Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences

Meike Watzlawik
Ska Salden *Editors*

Courageous Methods in Cultural Psychology

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Preface by the Series' Editor

Ordinary Courage: How to Make a Methodological Revolution Without Anybody Noticing It Is Going On?

Psychology is hopelessly stuck in its focus on methods and has overlooked their wider context—methodology. Separating methods from theories and phenomena has led to the creation of "empirical science" that is hyper-productive formally and dead intellectually. It is not the question of *which kinds of methods* are used (quantitative or qualitative, standardized or creative). Rather, it is the question of *what kinds of knowledge* the insertion of one or another method into the methodology cycle (see Fig. 1) allows us to produce.

Answers to that question are the privilege of the meta-codes—basic assumptions about the whole effort of research. In a basic distinction, non-developmental meta-codes (which characterize most of psychology) make no knowledge about developmental phenomena possible. The empirical research efforts are thus comparable to the blind guiding the blind (Fig. 2).

The biggest danger in twenty-first-century methodolatry is the proliferation of the belief that the move from quantitative to qualitative methods (or their hybrid/mixed methods) in itself solves the *methodological* problems the social sciences have inherited from their history. Replacing quantitative empiricism by its qualitative counterpart is merely a translation of the basic problem from one domain to the next. General knowledge does not accumulate inductively—a bitter lesson for those who are proud of psychology being "an empirical science."

The alternative is obvious: We need to restore the primacy of methodology—as an epistemological cycle leading to knowledge—in the discussions about methods. How can this be done? In Fig. 1 we can see that it all starts from the deep subjective desires of a researcher. The researcher is similar to an artist in the desire to understand—even if the tools for art and science are different (cp. Pollmann, Chap. 12, this volume).

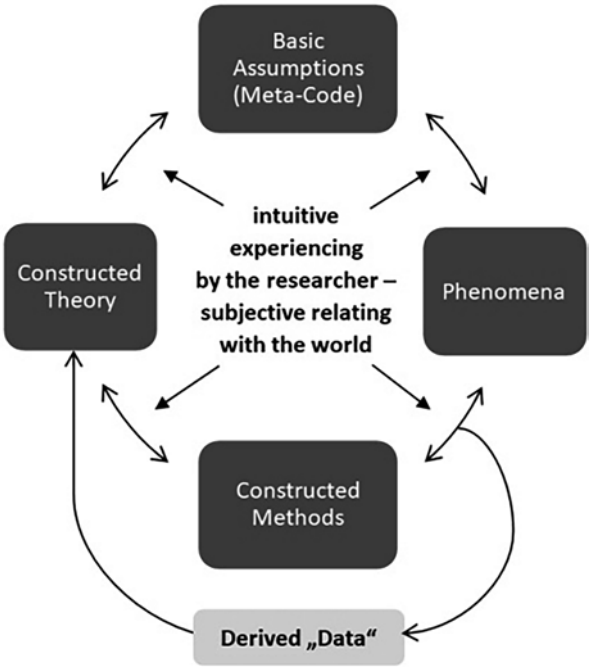

Fig. 1 The methodology cycle

The researcher educates oneself in relation to phenomena—by feeling into some aspects of it (and overlooking others). This exposure to phenomena is crucial for psychology where we may meet our computer screens more often than real human beings. This primary contact is followed by counterclockwise move through the methodology cycle—from phenomena to the discovery of one's own basic assumptions. As an example, I may look at some phenomenon (Z) via two opposite meta-codes:

Mechanical causal assumption—factors X, Y cause it (Z). The passive role of the organism—treated as intentionless mechanical system of no action potentials—is in the focus.

Organic assumption—the organism resists any inputs—the focus is on RESIST-X, RESIST-Y leads to Y. The active role of the organism is in the center of focus.

The two meta-codes are exclusive of each other, leading to vastly different ways how research questions are asked. Consider the ever-asked question about how parents participate in child development. The first assumption focuses on the causal inputs from the parents to the child. If something turns out not well, it is the parents who failed to provide the input. The child is a passive receiver whose role is to be critical or laudatory about parents. The child does not constructively participate in one's own development.

Fig. 2 *The blind leading the blind* (Pieter Bruegel d.A., 1568)

In contrast, the second (organic) meta-code focuses on the acts of resistance to the various inputs from parents. The child actively—and selectively—accepts or rejects (or transforms) the parents' educative efforts. The inputs are not *causes of* development but *resources for* development.

Needless to add that our contemporary child psychology mostly operates on the basis of the mechanical axiom—even as it is clearly misfitting if viewed from the standpoint of phenomena. Any parent or teacher understands instantly that children are active persons, the resistances of whom are to be carefully circumscribed.

After the meta-codes are made explicit in our counterclockwise move through the cycle, the researcher moves on to the construction of a theoretical scheme that remains adequate to the phenomena and is explicitly guided by the meta-code. Theory consists of abstract statements about the phenomena that would lead further to empirical work that can reveal new knowledge—rather than repeat what has been found already. After discovering the first example of something new in our empirical observation, we have all the necessary material for generalized new knowledge. Paleoanthropologists discover fragments of a skeleton of a fossil and can set together the full view of the given species. Discovery of thousands or more of similar skeletons does not add to this knowledge—even if it is important for specifying how widespread the species was at its time. But this is already a different research question.

Following setting up one's own theory—completely new or combining parts of other already existing theories—the researcher only now moves on to the construction of methods. I need to emphasize that any decision about methods is a constructive act by the researcher—even if the latter uses methods created by others. The methods set up are to be contextualized in the given research project—and that contextualization is always new. This eliminates the value attributed to "standard"

in description of methods, and even a "standard method" applied in a particular context is always new since the researchee—through one's own resistances and non-understandings—creates a message that differs from the mechanical assumption of "standardization." There can be standard questions in a psychological method, but answers to these questions are either explicitly or implicitly non-standard. This follows from the meta-code of all biological, psychological, and social organisms being open systems that constantly innovate themselves.

This look at methods eliminates the perceived differences between "quantitative" and "qualitative" methods—all methods are coordinated methods. This coordination pertains to the importance of juxtaposing the rich reality (phenomena) with abstract questions (stemming from theory) in the making of a method. A number—even a real number—is a qualitative sign that represents some feature of the phenomena. If that number is that of a binary code (0, 1), it involves two domains—non-being (0) and being (1). Both of these are basic philosophical terms of wide implications. Zero (0) simultaneously indicates everything and nothing. The

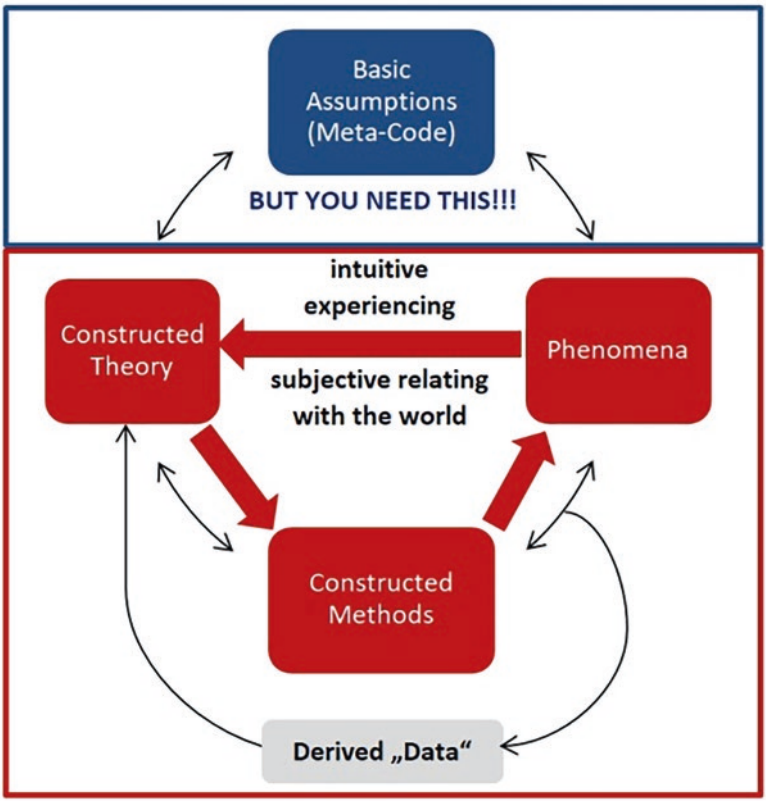

Fig. 3 Where silent scientific revolution happens (marked in red)

different ways of being (1) are likewise of very different concrete forms. There is no quantity in itself present in numbers other than researcher's invented conventions treating such qualities *as if* these were quantitative.

To conclude, the new silent methodological revolution in the social sciences happens through restoring the centrality of the meta-code to guide the triangulation of phenomena-theories-methods coordination (see Fig. 3).

What also follows from Fig. 3 is the importance of *selective entrance* into the phenomena via adequate methods. The data are relevant only if the theory in its abstractive schematic form relates meaningfully with the phenomena. If they do not, the method is useless and needs to be reconstructed. Researchers are in constant search for methods, but that search is organized by the fine-tuning of the theory and further penetration into the intricacies of the phenomena. And that is the beauty of empirical research—finding the rare and beautiful previously unknown flower in the middle of the vast meadow.

Aalborg, Denmark Jaan Valsiner

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Part I
Setting the Stage for Courageous Methods

Carlos Cornejo:	The Crooked Relationship Between Method and Matter
Martin Wieser:	Reading Traces in Eels and Faces: Historical Roots of Semiotic Thinking in Psychology
Hroar Klempe:	Why We Have Two Ears: Particularized meaning Beyond Language, or the Benefits of Musicalization in Research

Chapter 1
The Crooked Relationship Between Method and Matter

Carlos Cornejo

The collection of studies in this book defies traditional methodological definitions inherited and promoted by contemporary social sciences. Although each chapter covers different topics and research areas, they share two common features: first, they seek to provide a more accurate description of the matter at hand rather than simply follow an authoritative method; second, there is a recurrent theoretical need to inquire about psychological experiences that are hardly reducible to the domain of language. There seems to be an increasing sense of discomfort among some psychologists toward what I will call *discursivism*; an undercurrent in the twentieth-century social sciences that reduces the totality of psychosocial life to the register of linguistic devices. Discursivism has tainted the social sciences at least since the end of the Second World War and to an extent derives from the linguistic turn in philosophy, ignited at the end of the nineteenth century. Researchers participating in this volume are part of a strife to rescue aspects of psychological life that elude being captured by logo-centric techniques. This is nothing less than a challenging task to find methods that provide a faithful rendition of our intuitions.

Let us start by saying that the quest for more adequate methods is not about finding another product for an already saturated techno-bureaucratic science market. It is about improving our capacities to adequately describe psychological phenomena. This epistemic position can work as a common ground for the studies in this book: They are all based on and support a conception of science where methods and theories do not operate as separate systems but are dialectically entwined (see, for example, Branco & Valsiner, 1997). Although one might suppose this insight would be commonsensical to any social scientist by now, it is still perceived as a disruptive force in psychology as it challenges an eighteenth-century inherited conception of

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natural science. Mainstream psychology still works under the assumption that only directly or indirectly observable phenomena are amenable to proper *scientific* inquiry. Hence, methodology comes to satisfy a double function in the training of psychologists. First, it offers a set of necessary procedures and practices to investigate a phenomenon of interest. This allows newcomers to familiarize themselves with disciplinary tools and perpetuate or digress from a style of thought (Fleck, 1979). Second, psychological methodology prescribes which methods are acceptable for knowledge to be considered as scientific. In other words, it establishes *very concrete* demarcation criteria between scientific psychology and other kinds of non-scientific *psychologies*. Namely, if one uses established quantitative or qualitative methods, one qualifies to pass the scientific inspection. Hence, when someone uses a different set of techniques or methods, they tacitly trespass imposed methodological prescriptions. In the current sociocultural atmosphere, I believe this pursuit rightly deserves to be called *courageous*. This book gives the reader a taste of defiance to pervasive restrictions with stimulating and inspiring studies that expand our understanding of psychological phenomena.

In what follows, I take a deeper look into the two common features of the studies included in this volume. This excursion seeks to outline the specificities of both their epistemological point of departure as well as their theoretical horizon. I hope this pathway underscores the current importance of the risk taken by these courageous researchers. I will begin by describing the challenges put forward by the received conception of science and then by pointing out the theoretical importance of overcoming the restrictions of language symbolism.

1.1 Reformulating the Relationship Between Method and Knowledge

A deep insight into contemporary philosophy of science was advanced by psychologist Gerd Gigerenzer (1991). Departing from a historiographical analysis on the hegemonic use of statistics in psychology, he described a particular cognitive heuristic underlying scientific development. According to it, experimental instruments can end up being metaphorical extensions of what started as a theoretical scientific breakthrough in the past. A research *tool* used by psychologists in the 1930s to estimate to what extent a sample behavior was representative of the universe it was collected from became a *theory* about the human mind working as a statistician in the 1950s. A tool thus becomes a source of inspiration for theory about the very object examined by that tool. Once this pattern is revealed, the *from-tools-to-theories* heuristic principle can be seen more clearly in other examples: The eye can be seen as a camera obscura; the mind as a computer; consciousness as a complex dynamic system, etc. (Leary, 1990).

From an epistemological perspective, Gigerenzer's principle poses a radically different relationship between theory and evidence than the one proposed by *the*

received view of science (Suppe, 1974). The latter sees nature as fundamentally independent of our knowledge capacities, so it can be faithfully described provided that we approach it with the "right" tools and the "right" language, namely, the language of observational evidence. If, on the contrary, our theories are inspired by the scientific instruments used in a specific historical period, our understanding of the issue at hand would no longer be grounded on the ideal of a disinterested apprehension of its features and would be idiosyncratic and contingent. In this sense, Gigerenzer's research is part of a mid-twentieth century increasingly broader stream of arguments against the received conception of science that also promotes new approaches to scientific knowledge.

