the life that people live. For example, excerpt 6-1 was selected because it involved an architectonic moment that was by far the most prevalent moment: notion of place (turns 17-26 mention Chile and Canada repeatedly).

NOTES

1. This translation of Remembrance is the one cited by the editor and translator of the essay. It does not have stanzas or line breaks that are present in other translations. We have used this translation in order to retain more consistency with the translation of Bakhtin's essay. We do however acknowledge that it is strange that the translator of an essay concerning poetic features like form and material would choose a translation of a poem that alters these features (e.g. eliminates line breaks). We are placed in a position of trusting the translator of the essay and his reason for choosing this translation of the poem.
2. When Bakhtin referred to psychology, he was referring to physiological phenomena like nervous system responses, heart rate changes, and so on. This reference follows the phenomenological distinction made by Scheler between physiological happenings and embodied intentional experience.
3. This distinction is a familiar one. Rather than uncovering some independent reality, we are addressing life as it is lived yet veiled to us in its taken-for-granted character. Bakhtin was interested in developing techniques that allow what is lived to come forth in a more explicit manner. This sentiment is echoed in Heidegger's (1993) notion of "poesis". The idea is that the instrumental approach to interpretation is misguided. Interpretive work, as a kind of artesian craft, should enable lived realities to be made available for discussion where they were previously unseen. That is, interpretation shapes what was already present.
4. The heading lists the interview name that was used for the dissertation author's Second Year Research Project. Parentheses contain the time that the excerpt starts and the line numbers in the original transcript are in parentheses. Appendix C lists the transcription conventions and we describe below why we transcribed this excerpt according to Conversation Analysis conventions.

Appendix C: On Evaluative Criteria

We have discussed how the positivist standards of 'science' are not applicable for our endeavors. Traditional positivist standards such as reliability and validity are predicated upon an assumption of an unchanging mechanistic reality. Reliability presumes that there is a constant object that can be repeatedly measured and validity presumes that there is such an object to begin with. It is a well-worn observation in reference to qualitative work that such positivist standards are not appropriate because no such presumptions can be made in regards to human phenomenon (Berg, 2007; Merrik, 1998). Those making such observations argue that it is more appropriate to talk about the potential quality of the work. Of course, the turn to quality alone does not solve any problems in itself because the issue becomes one of the articulating the constituents of quality. If quality is used as a standard of the general caliber of the work in question, it cannot be so on the basis of correspondence to objective reality. Quality, as an indication of the caliber of the work in question, is not about reference to objects and other means of conceiving of standards is required.

Some authors have written about quality in terms of standards of "trustworthiness" (Merrik, 1998). We will provide a brief discussion of how trustworthiness of this kind of work could be approached. In particular, we will address accepted standards of trustworthiness in qualitative circles: credibility/confirmability, dependability, and transferability. However, we also will level a brief critique at applying these standards in an uncritical manner because these standards are often oriented around the positivist presumption that a naturalistic reality is at stake. For example, Merrik (1998) notes how these criteria are often touted as parallels to variants of reliability and validity (see also Stiles, 1993). While providing some standards, we are concerned that they not be applied uncritically to the foregoing claims.

Credibility/Confirmability

The notion of credibility is sometimes referred to as confirmability and it has been drawn as a parallel to internal validity or validity in general (Merrik, 1998). In the words of Bloomberg & Volpe (2008, p. 77) this "criterion refers to whether research participants' perceptions match up with the researcher's portrayal of them". To maintain the parallel between credibility and internal validity, we would have to rely upon the notion that a researcher can be an unbiased conduit. Such a notion differs from interpretation as we have characterized it because we have been explicit about how our interpretive activity is a boundary phenomenon. Such phenomenon precludes the kind of split between researcher and participants that the conduit metaphor relies upon. We have argued that an account of human action involves joint-action where there is no such separation that would allow for the conduit metaphor to be applied. Using credibility as a

standard to evaluate the trustworthiness of our work could be appropriate if it is not treated as a parallel to internal validity.

Approaching credibility differently means approaching the notion in a manner that is not based on the accuracy of our representation of participants. We argued that it is appropriate to start from the idea that action is lived from within participation in a community and we often do not reflect upon life, we simply do it as a matter of course. For example, we do not reflect upon the resonance that is accomplished in an interview because we do so as a matter of embodied resonance with others in the interview and later at the time of interpretation. If a study does not break somehow from the flow of this resonance then it falls back into being an expression of a community. It is on this basis that we propose that credibility should be understood as successfully acquiring outsideness to dialogue.

Do our techniques open up lived life to be seen in a new light? Such a question would be answered with demonstrations that the taken-for-granted mode of being is made explicit for both researchers and participants. It would be answered with a demonstration that techniques of interpretation make possible reflection on the relationship and the communities in relations expressed in the dialogue. In particular, discussing architectonic moments such as we described above should break the whole of expression into parts in such a way that they being to clearer light the whole that is lived. The detailed examination of conversation and embodied action should do likewise and support the claims we would make based on architectonic moments. Astonishment and surprise become modes of evaluating credibility because these point to outsideness. As such, they bring about bring about reflexivity on personal (about oneself), functional (continuous examination of research process), and disciplinary (research methodology & psychology assumptions) levels (see Merrik, 1998). In short, convincing readers that sufficient outsideness has been reached should be enough to make the claim that the research report is trustworthy enough to be more than a simple restating of what we already know to be true.