This book makes amends in noticing that the traditional conception of science is based on a severed relationship between theory and reality. Specifically, it questions a view where methods and instruments are conceived as neutral devices disconnected from scientific inquiry. This view assumes that methods can be separated from theory and social interests and stems from the objectification of the natural world and its ontological separation from human capacities and leanings. Sellars (1956) treated such belief in terms of the "myth of the given:" Nature is out there, undeterred, available to be exhaustively and objectively described if we disposed of the adequate observational tools. Furthermore, the very existence of such tools is taken for granted. It is assumed that the instruments available to us are neutral and therefore optimal in an impartial explanation of nature. The traceability of their historical origins or whether they evolve or not are completely irrelevant. Even less important is to consider the influence of social and historical factors contributing to the emergence and acceptance of scientific instruments. In this sense, just as nature, tools seem to enjoy an unquestioned existence in modern epistemology. They are simply taken for granted.

Mainstream psychology not only takes scientific tools for granted; their historical value is completely overlooked. Along with the "success" of natural sciences come the squeaking noises of modernity's instruments. Metaphysical arguments favoring the centrality of mathematical methods in the natural sciences date back to the end of the eighteenth century. When Kant introduced the mathematical principles underpinning scientific knowledge, disciplines were limited to those able to describe their respective subject matters in mathematical terms (Leary, 1978).[1] One generation later, Johann Friedrich Herbart (1822), one of scientific psychology's founding fathers, followed Kant's dictum and urged human sciences to adopt natural sciences' mathematical procedures, for "[m]athematics is the ruling science of

[1] Kant's basic argument is that mathematics points to the *form* of sense data. We perceive things in *time* and *space* even before we know what these things are about. According to Kant (2004), this kind of knowledge is *synthetic* (i.e., empirical) and a priori (i.e., not based on sensible experience): "Pure mathematics, as synthetic cognition [*Erkenntnis*] a priori, is possible only because it refers to no other objects than mere objects of the senses, the empirical intuition of which is based on a pure and indeed a priori intuition [*Anschauung*] (of space and time), and can be so based because this pure intuition is nothing but *the mere form of sensibility*, which precedes the actual appearance of objects, since it in fact first makes this appearance possible" (p. 35, added emphasis).

our times; its victories grow daily though quietly; whoever is not *for* it, one day will have it *against* her/him" (p.105, my translation, italics in the original). Not only did these methodological prescriptions help establish experimental psychology as an independent discipline, they helped to certify its scientific status. Quantification is not merely a convenient way to produce more reliable knowledge, it assures the incorporation of psychology into the natural sciences, and more broadly, into what Wilhelm Windelband called the *nomothetic sciences* (see Cornejo, 2013).

Adherence to quantitative methods inherited from the natural sciences was therefore not a matter of choice for scientific psychology; they furnished a structural basis for the discipline. Perhaps this clarifies why methodological training has such priority in psychological curricula worldwide. Contemporary psychological research collaterally shows that methodological precision is far more relevant than theoretical soundness of explored hypotheses, raising a suspicion about the "cult of empiricism" (Toulmin & Leary, 1992), "methodological fetishism" (Koch, 1992), or even "methodolatry" (May, 1958). The peculiar combination of methodological sophistication and conceptual dullness that characterizes many psychological studies can be said to be a consequence of choosing methodological over conceptual clarifications. Psychology seems obsessed with investing on methodological prescriptions and on the introduction of the newest statistical techniques rather than putting its energy on improving and refining the theoretical grounds for its subject matter. Apparently, becoming part of the natural sciences continues to be a far greater aspiration for psychologists than saving the integrity of psychological phenomena themselves.

One might have hoped for a reversal of this upside-down relationship between method and matter after the introduction of contemporary qualitative methods. While these flourished in the 1960s (along with other revolutionary movements during that decade), they still had to wait for mainstream psychology's official approval to become a complementary toolset oriented to address psychological phenomena (or some of their aspects) that remained out of reach for quantitative approaches. Although the qualitative world presented itself as part of a resistance against a supposed hegemony of the well-funded quantitative approaches, such epic narrative did little to prevent the assimilation of qualitative research by mainstream psychology (Musa, Olivares, Cornejo, 2015). Qualitative methods have been included in undergraduate and graduate curricula, continue to receive financial support, and far from being outcasts or rebels, their representatives often play bureaucratic roles in university departments. This progressive assimilation was paralleled by qualitative research's establishment of epistemic and rhetoric equivalents to quantitative standards (*dependability* instead of *reliability*; *confirmability* instead of *objectivity*, etc.). By using quantitative research as a benchmark, qualitatively oriented psychologists earned an acceptable place in mainstream research.

Unfortunately, this came at the high price of research standardization.[2] Although the rigidization of methods may be risky in any kind of research, in the case of

[2] See APA's reporting standards for qualitative studies (Levitt et al., 2018).

qualitative studies it comes with deep contradictions, as qualitative inquiry is justified by its ability to trespass "thin descriptions" of behavior to obtain "thick descriptions," including intentions and contexts of occurrence (Ryle, 1971).[3] By emulating quantitative standards, qualitative research inadvertently adopted an epistemological framework where the world has already been homogenized, and it is reasonable to speak about reproducibility, reliability, and representativity of data. To treat meaning, intentions and contexts in such a standardized way is not fundamentally different than considering these within the same structured reality characteristic of quantitative psychology. Qualitative research should bring in contextual sensibility and technical flexibility in accordance to the *uniqueness and irreplicability* of psychological phenomena rather than abstracting common traits of discourse inductively. It should be concerned with the depth rather than with the homogeneity of their descriptions. Hence, adopting the protocols of quantitative methodology to do qualitative work supposes a contradiction in terms.

This book will help the reader realize a crucial point at stake; namely, that the priority of method over matter operates irrespectively of quantitative or qualitative approaches. Both are gatekeepers to "valid" methods and their "rightful" implementation. The mainstream implicitly suggests that questioning the adequacy of methods should be avoided, raising fear among researchers of being "unscientific" if one does so—specifically, one runs the risk of not being published by disciplinary journals. However, the exploration of new methods and techniques, the modification of those in use, or even the dispute over their adequacy to capture our scientific interests is part of any research challenge. But this entails defying the idolatric belief that the implementation of current methods—either qualitative or quantitative—guarantees a gain in knowledge. In present times, there are countless studies that pass the test of scientificity but fail to pass the test of relevance. Others seem bound to sever phenomena so they become suitable to available methods. But what is stopping us from doing the reverse and adapting the methods we use to be faithful to the issue at stake?

We urgently need to fix the relationship between methods and matter. Methods serve the observation of a given phenomenon, not the opposite. Good science is not about following rules blindly but about dedicated observation and comprehension of the matter at hand. When methods are disrobed of their pseudo-sacredness and are seen for the instruments they are (as in Gigerenzer's proposal), questioning and modifying methods is not only scientists' right, but their duty. A variety of methods may be ad hoc, but what is truly relevant is their adequacy in providing a fair account of a given dimension of psychological phenomena.

This challenge brings the personal dimension of science making to the foreground. Scientists have always had a personal commitment in selecting phenomena of inquiry and the methods used to investigate them. This existential dimension is ubiquitous in scientific pursuits (even in the natural sciences). Chemist and

[3] For a history of the use of Gilbert Ryle's "thick description" in the social sciences see Ponterotto (2006).

philosopher Michael Polanyi (1958) identified and articulated it during the middle of the twentieth century:

> I have said that a tool is only one example of the merging of a thing in a whole (or a gestalt) in which it is assigned a subsidiary function and a meaning in respect to something that has our focal attention […] Like the tool, the sign or the symbol can be conceived as such only in the eyes of a person who *relies on them* to achieve or to signify something. *This reliance is a personal commitment which is involved in all acts of intelligence by which we integrate some things subsidiarily to the centre of our focal attention.* Every act of personal assimilation by which we make a thing form an extension of ourselves through our subsidiary awareness of it, is a commitment of ourselves; a manner of disposing of ourselves. (p. 61, italics in the original)

As long as scientists are people, their way to know the world cannot fundamentally differ from laypeople. Of course, as with any true craft, science imprints specificities to the construction of personal knowledge in training a scientific eye, ear, smell, and touch as part of preserving a discipline. Yet, psychological processes involved in the scientist's mode of knowing the world should not be at odds with that of the layperson. In Polanyi's approach, knowing the world entails that *tacit knowledge* (knowing how, personal skill, interest, experience, feeling, intuition, etc.) comes into play whenever someone—whether scientist or layperson—proposes a matter of inquiry. Tacit knowledge is continuously supporting and enabling someone's observations, descriptions, explanations, or even their doubts regarding the existence of a given phenomenon. This support is granted by what Polanyi formulated as a distal–proximal relationship: While I attempt to know a *distal* object that occupies my *focal attention*, I tacitly rely on *proximal* tools and knowledge that *subsidiarily* allow me to identify what is focal. Hence, every act of knowledge can be seen as constituted by two distinguishable components: what I focally attend to (what my point is *about*) and tacit knowledge that is subsidiary to the former. The latter acknowledges that every act rests upon a vast wealth of personal interests and skills that usually remain tacit.

Perhaps more important here is Polanyi's extension of this general description to scientific knowledge. Contrary to the received view of science, where knowledge supposes self-detachment, Polanyi's overall description of human capacities shows that scientific knowledge is also driven by personal commitment. Holding a hypothesis and finding evidence favoring or contradicting a theory supposes the scientist's *personal commitment*. In this sense, scientific knowledge is a special kind of *human* knowledge and carries the features of human environmental dwellings. This personal dimension of scientific knowledge involves the scientist's interests, cultural background, historical situation, and skills. Consider an example taken from ornithology: In a paper published by *Science*, Derryberry et al. (2020) evidence that noise pollution reduction in San Francisco—a side-effect of Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic shutdown measures—allowed birds to sing at lower amplitudes and maximize communicational distance and salience. The same auditory signal analysis used to regularly monitor the area served as a technique to quantify the soundscape. The critical point to our purposes is that such technique is *subsidiary* to what is capturing our distal attention, namely that birds now seem to be singing

louder, if not more colorfully, which was commented among laypeople around the world once lockdown began in different regions. Does not the core hypothesis of this technically sophisticated study come from an ordinary observation? Is this not further evidence of scientists orienting their professional doings by being personally involved, interested, and impressed as citizens?

The understanding of scientists' personal involvement as cultivated people rather than as technicians is crucial to question adherence to accepted techniques. The concept of normal science obliterates the personal dimension of scientific discovery claiming that it distorts objective access to nature. But this is a misleading claim, since it misrepresents human knowledge by setting its genesis in a disinterested and neutral individual; viz., a "subject" who is a nonperson, or someone lacking attributes. When Polanyi argues that scientists act as people and not as abstract epistemic agents, he means that even if they make an effort to follow methodological prescriptions, they cannot avoid being part of a community situated in a place and point in history. Let us consider some examples of how personal concerns and interests implicitly guide research. The purpose of creating a concept of *Umwelt* to account for life, thanks to and despite environmental circumstances, can be better understood once we reckon Jakob von Uexküll was part of Estonia's German-speaking upper-class minority during his infancy and youth. Similarly, we could perhaps be more forgiving with Descartes' analysis of method if we acknowledged it was developed during the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) that led France and the rest of Europe into a bloodbath between two parting ways to worship the same God. Does this not provide grounds for a sense of urgency to take out passions from scientific analysis (see Toulmin, 1990)? This also counts for the separation between theory and praxis and the superiority of the former over the latter. As John Dewey (1920) pointed out, what today looks like a forced dissociation might seem quite reasonable when pondering that the philosophers who helped establish it were also part of the rigid social class structure of ancient Athens, which relieved them from manual labor.

Natural sciences deliberate neglect of such personal dimension in *scientific* knowledge led Maurice Merleau-Ponty (2005) to boldly state that science is "always both naïve and at the same time dishonest" (p. *ix*), since it takes for granted (and even *formally* dismisses) the fact that our reality comes into existence thanks to that personal dimension. When the role of personal commitment is embraced, we can see that science seeks to speak authoritatively about a world that predates scientific knowledge. Rather than questioning the importance of scientific knowledge, this means coming to terms with the fact that it is indebted to and derivative from our prescientific acquaintance with the world and ourselves. Science does not replace personal knowledge, but rests on it, like a "geography in relation to the country-side in which we have learnt beforehand what a forest, a prairie or a river is" (Merleau-Ponty, 2005, p. *x*).

When the personal dimension upholding scientific knowledge is unveiled, the ethical aspect of research comes to the foreground. The use of methods and techniques is overtaken by vanity when the formulation, relevance, possible consequences, and sought benefits of our studies disregard personal commitment.

Theories and techniques are subsidiary to the matter at hand. This priority reassessment involves treating scientific methods as *tools* rather than *technologies*. Anthropologist Tim Ingold (2000) has spelled out how modern societies radically changed the classical conception of *technique* (from the Greek *tekhnē*) and replaced it with *technology*. In technique, a skillful artisan subsidiarily uses tools (*mēkhanē*) to achieve a distal goal. In technology, tools are replaced by machines that can operate independently of practitioners' skills. Machines are run by algorithms that decompose action into logical steps (procedures). The result is not a *technique*, but a *technology.* While the social life of techniques depends on the personal dexterity of a skillful artisan, *technology* removes the human agent from the operation of the machine, ensuring the "objective implementation" of ready-made algorithms: "Overall, then, the evolution from the classical dualism of *tekhnē*/*mēkhanē* to the modern dualism of technology/machine has been one in which the human subject – both as an agent and as a repository of experience – has been drawn from the centre to the periphery of the labour process" (Ingold, 2000, p. 316).

Opposing the modern exclusion of the human dimension of scientific knowledge, contemporary philosophy of science argues that scientific methods are forms of *tekhnē*, not technologies. Science is a form of knowledge that may be subsidiarily aided by machines (such as statistical or qualitative packages) but that cannot do without *personal skills* (Goodwin, 1994). As with any human practice, personal involvement is present throughout the phases of scientific research: from identifying the issue at stake and formulating research questions to selecting methods and reporting results. Psychological methods, irrespective of whether they are quantitative—reaction times, EEG, surveys, scales—or qualitative—discourse analysis, grounded inductive categorization, videography—only work to the extent that practitioners' use them adequately. Techniques do not simply yield to data by themselves, they produce data according to settings and decisions made by scientists. Their personal involvement turns out to be a condition for the very existence of scientific knowledge. At a time when it is increasingly accepted that intelligent machine use will absorb a number of human jobs, it is not an odd fiction to imagine automation in knowledge production as a sought-after goal. Such utopia complies with a received view of science: It would produce a total vision of nature from a neutral perspective, clean from the pollution of subjective and social factors. But far from a machinery for serially produced knowledge, science demands a kind of craftsmanship; a lively, subtle, caring craft (Rojas, 2021).

This book gathers good examples of courageous scientists that have chosen to question the order of things concerning the relationship between method and matter. They introduce or adapt methods to better understand a topic of interest. As the reader will notice, they all vividly exhibit a personal and existential dimension underlying the production of valuable scientific knowledge.

1.2 Overcoming Discursivism

Philosophy first and social sciences later have cultivated in the last century an almost obsessive interest in language. At the end of the nineteenth century, German philosophy developed an important methodological and theoretical veering—later called the *linguistic turn*—oriented to pair philosophical research to successful procedures in the natural sciences, similarly to what social sciences started to do at the beginning of that century. This philosophical movement aimed to convert philosophy into a "rigorous science" (Husserl, 2002) in hopes to catch up with the unfettered sense of progress so dear to the natural sciences. This movement was initially led by logicians (such as Frege, Husserl, Russell, and Carnap) in search for an ideal language that would unify all scientific disciplines. Gottlob Frege, perhaps the founding father of this movement (see Dummett, 1996), believed a condition for scientific progress was the proper use of language; namely, one that radically eliminates all ambiguities involved in ordinary language use. Consequently, philosophers and logicians shifted their attention from disciplinary matters to the language used to refer to such issues. Interestingly enough, while this emphasis on logic is usually thought to be the root of the twentieth-century analytic—British—philosophy, it is also the source for *philosophical* phenomenology in continental Europe.[4] Analytic philosophy systematically worked from its inception in constructing an *ideal* language; a unifying, physicalist nomenclature that assures objective relationships between symbols, objects, and events in the world. In turn, transcendental phenomenology worked in identifying the essences (*ideias*) by rigorously analyzing conscious intentionality. Trained as a logician, Husserl's life-long interest was to determine the essences of mathematical concepts (such as *number*, *three*, or *less than*). For Husserl (2002), human consciousness was subsidiary in clarifying mathematical concepts, not the distal goal ought to guide psychological inquiry.

The impact of the linguistic turn has been vast and manifold. The social sciences and psychology in particular have seen an increase in the centrality of language to understand any phenomenon from the middle of the twentieth century on. Inspired by notions of analytical philosophy, numerous psychologists have considered language to be an exteriorization of thought, since the former's qualities make it prone to study thought: It is objective (as social product), material (as sound), and even potentially malleable. In short, mind would be but the ongoing result of a scaffolding provided by a language. Oddly enough, this logo-centric vision of mind serves as a convergence point for two otherwise antithetic traditions: computationalism and neo-Marxism. On the one hand, as soon as machines began exhibiting intelligent behavior—executing logical rules over symbols—the human mind started to

[4] I emphasize *philosophical* phenomenology because of its difference regarding a concomitant *psychological* phenomenology, represented by prominent psychologists such as Carl Stumpf (Husserl's habilitation advisor), Theodor Lipps, Henri Bergson and Erwin Straus, among others. Although this tradition has been largely put aside by contemporary psychology, recent authors can well be considered to be its nourishers (Benetka & Joerchel, 2016; Rosenthal, 2019; Rojas, 2021).

be considered as a sophisticated machine that produces (unconscious) computations formulated in linguistic terms; viz., semantic representations. The emergence of the computational theory of mind was driven by a "language of thought" (Fodor, 1975) hypothesis; that is, the idea that thinking is speaking an internal language of logic. On the other hand, the idea of language as a social construct fed neo-Marxist theories about the human mind resulting from the internalization of signs (Vygotsky), voices (Bakhtin), or discourses (Foucault). Briefly put, despite much dissimilarity, these contemporary psychological approaches have absorbed logo-centrism leading to theories where language is, if not the only, at least the most important aspect defining mind.

Despite Ernest Cassirer's proposal to consider language as one among other *symbolic forms* (Cassirer, 2020), and C.S. Peirce's concept of *sign* not being limited to conventional *symbols* (Peirce, 1998), contemporary psychology still insists on giving language a be-all end-all role. Whether it takes the form of a *mentalese* or of poststructuralist semiologies, psychology has ultimately echoed the contextually inadequate Derridian claim *all is text*, as if psychological experience was coextensive to language structures. Additionally, discursivism gives the misleading impression that by performing literary, discursive, conversational, or semiological analysis, it is doing psychology. This equivalence is grounded on the claim that language is the ultimate stratum of the human mind.[5] Of course, the existence of verbal thought is not being questioned here. What is being contested is the claim that there is no psychological phenomenon outside the possibilities determined by language. Put differently, according to discursivism, all psychological phenomena are construed, limited, or scaffolded by linguistic devices of logical-syntactic structures.

Doubtlessly, discursivism provided a set of tools and a way to approach psychological phenomena that have proved to be useful to some discussions. It played an important role in helping psychology identify the problems of Cartesianism and the perils of solipsistic models of mind. However, half a century later, discursivism is turning stale. It can omit or obscure fundamental aspects of the human psyche that simply cannot be reduced to language (e.g., self, ipseity, free will, vitality, feelings). There is a point where discursivism has even distorted psychological phenomena to present them as mere secondary effects of socially internalized discourses. In short, discursivism involves the tendency to omit the experiential dimension of psychological life, putting aside depth and uniqueness in one's own psychism. In *The principles of psychology*, William James (1983) wrote: "No psychology, at any rate, can question the existence of personal selves […] The worst a psychology can do is so

[5] It is interesting to look into Frege's idiosyncratic use of psychological terms to refer to the technical terms he introduced (Frege, 1892). For instance, he used the German word for meaning [*Bedeutung*] to technically denote a signaled spatio-temporal object (which Russell rightly replaced for *reference* in his English translation of Frege's classical article *On sense and reference*). Similarly, Frege used the German term for thought [*Gedanke*] to name what one technically refers to as a *proposition*. Far from being inadvertent mistakes, these and other ambiguities allowed logicians –two generations later– to sustain that the mind of actual people is but a *calculus ratiocinator* – a machine.

to interpret the nature of these selves as to rob them of their worth" (p. 221). Contrastingly to James' view, contemporary discursivism has colonized psychological explanandum by presenting discursive devices that seek to exhaust psychological life.

In order to recover an authentically psychological standpoint, we need to see beyond the realm of language. In this volume, the reader will find valuable methodological information as well as in-depth descriptions of phenomena that exceed the limits of linguistic symbolism. In some studies, methods developed by other disciplines are adapted to enhance the comprehension of psychological topics: interactional analysis and videography (Demuth, 2021), art analysis (Fitzek, 2021), photography (Gupta & Chaudhary, 2021), historiography (Wieser, 2021), adaptations of ethnographic methods (Kietlińska, 2021; Shabel & García Palacios, 2021), extensions of text hermeneutics (Klemke, 2021), proposals like the *subjective camera* method (Wagoner et al., 2021), introspection (Huf, 2021), and variations of action research (Pollmann, 2021; Sheese, 2021). Interestingly enough, these proposals for new methods underscore the lived dimension of psychological phenomena. The expressivity of human actions and physiognomy are omnipresent and manifested in diverse forms: Gupta and Chaudhary (2021) work on prosociality in children; Kietlińska (2021) introduces the idea of *multisensory ethnography*; Wieser (2021) reviews the often neglected history of expression theory [*Ausdruckstheorie*]; Sheese (2021) proposes *experience-based* methods for a felt-embodied pedagogy; Fitzek (2021) reminds us about the role of feeling in art appreciation; Pollmann (2021) transforms *objects of research* into *subjects*; Shabel and García Palacios (2021) reconnect knowledge, actions, and feelings; Demuth (2021) reminds us about the relevance of body movement and gesture in meaning-making processes; Klemke (2021) explores the synesthetic traits of native storytelling; and Wagoner et al. (2021) explore subjective experiences when people visit memorials.

Psychology needs to prioritize the vitality of phenomena over the implementation of ready-made methods. This might be especially relevant in times when we intuitively perceive a discomfort with the objectification of uniqueness and expressivity in human experience. As I have argued, this seems hard to achieve if we keep putting aside the personal dimension of scientific research. The hope for this realization is in the hands of courageous researchers to come.

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Chapter 2
Reading Traces in Eels and Faces: Historical Roots of Semiotic Thinking in Psychology

Martin Wieser

2.1 First Steps in the Physiological Laboratory: Freud's "Latest Method"

On August 23, 1883, 27-year-old Sigmund Freud wrote to his fiancée Martha Bernays:

> Courage, my treasure! You will become my wife much earlier […] I think my 'latest method' is going to work; I wrote to you before that I am putting my hope in the light of the sun—it really seems to be effective. (Freud, 1961a, p. 45)

Martha, five years younger than Sigmund, was living with her family in Wandsbek near Hamburg at that time. She had agreed to marry and live with him—but not before he could support a family. At that time, Sigmund Freud had already been working for several years as a researcher in physiology. At the marine zoological station in Trieste, he had dissected several hundred eels to find out whether this species has two sexes or one (Freud, 1877b). After that, Freud joined the Physiological Laboratory of the University of Vienna, where he worked under the supervision of Ernst Brücke, an eminent representative of nineteenth-century physiology. When he wrote the quoted letter to Martha, Freud had just left Brücke's institute and entered the neuroanatomic laboratory of Theodory Meynert. During these early years of his career, Freud not only showed a remarkable degree of enthusiasm for his work in the laboratory: He also had a publication list that was growing rapidly (Freud, 1877a, b, 1878, 1879, 1882). However, what our young and aspiring researcher dearly missed was a secure economic foundation for a future with his fiancée. "Demonstrators" like Freud received very little payment from the university, and the

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only two long-term positions in Brücke's laboratory were already taken by older colleagues. Since Freud did not come from a wealthy family, his only chance for an academic career was to become an outstanding researcher in his field.

While many psychologists and historians are aware of the fact that Freud was a physician by training, the specific outline of his research practice in the laboratory is much less known. In the following section, I will introduce and discuss the methodological framework of "reading traces" to contextualize Freud's "latest method". This model of scientific research did not just exert a strong influence on Freud's later psychoanalytic thinking. It existed in many other disciplines as well, including psychology, until the middle of the twentieth century. As will be shown, there are quite a few hidden gems in Freud's early laboratory practice, some of which might also be very relevant to modern-day cultural–psychological research. What is interesting for cultural psychology is less concerned with eels, crayfish, acids, microscopes, scalpels, and all the other things that could be found in Brücke's laboratory. What is more important to us is the *epistemological logic* that connected all these elements: the idea that scientific research is an art of finding and putting together bits and pieces that are invisibly, but systematically, tied together by an invisible bond.

2.2 Freud's First Steps in the Laboratory

In Freud's first academic habitat, there existed basically two main roads to fame. One was to provide new empirical evidence by proving the existence of previously unknown nervous structures and their connections. Several of Freud's early publications attempted to do just that, as they aimed to reveal the structure and connections of fibers and cells of vertebrates, such as lampreys (1877a, 1878), eels (1877b), or crayfish (1882). The second route to success was via methodological innovation: If one managed to develop new *techniques* that revealed the slender and fragile biological structures that hide beneath the skin of the organism, one's academic reputation could increase significantly. The feelings that Freud expressed in his letter to Martha are connected to the latter. In two publications, Freud (1879, 1884a) reported about his use and refinement of the "gold-chlorid" method. It consisted of a series of steps to dissect, prepare, and color specimens. After bathing cut-out parts of the organism in gold chloride, the tissue was treated with a solution of nitric acid, glycerin, and water. Freud had been working on the refinement of this method for several years until he was satisfied with his results, meaning that those parts of the tissue which were not of interest to the observant (e.g., fat, bone, cartilage) would dissolve through chemical reaction. All other structures, especially nerve fibres, did not just remain intact but became even more clearly visible through the coloring (see Fig. 2.1).