Dependability

The notion of dependability has sometimes been drawn out as a parallel to the notion of reliability (Merrik, 1998; Styles, 1993). In other words, this criterion is based upon the premise that the steps taken over the course of a qualitative study could be retraced and comparable findings would emerge. Of course, qualitative researchers are quite candid that no two studies would be exactly the same. This criterion thereby refers not to carbon copy repeatability but rather the possibility of retracing analyses to arrive conclusions that are similar or reasonably alike the study under evaluation. Retaining the parallel between dependability still requires the presumption that whatever is addressed has enough independence from the researcher that another researcher would be able to arrive at similar conclusions using the same analytic steps. We have gone to great pains to articulate that the

notion of independence is deeply problematic in the kind of work we propose. In fact, from our perspective, retracing the steps of a researcher and finding similar conclusions would be indicative that research is not sufficient. Repetition would testify that the researcher has not done a credible study as we defined it above because it would testify to the fact that the research had not taken into account the dialogicality of the phenomenon. It is for this reason that we argue that conceiving of dependability as parallel to reliability is inappropriate and rethinking of this criterion is required to evaluate the trustworthiness of the research.

Of course, we are not the only researchers who have made the claim that dependability needs to be reconceived and Merrik (1998) provides a promising lead in this area. Merrik argues for a rethinking of dependability along the lines of auditing. In this conception, the research is audited as to whether or not the interpretive steps are clear enough to be examined by critics. A dependable study would be one that is not shrouded in mystery and is marked by enough transparency that it can be critiqued. The research should also be audited in terms of whether or not the interpretive work itself is systemic or simply marked by what appears to be haphazard looking. From our perspective, haphazard looking would not be haphazard in actuality because it would in fact be an expression of the community of practices we already are part of. It is systematicity that imposes obligations on us as researchers that can, if employed appropriately prompt the kind of outsideness described above.

The search for negative cases and disconfirming instances are part and parcel with the systemic work we have described above and this search is a gateway to outsideness. Rather than being about repeatability, we argued that dependability is better conceived as an audit as to whether or not interpretive techniques demonstrate sufficient efficacy at obtaining outsideness. This criterion differs from that of credibility insofar as it pertains to directly to the interpretive techniques themselves. In short, dependability could be conceived as an auditory criterion that evaluates (1) if the interpretive techniques are described enough to provide critique and, if so, (2) were said techniques effective at prompting outsideness, leading to credibility.

Transferability

Transferability, as a criterion of qualitative work, has been described by some as parallel to external validity (Merrick, 1998; Stiles, 1993). It is taken to be a criterion that is based on the degree to which conclusions in a research study can be transferred to a different situation and still remain useful. For example, if the conclusions drawn in a qualitative study on Polish immigrants can be applied to Polish immigrants in general, then the study could be said to be transferable. Again, conceiving of this criterion in this manner relies upon a presumption of core concepts being uncovered. If the methods have enabled a researcher to surmount biases then reached

conclusions represent core and shared reality and the study is deemed transferable. We have highlighted how we are not dealing with shared representations or core zones. Moreover, the notion of parsing out individual bias is problematic because no expression is purely individual and idiosyncratic. Such a presumption violates the hermeneutic of life in its denying the inseparability of the part and the whole. In short, transferability is generally treated as parallel to external validity or but this is inappropriate because a different way of thinking about how a study extends beyond its bounds is required.

We propose that the criterion of transferability is better approached in terms of competence. As we outlined in chapter one, the notion of competence involves the ability to naturally embody the expressive style of a speech genre. It means to naturally gain as sense of the life lived by a community. A research study that enables competence is one where the researcher has gained a sense of what life is like for those he engages research with. One should be able to speak from a perspective in the community. For example, a research study that leads to competence would be one where a researcher would be able to say to someone that a certain kind of activity, like a question, would simply not provoke any response. Or, a researcher would have a sense of what a community would and would not find funny an appropriate. If techniques of interpretation lead to a richer and deeper sense of life lived by the community, a researcher would be able to speak both from the community of researchers and from within the community of interest. Each would resonate with the conclusions of the research report. The reason that such an achievement could be considered in line with transferability is that the researcher could speak to situations beyond the research situation. He could speak on behalf of a community while not having knowledge of core or shared representations of reality. Rather, he could do such on the basis that his work has cultivated a generic sense of the kind of way participants would respond.

Appendix D: Transcription Conventions

Symbol	Name	
[text]	Brackets	Indicates the start and end points of overlapping speech.
=	Equal Sign	Indicates the break and subsequent continuation of a single interrupted utterance.
(# of seconds)	Timed Pause	A number in parentheses indicates the time, in seconds, of a pause in speech.
(.)	Micropause	A brief pause, usually less that 0.2 seconds.
.	Period or Down Arrow	Indicates falling pitch
?	Question Mark or Up Arrow	Indicates rising pitch.
,	Comma	Indicates a temporary rise or fall in intonation.
-	Hyphen	Indicates an abrupt halt or interruption in utterance.
>text<	Greater than / Less than symbols	Indicates that the enclosed speech was delivered more rapidly than usual for the speaker.
<text>	Less than / Greater than symbols	Indicates that the enclosed speech was delivered more slowly than usual for the speaker.
°	Degree symbol	Indicates whisper or reduced volume speech.
ALL CAPS	Capitalized text	Indicates shouted or increased volume speech.
:::	Colon(s)	Indicates prolongation of an utterance.
(hhh)		Audible exhalation
? or (.hhh)	High Dot	Audible inhalation
(text)	Parentheses	Speech which is unclear or in doubt in the transcript.
((italic text))	Double Parentheses	Annotation of non-verbal activity.

Jeffersonian Transcription Notation is described in: Atkinson, J.M. and Heritage, J. (1984). Transcription Notation. In J.M. Atkinson & J. Heritage (eds.), *Structures of Social Action*. Cambridge University Press, New York.