From all that we know today, Freud did not leave the physiological laboratory after working there for six years based on his own will—he desperately needed a more stable source of income. From 1883 to 1886, he underwent clinical training

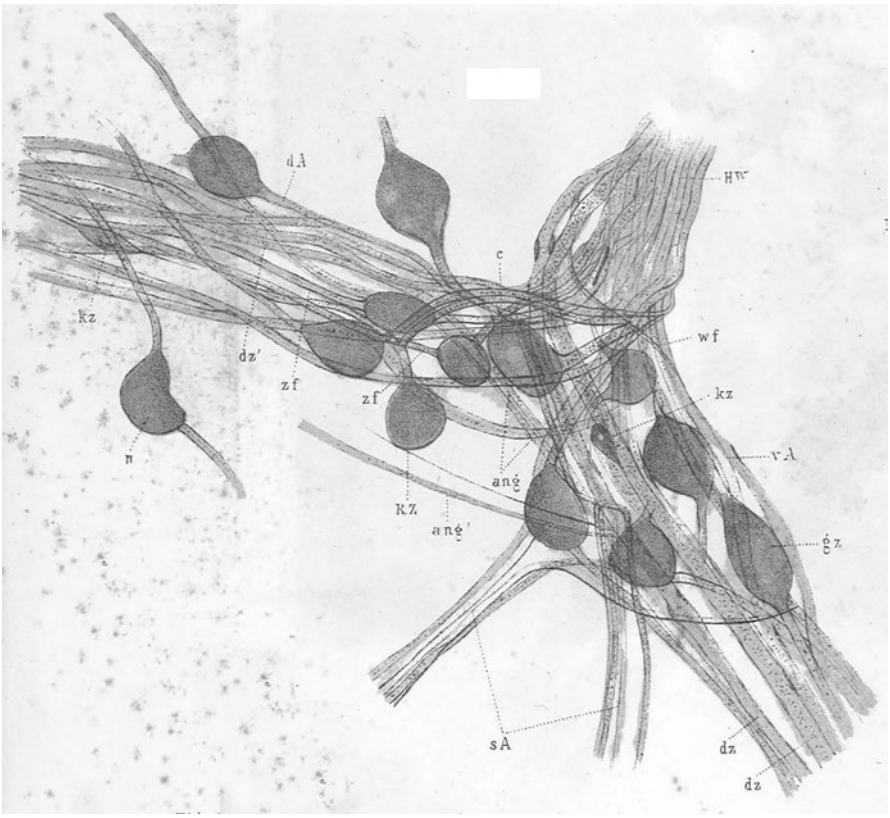

Fig. 2.1 Detail of image which shows a "fine net of varicose fibres on the pia mater" under magnification, prepared with gold chloride (Freud, 1878, p. 160)

and worked as a *Sekundararzt* (assistant physician) under the supervision of Theodor Meynert at the Psychiatric Department of the General Hospital in Vienna. During this period, Freud became familiar with the common methods of psychiatric treatment in Vienna (which were mostly based on physical treatment) and Paris, where he stayed between October 1885 and February 1886 where he learned about Charcot's use of hypnosis. In Vienna, Freud also started to experiment with cocaine (Freud, 1884b, 1885a), but these experiments soon reached a dead end. Freud did not have the necessary resources—including time, co-workers, and suitable patients—to go further in this direction (Lindemann, 2018). In the middle of the 1880s, Freud's research interest gradually moved from vertebrates toward the human central nervous system, as he published on the medulla oblongata (Freud, 1885b) and the acoustic nerve (Freud, 1886). As his research focus moved up the phylogenetic ladder from crayfish to the human brain, he answered the challenge of reconstructing increasingly complex nervous structures by further refining his methods. Instead of just dissecting and preparing multiple organisms of the same

type, he adapted "Flechsig's method" (which was named after the neuroanatomist Paul Flechsig) by clustering specimen into groups that varied by age. In this way, Freud hoped to reveal the growth and unfolding of nervous structures over time: As organisms grow, the size and location of cells change, along with their connections to other nervous structures. Flechsig's method, as Freud (1886) argued, promised to entangle the complex and intertwined structure of the central nervous system by the examination of specimens of different age and which would enable the observer to examine the change of cell growth and positioning over time (see Fig. 2.2).

During his stay in Paris, Freud was fascinated by the work and personality of Jean-Martin Charcot, whose controversial theories on the development of hysteria were already internationally known at that time. After returning to Vienna, Freud was harshly criticized by his superior Meynert, who was in opposition against the French tradition of hypnotism and Charcot's explanation of hysteria, and Freud and Meynert eventually split up. Freud set up his clinical practice in April 1886 and married Martha five months later. In 1885, he had been awarded the status of a *Privatdozent* (private lecturer) for neuropathology at the University of Vienna. One year later, he began to work at a private children's hospital in Vienna (Ellenberger, 1994). At that point, Freud's academic career was halted, not only because of a lack of opportunities and positions, but also because of the latent anti-Semitism at the University of Vienna (Taschwer, 2015). Thus, in the course of the 1880s, Freud gradually moved away from the physiological and neuroanatomical laboratory and entered clinical practice, where he now faced the challenge of finding a treatment for mental illnesses that had no visible connection to organic failure.

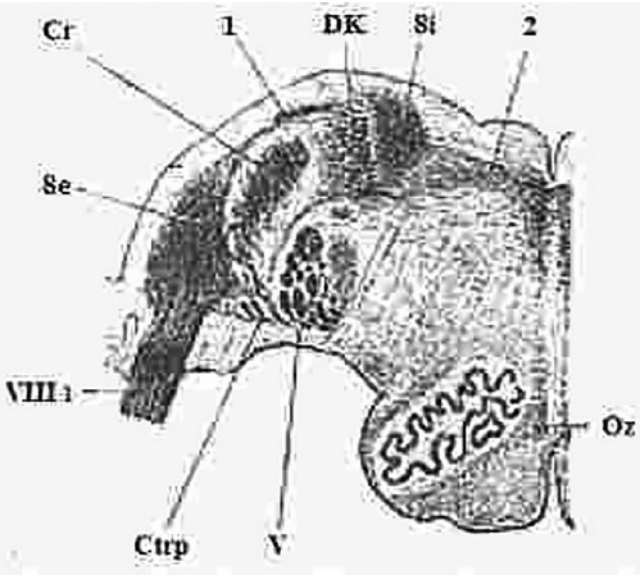

Fig. 2.2 Freud's drawing of a cut-through of the acoustic nerve of a 6-month-old fetus (Freud, 1886, p. 248)

2.3 From Gold Chloride to Free Association: The Freudian Art of Reading Traces

Although Freud's first attempts to pursue an academic career failed, he never gave up his scientific ambitions. During the 1890s, he turned toward a different object of investigation: the neurotic patient. Although Freud transferred from physiology to psychopathology, there is a profound methodological constant in his work. In his own view, he was still following the same ideal of uncovering hidden structures, signs, and traces and their development over time. The method of "catharsis," as it was presented in the *Studies on Hysteria*, was designed for the purpose of "clearing away the pathogenic psychical material layer by layer." Freud and Josef Breuer compared this procedure to a "technique of excavating a buried city". They aimed to "penetrate into deeper layers" of their patient's memories "by carrying out an investigation under hypnosis or by the use of some similar technique" (Freud, 1955, p. 139). Quantitative methods of experimental psychology, Freud argued, were not helpful in understanding the aetiology of neuroses and their treatment. Freud was very critical of contemporary academic psychology, as he accused the "philosophers" of having "done little to prepare the way for us" (Freud, 1962, p. 219). In his view, the questions that captured his interest could not be answered using experimental methods designed for the measurement and quantification of mental functions (although he did not reject these methods in principle). His main goal was to find methods that would help him exploring the hidden structures and dynamics of the human psyche and their unfolding over time.

In the following decades, Freud repeatedly refined and adapted his psychotherapeutic methods of "excavation." Hypnosis, catharsis, dream interpretation, and free association may all differ on a technical level, but they all served the same purpose: transgressing the superficial and visible, the conscious and manifest, to approach the hidden, unconscious, and latent structures and contents of the psyche (Wieser, 2013). Freud replaced the laboratory bench and the microscope with the couch and the spoken word, but his goal remained the same. He aimed to bring the invisible to light by the application of a method that is appropriate to the object of investigation. This method should enable the observant to trace signs or symptoms back to their causes and explore their hidden connections. Freud was convinced that he had always remained true to this principle, and he was always convinced that he had never left the field of natural sciences. In his view, there was no doubt that psychoanalysis was part of a scientific worldview: "nothing is altered in the attitude of science as a whole, […] no new sources of knowledge or methods of research have come into being" (Freud, 1964, p. 159). Freud's scientific "attitude" needs to be understood in the context of the methodological and epistemic framework of the physiological laboratory. It was defined by a strong empirical orientation, focusing on preparation, close observation, and detailed description of the specimens, as well as a historical focus on the unfolding of its elements over time. The historical roots of this research model reached beyond the nineteenth-century laboratory and were connected to the theory of evolution and natural history (Lawrence, 2000). Although

this intellectual background became less visible later in Freud's career, it still played a major role in his understanding of the proper method of scientific inquiry. As will be shown below, the methodology of reading signs was not only incorporated into psychoanalysis, but in many other fields as well.

2.4 "Symptomatology": Carlo Ginzburg and the Interdisciplinary Art of Reading Signs and Clues

In Carlo Ginzburg's essay "Morelli, Freud, and Sherlock Holmes: Clues and Scientific Method" (1984), the author introduced an interdisciplinary "epistemological model" which he called the practice of "reading traces." Ginzburg's argumentation is based on three examples: the art historian Giovanni Morelli, the novellist Arthur Conan Doyle (creator of Sherlock Holmes), and Sigmund Freud. In Ginzburg's view, all three of them could be seen as representatives of "medical semiotics or symptomatology, the discipline which permits diagnosis, though the disease cannot be directly observed, on the basis of superficial symptoms or signs, often irrelevant to the eye of the layman" (Ginzburg, 1984, p. 87).

During the 1870s, the first author mentioned by Ginzburg—the Italian art historian Giovanni Morelli—presented a new empirical method for studying works of art (Morelli, 1900). Morelli argued that whenever the creator of a piece of art is in question, we should not primarily look at the features that are usually the focus of attention (e.g., the smile of *Mona Lisa* or the eyes of Vermeer's *Girl with a Pearl Earring*). It is the trifles, the small unnoticed details, where the author unknowingly leaves their signature: the shape of an ear or hand, the coloring of finger nails, the posture and size of a limb; all of these side-elements are often painted with less attention to detail, which is why the author tends to reveal himself more easily. By looking for recurring patterns, hidden traces and shapes in these elements, Morelli argued, it is possible to distinguish original from fake (see Fig. 2.3).

The *Morellian* expert ignores the overall impression, which Morelli disregarded as too subjective. Instead, he emphasizes the importance of interpreting and reading trifles as clues or signs. Although some critics argued that this approach was too mechanical and oversimplified, it has become part of the standard repertoire of generations of art historians ever since (Lawrence, 2008).

The second example of Ginzburg's semiotic model is detective Sherlock Holmes, the protagonist of many of Author Doyle's works. Like Morelli, Holmes focused on seemingly irrelevant aspects and unnoticed leftovers to track down a criminal. For example, in the famous novel *The hound of the Baskervilles* (Doyle, 1902), Holmes examines the pieces of a warning letter in detail, including the quality of the paper and the type of print, to collect clues about the origin of the letter. This procedure also serves a narrative function which might be one of the key factors for the popularity of Doyle's works: As readers are following Holmes closely through his adventures, they are invited to solve the riddles together with the protagonist. If the reader

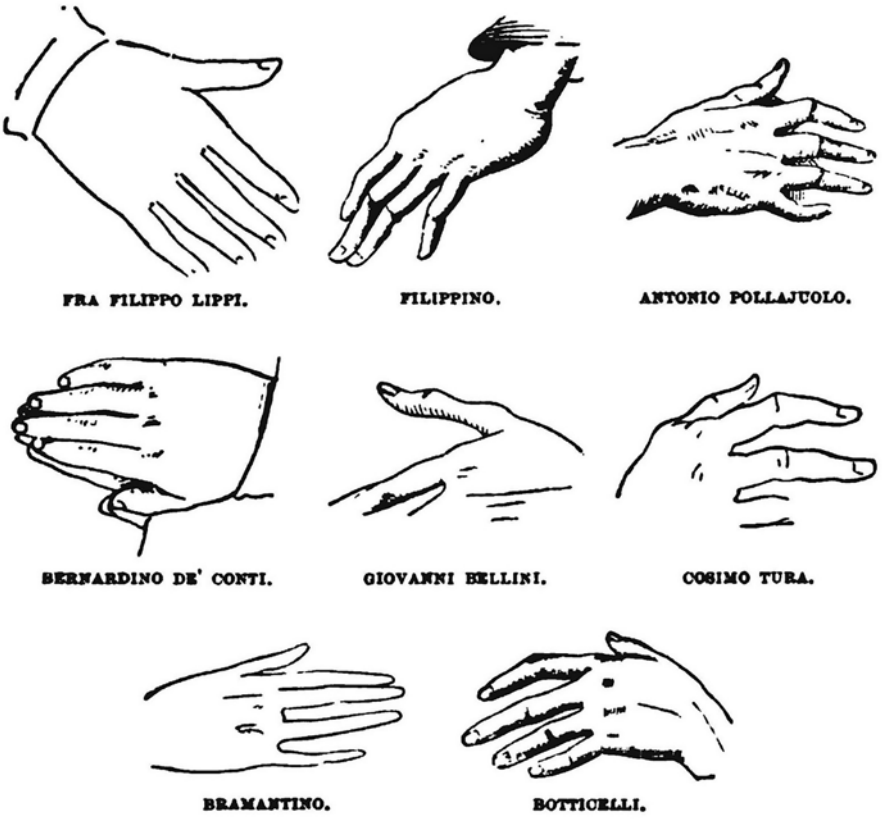

Fig. 2.3 Typical hand drawings of different Italian painters, taken from (Morelli, 1900, p. 77)

is able to decipher all the clues and signs that are left behind at a crime scene, they will find the perpetrator, just like Sherlock Holmes.

Coming back to Freud, it is easy to see the similarity between his clinical method and the detective's modus operandi. In his *Introductory lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, Freud argued that the material for the psychoanalytic observation

> is usually provided by the inconsiderable events which have been put aside by the other sciences as being too unimportant […] if you were a detective engaged in tracing a murder, would you expect to find that the murderer had left his photograph behind at the place of the crime, with his address attached? Or would you not necessarily have to be satisfied with comparatively slight and obscure traces of the person you were in search of? So do not let us underestimate small indications. (Freud, 1961b, p. 27)

Freud's interest in Holmes was also confirmed by the so-called *Wolf-Man*, one of Freud's most famous patients:

> Once we happened to speak of Conan Doyle and his creation, Sherlock Holmes. I had thought that Freud would have no use for this type of light reading matter, and was surprised to find that this was not at all the case and that Freud had read this author attentively. The

> fact that circumstantial evidence is useful in psychoanalysis when reconstructing a childhood history may explain Freud's interest in this type of literature. (Gardiner, 1973, p. 164)

Freud was not just an avid reader of Doyle. He also explicitly referred to Morelli in his essay "The Moses of Michelangelo" (cp. Fitzek, this volume). Morelli's method is, as Freud emphasized, "closely related to the technique of psycho-analysis" (Freud, 1958, p. 222). In Freud's eyes, both he and Morelli aimed "to divine secret and concealed things from despised or unnoticed features, from the rubbish-heap, as it were, of our observations." This overlap was not a coincidence: Freud claimed that Morelli's method had inspired him "long before I had any opportunity of hearing about psychoanalysis" (ibid.).

In Ginzburg's eyes, the connection between Morelli, Doyle, and Freud is profound: "tiny details provide the key to a deeper reality, inaccessible by other methods. These details may be symptoms, for Freud, or clues, for Holmes, or features of paintings, for Morelli" (1984, p. 87). Just like Freud, Morelli and Doyle were trained as physicians before they moved to their respective fields. In Ginzburg's view, the common characteristics of their methods are based on the fact that all three of them are based on a similar epistemological framework. Ginzburg named this framework "medical semiotics" or "symptomatology," (ibid.) a model of research that supposedly goes back as far as Hippocrates and ancient medicine. As Ginzburg argued, this approach remained uncontested in medicine, philosophy, and the natural sciences until the early seventeenth century, when the "Galileian paradigm" emerged in astronomy and physics. Ginzburg's semiotic model is based on the qualitative analysis of individual cases, the interpretation of unique documents and artifacts, and it aims to uncover the events or persons that caused or created them. The Galileian paradigm, on the other hand, does not focus on the individual. Its use of mathematics and its search for universal laws and constants (such as Galileo Galilei's gravity experiments) blinds out all unique characteristics of the object of investigation. Quantification und experimentation is supposed to ensure the exactness and reproducibility of scientific research: "Using mathematics and the experimental method involved the need to measure and to repeat phenomena, whereas an individualizing approach made the latter impossible and allowed the former only in part" (Ginzburg, 1984, p. 92).

Ginzburg's differentiation between the semiotic and the Galileian model should not be confused with other known dichotomies in the philosophy of science, such as "hard" versus "soft" sciences, explanation versus interpretation, or the sciences versus the humanities. According to Ginzburg, the semiotic model originally emerged in the field medicine and made its way into art theory, criminology, literature, philosophy, and history over the centuries. It still is an important part of physiological research and deeply influenced evolution theory, as well as with geology and archaeology. Regardless of whether signs are natural (e.g., footprints in the snow) or artificial (e.g., a graffiti on the wall), the observer must learn to read them correctly in order to identify their origin. The Galileian model, on the other hand, is not only prevalent in physics or astronomy but can also be found in many different social sciences today. The semiotic model dominates wherever the unique features of an

object, its history, and its distinct qualities are of interest. Its antagonist ignores these properties and focuses only on measurable properties that are shared between all objects of the same class or type. Ginzburg's differentiation is not hierarchical, as the value of the method is measured by its capability to address a specific problem. Each method has its natural limits. As Ginzburg points out, the semiotic model has been frequently criticized for its weaknesses in terms of intersubjectivity and reproducibility, while the Galileian model blinds out all features that cannot be measured and quantified, such as the context, history, origin, and development over time of the investigation object.

So what does this historical split between semiotic and Galileian types of research tell us about psychology today? How does academic psychology relate to his differentiation? Has there ever existed anything similar to Freud's idea of making hidden structures visible in other fields of psychology? Presumably, the majority of academic psychologists today would position themselves as followers of the Galileian model. Since the rise of *Operationalism* and *Neo-Behaviorism* in the United States during the 1930s, this philosophy and practice of research has clearly dominated most parts of Western psychology (Mills, 1998; Rogers, 1989). But in the German-speaking world, there was a current of psychological research and practice that had many similarities with Ginzburg's semiotic model.

2.5 From Research to Practice: First Steps of German Military Psychology

After the end of World War I, German psychology entered a phase of profound transformation. A discipline once almost exclusively concerned with fundamental research became increasingly practical. Walter Moede, a former student of Wilhelm Wundt, was among the first psychologists who tested the aptitude of soldiers for their suitability as drivers of motor vehicles during World War I. As Moede (1926) reported by the end of the war, more than 10,000 soldiers had been psychologically examined. Many of his colleagues developed similar procedures for testing pilots, radio operators, gunners, and other specialist personnel in the military (Rieffert, 1922). In Germany, psychological testing was implemented to find out whether candidates were suited for predefined tasks so they could be trained later on (e.g., how to drive a motor vehicle or fly an airplane). The number of tests that were conducted in Germany was much smaller than in the United States, where approximately 1.75 million soldiers were examined in only a few months (cf. Yerkes, 1920). *Psychotechnics* (Psychotechnik), a term introduced by William Stern (1903), became the first branch of applied psychology in Germany that was concerned with the measurement and comparison of psychological functions (e.g., spatial skills, reaction time, acuity). After the war, an increasing number of experts who gathered practical experience in this area started to work for the industry. Until the recession hit at the end of the 1920s, Germany became one of the world leaders in the field of

applied psychology. About 250 psychotechnical institutes were established between 1918 and 1926 in Germany (Jäger & Stäuble, 1981).

Psychotechnics was growing rapidly during the recovery of the German industry after World War I, although it was usually not taught at the universities. The members of the first generation of its representatives in many cases did not have a psychological background but were engineers by training. Wherever psychological methods and instruments appeared to be useful for the selection of personnel, the reduction of accidents, or the optimization of production, they could be used and adapted by basically anyone, without any legal restrictions (Patzel-Mattern, 2010). However, there was a limit to this approach: In Ginzburg's (1984) terms, psychotechnics was clearly an example of the Galileian model of research, as it was designed to measure and compare isolated mental functions, blinding out their development over time, as well as their interrelatedness. Motivational factors and social skills were very hard to fit into this framework. Because of these shortcomings, a different type of knowledge became increasingly popular in German psychology in the 1920s, one that came to be known as *Ausdruckspsychologie* (which can be roughly translated as "psychology of expression"). It represented a system of psychological examination procedures that had almost nothing in common with psychotechnics, besides their ommon goal to provide a rational and empirical-based system of knowledge to describe and analyze the human personality. While psychotechnics was designed to differentiate between persons based on a measurement and comparison of mental functions and capabilities, *Ausdruckspsychologie* provided a set of methods and procedures designed to analyze the personality as a "whole" and the unique "form" and "structure" of the character. One of the most influential works in this context was the book *Gesicht und Seele* (*Face and Soul*), which was published in 1932. This book advised readers on how to interpret muscular movements of the face, especially the eyes and the mouth, as expressions of the structure and dynamics of the personality. Its author Philipp Lersch worked as a military psychologist between 1925 and 1933 in Berlin. In 1939, he was appointed professor at the University of Leipzig, where he held the famous chair that was formerly Wilhelm Wundt's. During his time in the military, Lersch was part of a group of psychologists who worked under the lead of Johann Baptist Rieffert in Berlin, who developed a new method for the psychological examination of soldiers (Weber, 1993). The challenge that Rieffert, Lersch and their colleages faced was a profound one: How can we assess the aptitude of soldiers for leadership roles? First and foremost, officers were supposed to guide and lead others and keep the group together even in the face of imminent danger. A mere assessment of physical and mental fitness was not sufficient for this task. In the Prussian tradition, the "strength of will," the "passion for war," and the "readiness for self-sacrifice" were assumed to represent the most important characteristics of the German military officer. As psychologists had proven the usability of their methods in World War 1, they were now eager to prove that they could do more than the testing specialists. The common methods that came from the psychological laboratory were, however, of little use for that. They were developed only for the measurement of "lower" mental

functions. But how could one examine a candidate's willpower, his willingness for self-sacrifice, and his ability to lead, impress, and enthrall others?

Ausdruckspsychologie was designed to fill this methodological gap. The basic idea of this method was that the mimicry, gestures, and all other observable changes on the surface of the body do not just represent reactions to the current environment but can also be *read* as signs of "deeper" and more enduring layers of the personality. The way someone smiles or raises their eyebrows, how they frown, laugh, cry, or shout; how they write, walk, and talk: in Lersch's view, all of these patterns of action and communication can be interpreted as *Ausdruckszeichen* (signs of expression) of the whole personality. For Lersch, "the expression as a sensorial sign ['sinnliches Zeichen'] for a mental content always implies some *meaning* which can be *understood* [verstanden]" (Lersch, 1932, p. 13). Since all "expressions" are bound to the personality as a whole, all "layers" of the personality are involved in every single act: biological drives and instincts, emotional processes, as well as intellectual reflections and moral values. For Lersch, facial movement represented the most challenging and promising level of psychological analysis.

2.6 The Rise and Demise of German Ausdruckspsychologie

Ausdruckspsychologie was not the first diagnostic system designed to infer the mental inside from the physical outside: Johann Caspar Lavater's *Physiognomic fragments for the promotion of knowledge about and love of humanity* (1775–1778) was quite famous at the end of the eighteenth century, and phrenology became quite popular in the Western world in the middle of the nineteenth century (Sokal, 2001). The difference between *Ausdruckspsychologie* and its antecedents, however, was twofold: First, *Ausdruckspsychologie* was not interested in static properties, such as the length of the nose, the size of the eyes, or the bumps of the skull. The "signs of expression" that were of interest were muscular movements that represented parts of the dynamic *Ausdrucksgeschehen* ("events of expression"): The *movement* of the body is where the soul unveils its true nature. Second, on a methodological level, proponents of *Ausdruckspsychologie* did not aim to develop a system of knowledge that would connect every type of movement to a specific, predefined trait of personality. Lersch was aiming for objectivity in his methodology, but he did not ignore the ambiguity and context-dependency of the "events of expression":

> The necessity to trace every subjective quality of impression back to its objective basis makes three things a prerequisite for a scientific, interpretative psychology: a comprehensive, empirically based *knowledge of the possible expressive phenomena*, their precise *objective determination* and a precisely formulated, sufficiently justified *determination of their diagnostic meaning* or *ambiguity.* (Lersch, 1932, p. 26)

For many years, Lersch and his psychological comrades in the German military tested and applied their methods designed to interpret situational "expressions" as traces that supposedly revealed permanent characteristics of the personality. While

Lersch focused on facial expressions, his colleagues in the military tried to expand the realm of "signs" that could possibly be read: Keilhacker (1940) explored methods to analyze the voice of the examinee. Practices of *Graphology*, which used handwritten texts as the basis for the interpretation of personality (Schlicht, 2020) were also widely used in this context. Peter Hofstätter (1940) suggested investigating the *Dunkelschrift* (dark writing) of candidates by assigning them to write alternately in darkness and in light. The change in writing style between those conditions was supposed to reveal the "inner consistency" and "steadiness" of the writer (Fig. 2.4).

Gesture, mimicry, bodily posture, movement, speech as well as group behavior represented key components of *Ausdruckspsychologie*, as its methods were implemented in the German military during the 1930s (Geuter, 1988). Although Lersch

Fig. 2.4 Film stills from recordings of facial expressions, archived at the Vienna Psychological Institute (n.d., presumably 1938–1945)

and many of his colleagues were eager to emphasized that they had nothing to do with psychoanalysis (even more so after it was officially classified as a "Jewish science" during the reign of National Socialism), they shared some core assumptions with Freudian thinking. First and foremost, they followed the idea that the psyche is a system of "layers" or "strata" that unfold over time during ontogeny (cf. Lersch, 1938; Rothacker, 1938): Every human being, from the perspective of stratification theory, is dominated by primitive, bodily drives and needs at the beginning of their life. As they grow up, new, "higher" and more complex layers (e.g., the intellect, reason) grow out of the older ones. The older ones prevail (even adults need to satisfy their basic biological needs), but the newer ones are able to perform more complex functions and even dominate the older ones (e.g., inhibit aggressive impulses for moral reasons). The historical roots of stratification theory go back to ancient Greece (cf. Wieser, 2018), but for our context, it suffices to highlight its role as a theoretical foundation for *Ausdruckspsychologie*. Theories of stratification provided a conceptual framework to interpret and classify elements that pointed to what lies "beneath" overt behavior. In this context, all "signs of expression" were interpreted as determined by all layers simultaneously, albeit not to the same degree. A singular act of physical violence, for instance, can be interpreted as an outburst of instinctual drives in the "deeper layers" (e.g., feeling physically threatened), but it could also be steered primarily by emotions (e.g., jealousy or anger) or cognition (e.g., an executioner fulfilling his duty). Erich Rothacker (1938), another famous proponent of stratification theory in the area of personality psychology, argued that "human acts, as realizations [Äußerungen] of the whole personality, can only be understood as discharges [Ausflüsse] of the layers of the personality" (p. 7). The interpretation of conduct, in this framework, means to identify the degree of influence as well as the interaction of all layers of the personality in any given act.

Proponents of *Ausdruckspsychologie* conceptualized human conduct as an *ambiguous* sign, one that can only be interpreted by looking at it from different perspectives. The examination should build upon the observation of the examinee in different situations and on different levels (e.g., voice, mimicry, gesture, posture, etc.) to collect as many "signs" as possible. The aim was to gain a picture of the personality that is as comprehensive as possible. In German military psychology, this model of personality assessment was put into practice by the implementation of a series of examination procedures at the psychological inspection offices of the German military. There, officer candidates were tested for about two days across a series of steps, while they were observed by a committee of psychologists, psychiatrists, and military officers. The *Ausdrucksuntersuchung* (examination of expression) and the *Handlungsuntersuchung* (examination of conduct) represented the most important elements of this assessment. While the candidates were going through an obstacle course of examinations (e.g., writing an essay, giving a speech, undergoing dexterity tasks, cf. Geuter, 1988, pp. 113–119), the observing psychologists aimed to get a full picture of the "structure of the character" by focusing on the individual's mimicry and gesture, style of writing, or timbre of speech. In general, expression psychologists were more interested in the character than the intellect, a focus that corresponded to the ideology of National Socialism—which preferred the

"strong will" to analytical reasoning. The examination of expression was not primarily concerned with *what* was written or said, or how well the candidate performed in a given task. In contrast, German military psychologists focused on the *form* of conduct, the *way* a candidate expressed his opinion, *how* they related to their social and physical environment (e.g., aggressive or submissive, friendly or rude). One example of this approach was an examination where the candidate was ordered to pull an expander with both hands while their face was filmed by a camera in close-up. The expander was electrified, and the more the candidate pulled, the more the electric shock increased. During this task, the examiner observed changes in the facial movement and whether or not the candidate was able to "keep his face" even under "tension"—which was supposed to be a key characteristic of a gifted leader.

In 1942, German military psychology was almost completely disbanded, presumably due to rapidly mounting casualties on the Eastern Front, which quickly made officer selection mostly obsolete. Nevertheless, *Ausdruckspsychologie* had played a very important role in transforming a former academic discipline into a profession. After the war, this tradition of personality psychology and diagnostics remained popular in Germany until the end of the 1950s. Lersch, for instance, was appointed professor of psychology in Munich in 1942 and kept that position until his retirement in 1968 (Weber, 1993). He was also appointed president of the German Psychological Association in 1954. In the same year, he took part in a debate with Hans Eysenck and other proponents of operationalism that was held in Montreal. Eysenck and his U.S.-American colleagues fiercely attacked stratification theory, characterology, and psychoanalysis. In Eysenck's view, all three of these currents represented nothing more than "philosophical beliefs," an accumulation of "antiscientific" presuppositions and assumptions based on mere "speculation" (Eysenck, 1957). As the "Americanization" (Métraux, 1985) of West German psychology progressed in the 1960s, *Ausdruckspsychologie*, together with characterology and stratification theory, vanished from the German universities. Using Ginzburg's terms, one could describe the triumph of operationalism as a victory of the Galileian model over the semiotic model in the context of academic psychology: The next generation of German psychologists was much more interested in learning about the exciting tradition of American experimental psychology than in becoming part of an old-fashioned psychological current that had failed to critically reflect upon its servitude to the Nazi regime (Geuter, 1980).

Although *Ausdruckspsychologie*, stratification theory, and holistic psychology almost completely fell into oblivion in Germany after the 1950s, their remnants remain scattered across many different disciplines (Wieser, 2018). One of these areas is psychoanalysis, which shared many characteristics with *Ausdruckspsychologie*: Instead of measurement and quantification, representatives of both currents aimed to identify and decipher signs, clues, and small details in order to infer the invisible "inside" from the visible "outside." Both systems acknowledged the importance of the connection between mental structures and observable conduct. As Freud moved toward clinical practice, the traces he was following were not made out of tissue, muscles, and fibers, but mostly spoken words. While later authors such as Paul Ricoeur (1970) argued that this change of focus

effectively turned psychoanalysis into a variant of hermeneutics, Freud always considered psychoanalysis to be part of the natural sciences. In his eyes, he never violated the methodological principles that he once learned in the physiological laboratory. *Ausdruckspsychologie*, on the other hand, was much more open to Dilthey's concept of *Geisteswissenschaften* and the use of "empathic understanding" [*einfühlendes Verstehen*] as a foundation for the psychological analysis of personality. Lersch (1932) argued that "through the observation of the singular mimic sign […] we observe a modification of our own consciousness," and emphasized that it is "necessary to understand the common occurrence of different properties of phenomena out of our own experience" (p. 55). From his perspective, the use of (trained) intuition, introspection, and insight into human nature represented an essential part of psychological methodology. His colleague Max Simoneit, who was the scientific leader of the headquarters of the Psychological Inspection Offices in Berlin, used the term *Urverstehensfähigkeit* (intuitional understanding) to describe the psychological ability to create a "true, inner contact with the candidate" (Simoneit, 1939, p. 2 f.; also cf. Geuter, 1988).

Because of its use in the military, notwithstanding the appreciation of "intuitional understanding," the categories of psychological examination in German military psychology were quite predetermined. While Freud had been pondering about the "interminable analysis" (Freud, 1964), German military psychologists had to complete their psychological assessment in two days (and even less, the longer the war went on). During that short period of time, they had to come up with a report that included a clear recommendation as to whether or not a candidate should be admitted for training as an officer. Simoneit (1938) claimed that "psychological examination is only directed towards what is there, and does not evaluate it" (p. 7). Nevertheless, the dimensions of the personality that were considered relevant (e.g., will, mental strength, assertiveness, courage, and enthusiasm for the National Socialist ideology, readiness for self-sacrifice) were predefined by the practical context, and military psychologists could not escape the pressure to give a definite judgment on this matter at the end of the assessment. Psychotechnics, the "Galileian model" of the examination of the personality and the measurement of mental functions, was not abandoned during the heyday of *Ausdruckspsychologie*: Its use was widespread in the war industry, especially for the assessment of forced laborers (Wieser, 2020).

2.7 Conclusion: On the Hidden Tracks of Semiotics in Psychology

Cultural psychologists traditionally justify their interest in semiotics by arguing along with Innis (2012) that "mental existence is embodied semiosis," meaning that the constant "production and interpretation of signs" (p. 256) is one of the key characteristics of being human. The role of signs as mediators between the subject and

the environment represents one of the core topics of cultural–psychological inquiry (Valsiner, 2007, 2014). Human beings, from this perspective, live in a web of meaning that predetermines the outlines and shape, the potential and the limits of our thinking and feeling. Semiotics is mostly used as a theoretical or anthropological background or "analytical framework" (Innis, 2012, p. 257) for cultural psychology today. Ginzburg's semiotic model, on the other hand, primarily represented a framework for empirical research. Psychoanalysis and *Ausdruckspsychologie*, despite all their differences, shared the idea of analyzing verbal or behavioral signs to explore the invisible structure and dynamics, the past and becoming, of a person. As a psychoanalyst, Freud almost exclusively focused on *verbal* signs to follow the traces of free association, while expression psychologists were ready to include basically any kind of observable conduct in their assessment, as long as it promised to provide reliable information about the more permanent structure the personality.

Even though *Ausdruckspsychologie* was integrated into the highly bureaucratic and formalized procedures of military aptitude testing, there was always some degree of freedom left for the examiner during the assessment, as the individual examiner had to rely on his personal experience, intuition, and empathy. Representatives of *Ausdruckspsychologie* never managed to refute concerns about the reliability of their methods, as they were frequently accused of working too observer-dependent and supposedly lacked standardization and transparency in their methods. This critique was not specific to psychology but reflected a general distrust of Galileian thinkers toward the semiotic model: "Although progress had been made, its methods still seemed uncertain, its results unpredictable" (Ginzburg, 1984, p. 100). The Galileian model was designed to ignore all properties of the object of investigation that could not be measured. Its applicants were trained to avoid any observations that were open to subjective interpretation as far as they could. But the Galileian model reaches its limits when we focus on phenomena that differ in quality, not quantity: "the real difficulty in applying the Galilean model lay in the degree to which a discipline was concerned with the individual" (Ginzburg, 1984, p. 97). This methodological divide is not identical with the "two cultures," as described by C.P. Snow (1963), who warned of a growing division between science and technology on the one hand and the arts and humanities on the other, in Western culture and education. The distinction between Galileian and semiotic does not overlap with these traditional dichotomies, as semiotic thinking was (and is still) widespread in the natural sciences, while many social scientists work with Galileian methods of research.

The rise and demise of the semiotic model in academic psychology needs to be understood against the background of the changing societal, political, and economic contexts that shaped psychology during and after World War II. As the German military was looking for practices that facilitate the selection of personnel, *Ausdruckspsychologie* profited from this demand during the war. After World War II, the discipline developed into a different direction: As psychology turned even more into a profession, growing both in terms of student numbers and areas of application, the methods that were taught at the university became more uniform and standardized. The Galileian model is easier to integrate into this context, as the

semiotic model puts more emphasis on individual training and experience. This does not mean that the semiotic model is impractical. But its integration into academic teaching might require teachers and students to approach the teaching of methods differently than relying on standardized steps of operationalization and calculation, which are supposedly put into practice regardless of the origin and development of their object of study. "Reading traces" requires a considerable amount of keen observation, personal experience, persistence, patience, willingness to go after "rules of thumb," empathy, and intuition. These skills probably won't be found in modern textbooks on psychological methodology, although this does not mean that such skills do not play a role in concrete psychological research and practice. They also include a considerable amount of implicit or tacit knowledge that is usually acquired through personal communication and learning by model. There is probably as much art in the application of the semiotic model as there is science, which makes it harder to integrate into standardized manuals of psychological diagnostics.

So where does this leave modern cultural psychology? The relevancy of language analysis and semiotics seems undisputed in this field today (Kitayama & Cohen, 2007). But apart from theoretical and conceptual analysis, cultural psychologists have probably not yet fully explored the idea of semiotic analysis as an empirical method. Ginzburg's semiotic model could provide an inspiring starting point to venture in that direction. As well as any other research method, it surely has its limitations, flaws, and biases. In academic psychology, where great value is traditionally placed on established practices, those who dare to try out unconventional methods are often met with skepticism or mistrust. Whether or not cultural psychologists can successfully integrate the semiotic model will also be decided by their success in tackling the challenge of the *ambiguity* of signs. This needs to be done in a way that seriously takes into account the criticisms that have been voiced by the Galileian side of our discipline, but stays true to the nature of its object of investigation. It might take just a bit of courage to overcome these concerns—just as young Sigmund Freud once expected his fiancée Martha to believe in the success of his "latest method."

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Chapter 3
Why We Have Two Ears: Particularized Meaning Beyond Language or the Benefits of Musicalization in Research

Sven Hroar Klempe

One of the many mysterious aspects of human behavior is the communicative act. For humans, communication is primarily entrenched in language, as language is the most salient trait of the human species. Psychology reflects this by analyzing different types of communication in translating them into verbalized expressions. However, we know very well that communication is not restricted to language. Although we may not say a word, we still communicate with each other on different levels (e.g., through intonation, body language, gaze, etc.). Many of these levels may even be included in verbal communication. Thus, it is not always possible to grasp the meaning communicated through these extra-linguistic levels to its full extent even after the meaning has been put into words. On the other hand, an academic discourse requires concepts and verbal presentations. Consequently, when extralinguistic communication transcends what language can express, there exists a severe methodological challenge. The applied approach has to uncover a subliminal hidden meaning that dwells within the communication. Some of the requirements for achieving this are that one is able to disclose that there actually are subliminal aspects of communication involved and that one knows how to analyze and understand the actual extralinguistic aspects that are at stake. A competence in the latter is a precondition of performing the former. This implies that the methodological toolbox has to include competences in the extralinguistic aspects as well as great skills in the scientific discourse.

In line with this, the linguistic style, form, and sound may become more important than the mere lexical meaning of the words. Thus, there are two types of meaning embedded in language: the generalized and the particularized. The rational use of language in terms of logical thinking provides the former, whereas the sensuous

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aspects of language provide the latter. Therefore, one of the fundamental questions in communicative acts and meaning-making should be: Do we talk about generalized or particularized meaning? The immediate answer would be: both! However, the particularized meaning in the use of language is quite often ignored when examining certain phenomena; that will be the focus of this chapter. I will concentrate on how a musicalized use of language may represent the particularized type of communicated meaning, by analyzing a short poetical description of the Amazonian boatman (Simão, 2013). This will be compared with some fundamental problems related to the use of scientific discourses. The chapter will end with a discussion of the work of Hans Georg Gadamer (1960/2013, 1976), because his theories on the methods used in the field of hermeneutics provide a potential solution to the methodological challenge outlined here.

Despite the time distance between us and Aristotle, his way of defining and practicing scientific discourse is still valid. Per his view, the only acceptable sources of scientific knowledge are thinking and logical reasoning. Although the modern age has added to this a requirement of empirically based knowledge, the Aristotelian understanding has survived and is still unavoidable in current scientific thinking. According to Aristotle, however, thinking and logical reasoning are at odds with knowledge acquired through *sensation*, which he said is unlimited (Aristotle, 1964/2010). Although he also declared that *nothing* is in the mind that has not previously been acquired through the senses (Aristotle, 1907), this statement emphasizes the meager beginnings of all scientific knowledge, and this tendency to include sensation among the inferior aspects of science is still very much the case.

According to Aristotle, scientific terms are at once general and delineated. This is in line with the basic principles of logic, which concern differentiation: "Logic […] knows only dichotomy, the division into two: a certain thing either is or is not—tertium non datur" (Snell, 1982, p. 192). A sense impression stands in opposition to concepts and generalized meanings: It is particular, but also unlimited. "[I]ndividual cases are so infinitely various that no systematic knowledge of them is possible" (Aristotle, 1964/2010, p. 10). The aspect of not being limited has been regarded as such an important aspect of a sense impression that it was given its own particular Latin maxim during medieval times: *Individuum est ineffabile*—the individual is unlimited (Mathisen, 2005). Goethe adopted this as a guideline for his novels; consequently, he was one of the first to focus on just one character, as in *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774). With this novel, Goethe changed the quality of written language by describing the deep feelings of a spurned lover and his subsequent suicide. His heartbreak was depicted so intensely that it caused a small epidemic of suicides among young men. Whereas language in novels had previously been applied to and associated with conveying general meaning, in the *Sorrows,* it became a device for communicating particularities, as if language was able to directly present the feelings of young Werther.

3.1 The Difficulty of Differentiating Between Various Levels of Meaning

How difficult it is to differentiate the particularized from the generalized meaning of language can be shown with the help of the term "musicalization." While this expression can be regarded as a neologism, for decades it has been employed by different scholars in quite varied contexts. Apparently, it may be regarded as a rather unclear and unspecific term. Julia Kristéva (1984) applies it in her analysis of the writings of the French novelist Louis-Ferdinand Céline (1894–1961). The musicologist Thrasibulos G. Georgiades (1954/2008) invokes "musicalization" when music subverts the lyrics in musical polyphony. Both analyses are grounded in the need for a term that depicts the fact that language surpasses itself. This is why musicalization has been used as a metaphor for intermediality (Wolf, 1999), which not only refers to a combination of different communicative systems but also the tendency to transform one system into another (see below).

The latter tendency—that of transformation—has also provided the background for this chapter, which aims to focus on the role of music within the intermediated complexity of communication in everyday life. In our daily lives, we find ourselves in situations where meaning is not provided by words, but only by sound. Even in verbal conversation, meaning is not only found within the delineated lexical content of the words, but in the sound of them. The religious exclamation of "Halleluja!" is one example. While few people know its lexical meaning—a liturgical expression in Hebrew that translates as "praise ye the Lord"—everybody knows what it means when it is articulated properly. The subliminal information provided by sound of it is related to sensation and, therefore, belongs to the inferior aspects of cognitive functions or the periphery representational systems (Jackendoff, 1987). But even if these systems are "peripheral," they have a discriminative function in meaning-making, which indicates that they provide information that makes people act and react due to a very actual situation. One example that may illustrate this concerns a Renaissance vocal group from Britain that I met some decades ago. They told me that they had toured in South Africa performing Renaissance church music. When they came to the part where "Halleluja" was vocalized, parts of the audience immediately stood up, raised their hands, and responded loudly with their own "Hallelujas." Consequently, the embedded extralinguistic meaning is conveyed by and depends upon conventions and social agreements. These particularized types of meaning-production thus characterize different cultures, which will be demonstrated in the text analyzed below. To stress this point, it is not necessary to bring in a long text: Even in short excerpts, one can detect different levels of meaning construction. The levels are immediately embedded into the simplest form of communication in actual life—in a certain moment, at a certain place.

3.2 An Example for Analysis: "Everything Goes on Happening at the Same Rhythm"

I will present a very short summary of a text by the Brazilian author Paes Loureiro (2001) in which he describes a particular communicative situation in the Amazon Jungle (Simão, 2013, p. 1f). This situation will be sufficient to illustrate the fact that many senses, systems, and considerations are evoked, applied, perceived, and acknowledged immediately and at the same time when people communicate with each other.

The summary reads as follows:

> (1)According to [Paes Loureiro], one of the features of the Amazonian man is his (2)contemplative solitude, a solitude that, at the same time, longs for communication (3)that may surpass itself. A testimony to the existence of this feature happens when— (4)for many different reasons—the men go down the rivers in the course of their (5)embarkations within the deep darkness of the Amazonian nights. As darkness dims (6)all contours in the horizon, their navigation is oriented by the positions of the planets (7)and stars in the sky, as well as by some signs from the riverbanks. During these night (8)excursions, it is usual for the crew (the river men) to emit, at times, some words or (9)short phrases musically marked as salutations in the darkness, breaking the silence. (10)Immediately, along the riverside, the lights of oil lamps appear from the houses (11)along the banks. Everything goes on happening at the same rhythm together with the (12)words or short phrases springing up, as if they were invisible flames in the dark (13)and silent solitude [...] It is the dwellers of the riverbanks that, in a stream of (14)affectivity, try to help the navigators to follow the right course, giving them safety, (15)or simply manifesting that they are alive, that they belong to the same social (16)universe. (Simão, 2013, p. 1, slightly edited by author)

An investigation of the subliminal extralinguistic discriminative aspects of conversation is not easy to design. Yet this is not impossible, as there are many ways to work this out. First, I would like to argue why this excerpt is particularly suited for analysis. The text is not the original written by Paes Loureiro, but a summary of his work provided by the Brazilian scholar Lívia M. Simão. Several arguments led to the decision to use this form of text and how it is treated:

> Paes Loureiro is a university professor with a certain expertise in Amazonian history and culture.

The reproduction of his knowledge, which in its original can be described as a poetical narration of the human orientation along the Amazon River, helps us to understand Amazonian strategies for survival. These strategies are embedded in the Amazonian culture, yet not that easy to put into words and explain in rational terms.

The author of this chapter is a Norwegian scholar, educated in psychology, musicology, and philosophy. He has just barely visited some very small parts of the Amazon River and remains quite ignorant of its culture.

Thus, Paes Loureiro is to be defined as the observer and Simão as the narrator, whereas I will be the analyst and mediator. The latter point is one of the most important parts of this design. It states that different participants in a research endeavor have different backgrounds, perspectives, and roles. Although Paes Loureiro is a

researcher himself, in this situation he is rather the observer, as he applies a poetical form to reproduce his observations. While poetry is highly relevant as a source for academic research, the academic discourse itself is not necessarily poetical but attempts to follow up the Aristotelian ideals of being precise and unambiguous (Aristotle, 1907, 1964/2010).

Paes Loureiro's poetical presentation of the Amazonian culture and behavior is reduced to a summary with some original quotations. As the synopsis is done by the Brazilian professor in psychology, Lívia Simão, the validity of the synopsis is unknown. Thus, the analysis is done as if the synopsis is adequate for some aspects of the Amazonian culture.

3.3 Systems Combined: Synesthesia

Communication systems challenge us to understand them. We may talk about language as a system of communication, but in the semiotic tradition, we will discuss several different systems of communication, such as gestures, facial expressions, pictures, and the like (de Saussure, 2011; Peirce, 1994). The information provided in the text above does not give us any indication of which aspects of communication actually took place. Yet we still do have access to additional information about extralinguistic systems, through the words that are applied. Here, I will primarily focus on the following three systems: language, music, and calculus.

According to Ferdinand de Saussure (2011), the arbitrary sign characterizes the linguistic system. This implies that the sound of the word does not have any meaning by itself. It is rather the context, or the fact that the word is delineated from and stands in opposition to other words, that constitutes its meaning. This counts for calculus as well. A number does not have a meaning unless it is related to the other numbers in the calculus system. This also applies to notes in music. Just as there are various systems in calculus, music has different systems: Most musical systems imply a sort of tonality, yet twelve-tone music does not: The two categories represent different systems. The discussion, therefore, is not whether we have different systems in music, but to what extent they are applied. This implies that in all the three systems—language, music, and calculus—the content of the elements is given by the context, that is, the whole system. On this basis, all three systems are self-constitutive. This means that they are also changeable and, to an extent, unpredictable, despite the fact that they seem to be stable and predictable. For example, Shakespeare's English is different from today's English, but we do not know how English will develop in the future.

This perspective on language, music, and calculus will form the basis for how the communicative process proceeds in time and space and how one individual may stay in dialogue with another. Moreover, these systems are not necessarily isolated from each other, even though their function is self-contained. They might be combined in different ways, and they may intertwine with each other in the subtlest ways. Yet as long as they are definable systems, the level of interaction between them should be detectable.

In addition, there is an aspect of synesthesia, which does more than make them go beyond themselves by merging each one with the other two. Synesthesia also means that one sense may evoke and include other types of sense impressions. A number may include a color, and this produces a unified wholeness of impressions. Fundamentally, therefore, I will rely on theories of the psychologist Heinz Werner (1957), who explains our conception of time and space as a result of the process of synesthesia. According to Werner, synesthesia "is a reciprocal influence within the different fields of sense" (p. 93). Thus, synesthesia is not just about combining different systems but that the use of one system may actually induce the presence of another. Consequently, there are two ways of combining different systems: when the sender actively merges them and when another system is activated in the receiver as soon as information appears.

3.3.1 Level 1 of Analysis: Time and Narratives

The short text above is a narrative that expels itself in time in the sense that it is told in a sequential way in irreversible time (cp. Valsiner, 1994). This implies that the emitted words are articulated one by one, and we are told that "the Amazonian man is in his contemplative solitude" (excerpt line 2). Yet this is not the whole truth because he "longs for communication" (line 2), and consequently, he applies communicative means to get in touch with people he passes, who would then help with navigation because "they belong to the same social universe" (lines 15–16). In this respect, the words count, and that is why they are emitted sequentially, one by one. They are discernable and understandable, and thus, they evoke meaningful answers from the people along the riverbank. This is expected and required, and the conversation runs fluently, although the interchange seems to be quite modest. Hence, the language is used according to the rules that govern the linguistic system. All that is said seems to be meaningful for those who take part in the conversations.

However, the conversation compensates for the fact that ordinary orientation marks, such as mountains or other landmarks, are not available in the dark. The shape of the riverside changes continuously, and therefore, new information is required after each turn. In this sense, the number of words in any "short phrases" is a factor. These words represent an extension of the sounding signal, which is necessary to break the silence and announce the arrival. The preservation of sound retains the communication "as salutations in the darkness" (line 9), no matter what the boatman and the dwellers on the bank communicate about. Furthermore, the sounding calls and responses mark the distances "as if they were invisible flames in the dark and silent solitude" (lines 12–13). In accordance with this, the sound of the words has its own value and the words become musicalized. Moreover, the sound provides a sort of quantitative understanding of distances. Thus, the embarked boatmen continuously transform the narratives into sound and the sound into information about necessary quantitative factors. This transformation of the narrative into music, seeing, and quantities— and then back again—is strengthened by saying,

"their navigation is oriented by the positions of the planets and stars in the sky, as well as by some signs from the riverbanks" (lines 6–7).

If the words are experienced in this way, they are transformed into numerical, musical, and other types of signs. Rhythm can, in many respects, be defined in terms of a numerical division of a timeline in points (Cooper & Meyer, 1960). Yet what characterizes rhythm is that it does not require equal distances between the emphasized points. It is rather the opposite; the time sequences between the points may vary a lot, and they can even contradict each other. This happens in *polyrhythm*, when, for example, two and three points are simultaneously marked within the same time span. This is very often the case in daily life as well as in music, and probably in the situation Paes Loureiro describes above. The term "rhythm," therefore, would not be a metaphor, as the words are rhythmically articulated and events on the riverside come and go at random.

The most salient trait of a rhythm is the aspect of repetition, and the more complex the rhythm until a certain point, the more pleasurable the tension it creates. Both rhythm and repetition seem to be factors in the sailors' experiences in this communicative process: After receiving the expected responses in one stretch of the river, they do not know if they will get the same after the next turn, which may even include unexpected events. The responses they get after the next turn are never the same, although they may be similar and fit the whole sequence that amounts to their traveling. This is comparable with the musical narrative, which can be expressed through the phrase: "Always the same, but never in the same way" (Schenker, 1979, p. iii), which forms the narrative in both Western classical music and most traditional music and myths around the world (Lévi-Strauss, 1981).

Yet time is not a pure and abstract entity. The narrative actually "produces" it: a result of the perception of space. This indicates the synesthetic process that generates time. The core of this process is the movement. As long as a person moves in space, elements in space are perceived, and they are partly the same and partly different. There are trees all over, but they are not all the same, neither are they presented in the same position. They are all changing, yet not without recognizable similarities. In line with this, the Kruegerian gestalt psychologist Heinz Werner (1957) points out: For different peoples, time is "not so much an abstract measure of order as a moment embedded in the whole concrete activity and social life of the tribe" (p. 182). Thus, time is not primarily a quantitative but a qualitatively experienced entity. It is the synesthetic product of the experienced points in space. This is what is depicted in the story about the Amazonian human who has to navigate along the Amazon's riverside.

The fact that time must be regarded as a product of synesthetic processes related to the experienced space does not imply that time can be reduced to space. In this context, music is the best example. Although the rhythm is sound waves experienced in space, the principal experience of music is the ephemeral and continuously coming and going of different sound blocks that are related to each other in time. This cannot solely be reduced to spatial dimensions. The fact that space generates time does not mean that time does not exist on its own, rather the opposite. The synesthetic rationale is that different sense impressions depend on and activate each

other. They are not experienced *in abstracto*, but *in praesentia*—in the actual life—which implies that inner and outer senses are activated in cooperation. This is the human factor; specifically, that all impressions are related to each other, which implies that humans will never process impressions in isolation. The way in which impressions are processed means that even very different systems are related to each other. The text we have analyzed tells us exactly this; namely, that language, music, and calculus in terms of concepts, sounds, and quantities are combined in a synesthetic wholeness.

3.3.2 Level 2 of Analysis: Navigating Through Space

By all appearances, music is an abstract art that primarily takes place in time. However, many examples from the history of music exemplify how the sound of music is highly related to space as well as time. The way an ordinary symphony orchestra is arranged, with the violins on the left side of the conductor and the double bases on the right side, tells us how the sound defines our experience of the space. A change in this order in space may turn the world upside down for a music lover.

This was also a factor in Kurt Lewin's (1934) theorizing and experimental research in the psychological understanding of space. Among other things, he showed that the blind compensate for sight with the sense of listening when they must orient themselves in space. This is not only true for the blind; it is also true for sighted people who are temporarily prevented from seeing. Furthermore, the role of sound was a dominating topic in Wundt's laboratory experiments in Leipzig during the nineteenth century (Wundt, 1983). Consequently, early psychological research demonstrated that the sense of listening was of special interest when it comes to how human beings orient themselves in the world through their senses. Yet when, as stated in our exemplary text, "some words or short phrases [are] musically marked, as salutations in the darkness" (lines 8–9), the sound is marking the spatial environment. Moreover, sound appears as a device for communication, almost as if replacing the rational use of language: A kind of *musicalization* of language seems to manifest itself.

Distance and orientation are very much determined through space. Thus, in our text, the answers coming from the banks are referred to as visual signals. In this sense, the two narratives are intermediated by combining two different forms of expression. The calls are provided by intonated words, whereas responses are perceived as if they were "invisible flames in the dark" (line 12). The sounds given in time are transformed into an inner visual representation within an imagined space. However, the whole story is provided by language, and, by dint of this, the spatial understanding is transformed into a form of expression, which primarily unfolds in time. In this situation, the time factor is not the most crucial aspect, and the communicational activity is rather a device to navigate in the here-and-now situation. Thus, the sound of the words is important in calculating the distance from the boat

to the riverside. The further away they are from the bank, the louder they have to call. Moreover, if the river is so wide that one voice is not enough, the embarked boatmen have to coordinate communication with each other and make the same call together. Yet the text emphasizes the solitude of the Amazonian human. In line with this, he might be alone in the boat and make the calls by himself. If the calls do not evoke any response from the banks, the solitude and the empty space that surrounds him are highly emphasized.

This situation provides two types of calculus. On the one hand, the number of humans involved in the conversation is essential. The absolute minimum is the one that is alone. According to the text, this is the normal situation for the Amazonian human, although the longing for surpassing oneself can also be a collective demand for a group enduring temporary isolation on a boat. At any rate, the need to realize how many will follow up on his calls touches some existential issues for a human. On the other hand, the need for calculating where we are in the world is also strongly related to considerations around solitude. Consequently, it is necessary to have an exact understanding of distance, not only the space between the boatman and the people in the immediate neighborhood but also the distance to the final destination of the boat. Thus, navigation mobilizes many sense impressions and systems, in which even calculus becomes a factor, although it is implicitly involved in the use of hearing, seeing, and talking.

The existential aspect of calculus and numbers is probably the reason why it has so dominated both modern and premodern scientific thinking. Even John Locke (1651/2014) highlighted its role by including numbers and sizes as a part of the primary sense qualities. It is not a big surprise, then, that these aspects were equally important for Leibniz (1998), although he combined them with some groundbreaking psychological considerations: He was the first to use the term "the unconscious." For him, this concept was related to the close relationship between calculus and music in the sense that "music," as he said, is the "soul's unconscious counting" (as cited in Dammann, 1967, p. 78f). This statement is primarily related to the fact that musical harmony is intimately connected with simple numbers and ratios but can be extended to how we perceive music as a door opener to space. The cinema will be a good illustration of this. Although we think that the images on screen can reproduce the space in which they were filmed, they do in fact represent only two dimensions. The third dimension comes with the sound. After the first public performance of moveable images in Paris in 1895, the movies have never been silent (Prendergast, 1992). Although there may only have been one sound source in the theatre—for example, a piano—this was sufficient to give the audience the impression of a third dimension in the movies. This happens on an unconscious level. Because of the relatively "slow" speed of the sound (300 m/s), and the distance between our two ears (22–23 cm), the so-called interaural time difference (ITD) is 660 microseconds (μs) at the most, that is, less than one millisecond. In other words, this is a time span that is not consciously perceivable, yet it is being perceived anyway. This unconscious awareness of sense impressions is what the cognitive psychologists have called the peripheral representational system (cp. Jackendoff, 1987), which is characterized by an enormous capacity, but extremely short memory. Our sense system

is able to register but not to make us aware. This tells us that the sense of listening is as accurate and precise in calculating as the most modern, developed digital nano-instrument. Yet, at the same time, calculus is not the most important factor in this situation. The important thing is rather to acknowledge that "the short phrases springing up" (line 12) are sounding humans who not only signalize that they are there but also the direction in which the boatman can find them, or, sometimes, even so that he can avoid them. Navigation along the river after dark is related to both these needs: to avoid hitting the riverside when it turns and to confirm that there are other humans in the environment. This is the psychological space Lewin (1934) referred to, which primarily does not find a straight line between two points, but an abundance of points the psychological process has to take into account to follow the actual curves. Moreover, the pleasurable sound of musicalized words articulated in the dark is sufficient to achieve this.

Space, therefore, is a result of seeing, but hearing creates the feeling of space. The synesthetic aspect of this is made quite clear when we see a movie: The sound makes the film appear as if it is presented in three dimensions. However, the synesthetic process is not absolute. Some, but not all, will immediately have an experience of space when sound is added. Thus, stereophonic or quadraphonic sound, or other types of phonic combinations, will help considerably to evoke the feeling of space in sound for all. While some moviegoers will be conscious of how space is created by technological improvements, many will simply accept an immediate experience of either more or less space around them. The emphasis on creating as big a space as possible in movie theaters must be seen as an interesting achievement. According to Werner (1957), the "ontogenetic development of the spatial idea might be understood in terms of a gradual widening of the gap between the ego and the external world, an increasing objectivation" (p. 172). This implies that the conceptualization of space is highly related to the experience of one's own body. According to Freud (1973), newborn children follow the pleasure principle and do not make any distinction between themselves and their surroundings. They have no conception of space before the reality principle takes over. Thus, the conception of space is highly related to the separation process that constitutes the reality principle. This implies that the conception of space is established when the child is able to make a distinction between the "I" and the "other." This is the content of Werner's formulation: "an increasing objectivation" (1957, p. 172). If, however, the concept of space is related to the ego and the body, then the skin of the body represents an important factor: "Space literary ends at the periphery of the physical being; it is enclosed, so to speak, with the skin of the child" (Werner, 1957, p. 172). If so, space is at the same time a result of the tactile senses. In other words, when it comes to the conception of space, it is a result of a synesthetic process in which the senses of seeing, hearing, and touch are activated and partly coordinated. Again, this does not imply that the abstract and measurable space does not exist, but even the measurable space cannot exist without the synesthetic process that lies behind it.

3.3.3 *Level 3 of Analysis: The Individuals Who Surpass Themselves*

The text refers to a "contemplative solitude" (line 2), which also implies a feeling of being alone. This formulation also reflects a longing for not being alone, a longing for communication with others (line 2). Moreover, the communication is regarded as a way of surpassing itself (line 3). These statements touch some of the core challenges in psychology, namely, the relationship between the one and the other, but also the changes in oneself. To surpass oneself makes meaning if it is understood as an expression for changes and development.

Many have dealt with the question of change and sameness. In psychology, this became a focus in the seventeenth century. John Locke (1651/2014), for example, solved the problem by making a distinction between consciousness and thinking substances. The latter, which refers to what we think about, may vary, but consciousness will still be the same. In the German tradition, the following concept became crucial: "apperception," the mental process by which people assimilate new ideas into the body of ideas they already possess. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1998) used the term to underline the fact that we, as human beings, can be conscious of ourselves, and by means of this, we are also able to approximate observation of ourselves from the outside. Self-observation presupposes a distinction between oneself as an observer and as the self that is being observed. Kant (1998) applied this as a method for discovering the transcendental categories given theoretically in his *Critique of the Pure Reason*. As self-observation also includes acquiring new knowledge of oneself, Kant expanded apperception to include the process of acquiring new knowledge. This emphasized the question of how a person that acquires new knowledge could still be the same person. Kant's successor in Königsberg, the German philosopher, psychologist, and pedagogue Johann Friedrich Herbart (1851), followed up on this by coming up with another and much more original solution than Locke's, in pointing to the musical system. This system is characterized by harmony, which implies that different pitches—a minimum of two—are assimilated into a united harmony. Moreover, harmony is primarily related to a pleasant sensual experience. Thus, Herbart suggested a relationship between the rationality of thinking and the rationality of music, both of which are concerned with combining two different types of senses. Thinking is normally characterized by logical inferences and is therefore an inner sense. Music is characterized by the opposite process, namely by hearing actual sounds in time and space. The rationality in music is very different from logical inferences. Hence, when Herbart refers to music as a model for thinking, he may be demonstrating a synesthetic process in the broad sense. Moreover, he also demonstrates that the processes that lie behind thinking are not necessarily the same as the processes that underlie language. This tells us something about the nature of the abovementioned synesthesia, namely that the different sensing systems, both inner and outer, have a common ground that unites them and creates the synesthetic experiences. This is what was captured when Aristotle came up with the concept of *sensus communis* (1907). The British empiricists turned this

term into the meaning of a social, common understanding, which is validated when we use the term "common sense." Yet the latter does not explain how senses are coordinated, which is an important aspect in the understanding of synesthesia.

So when the musicalization of the words underlines solitude, it does so in a very peculiar way. This synesthetic process surpasses language in taking it beyond the lexical meaning of its words. Such a process transcends the literal experience and launches it into musical meaning, which brings to the human's attention the immediate and particular sensual experience of the sound here and now. Pure solitude is the subjective experience of the finitude in a given moment. The general meaning of language is not the experience of finitude in that certain moment but rather a reflective act that supersedes the moment. Music, on the other hand, is a very sensual experience, and we have the same relationship to music as to other sensual experiences, such as the erotic. Music and the erotic both represent very private preferences. Therefore, music therapy has developed so as to tailor the use of music to the individual's private history, experiences, and preferences (Myskja, 2006). This aspect of music has been highlighted by many, not least by Claude Lévi-Strauss (1981), who in his analysis of mythology finishes by quoting French author Baudelaire, who characterized music as a structure that can include the individual's own life history. Thus, along the Amazon River, the sound of the words that musically break the silence in the darkness are "manifesting that they are alive" (line 15) and are part of the listener's life history, constrained by its limits, but still present in the moment—in the particular here and now. To experience oneself as alive presupposes an observation of oneself. What one observes, then, is that to be alive is to be entrenched in an abundance of sense impressions and systems that are activated and combined in a synesthetic complexity.

3.3.4 Level 4 of Analysis: The Aspect of Sociality

Linguists have described language as being characterized by mutual exclusions (Martinet, 1964). An articulation of a chosen word excludes articulating another word at the same time. The same is true for the phonemes we select. These mutual exclusions generate and emphasize linearity in the use of language. Moreover, this principle of mutual exclusion highlights the aspect of individuality and solitude in a well-formed articulation. In a conversation, the ideal is to have clear turn-taking among the participants. However, in practice, we may talk and shout without taking into consideration the aspect of turn-taking and the principle of mutual exclusion. In such cases, it is not necessarily what is said, but how things are said, that might be the most important part of the conversation. This is probably also a way of surpassing itself, and this is done by subverting the exact lexical meaning of the words in favor of highlighting the quality of the sounds of them. This is a way to make the "phrases musically marked" (line 9) and creating a "social universe" (lines 15–16). Consequently, the communication along the Amazon River is social, whether the participants are embarked in the boat or stay on the banks.

The paradox we find in language, therefore, represents something fundamentally human. To have a rational conversation, we cannot talk above one another. However, we actually do this, especially when the tone of a social gathering reflects more than just a good mood. This is comparable with synesthesia. Like our voices, the five senses appear as if they are independent of each other, but the synesthetic processes bring them together. Moreover, these processes seem to be fundamental for our conception of time and space. In line with all this, it is not really astonishing that even the Romans, including the old stoics, applied the term *sensus communis* to these processes (Gadamer, 1960/2013). They saw that all the senses were coordinated and united in a coinciding impression of the world, given through sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. According to Gadamer (1960/2013), *sensus communis* is not to be regarded as a sense on the same level as the five senses but rather represents the process through which we acquire common meaning and belonging. This content also exceeds the English expression "common sense" and makes the term more comparable with the psychological term "sense of community" (Sarason, 1974). Social psychology has focused on this aspect of the community since the beginning of the twentieth century (Dege, 2012). However, Gadamer (1960/2013) expanded its context by relating the term to the core of a proper education (German: *Bildung*), which is provided by wisdom instead of science and technology. As one of the best expressions of how knowledge and cognition are entrenched in social agreements, he singles out Giambattista Vico's focus on rhetoric instead of logic, and the way Vico highlights common sense as an unreflecting judgment shared by an entire social order (axiom xii in Vico, 1744/1999):

> But the most important thing in education is […] the training in *sensus communis*, which is not nourished on the true but on the probable, the verisimilar. The main thing for our purposes is that here *sensus communis* obviously does not mean only that general faculty in all men but the sense that founds community. According to Vico, what gives the human will its direction is not the abstract universality of reason but the concrete universality represented by the community of a group, a people, a nation, or the whole human race. Hence, developing this communal sense is of decisive importance for living. (Gadamer, 1960/2013, p. 19f.)

Gadamer (2013) understands *sensus communis* as "the sense that founds community" (p. 19). Thus, the sense of community is not something given; it is a process that takes place. Communication is at the core of this process. However, communication is not a delineated process. It is about sharing something. This can be knowledge, a piece of cake, exchanges of sounds, or whatever is to be shared. From this perspective, the above quotation from Gadamer summarizes Paes Loureiro's phrases about how the Amazonian people share the territory, the river, the riverbanks, the dwellers, the planets, and the stars through their communicative activity. What they share is almost without limits, but they know what to share and how to share it in the experienced particularities given here and now. Thus, these moments of sharing provide the experience of sociality.

3.4 Conclusions

The passage from Gadamer (1960/2013) brings us back to the starting point. The aim of this chapter was to investigate how particularized meaning can be focused on and detected in an analysis of a text. This requires that the researcher can disclose that there are particularized aspects of meaning in the communication and knows how to analyze them. In this case, particularized meaning has primarily been operationalized in terms of the sound of language. Apparently, a text normally provides delineated lexical meaning. However, through the four levels of analysis applied to the text about the Amazonian boatman, it has been demonstrated that particularized meaning might be unlimited and, therefore, goes beyond the delineated lexical meaning. Language, therefore, surpasses itself and involves more systems of communication. By focusing on sound, some aspects of musical systems are revealed. Even more systems may appear, like the system of calculus, but also aspects of sight and touch. When two or more systems are activated and coordinated, we may talk about synesthesia, and this seems to be an overarching guide within the communicative processes that are at stake.

The arguments for stating this are given by the four different levels of analysis. Level 1, which focuses on narratives, concludes that what is told in the conversation between the boatman and the dwellers along the bank is subordinate to the sound of telling. Level 2, which focuses on space, concludes that a proper image of space depends on a combination of impressions derived from seeing, hearing, and touching in a synesthetic unity. Level 3, which is about the individual, concludes that all the different sense impressions, and the fact that human beings are able to observe themselves, presupposes a process of unification that synesthesia may account for. Level 4, which is about human sociality, concludes that a Gadamerian understanding of *sensus communis* very effectively summarizes the content of the text. It emphasizes that sharing a common understanding of particularities is the basis for developing a sense of community.

The introduction of Gadamer in this context was not done at random. While his main work (1960/2013) appears to be about truth and scientific methods, the quotation above points in another direction. When he says that "*sensus communis* […] is not nourished on the true but on the probable" he is presenting an argument for an alternative to the traditional scientific method, which (according to Gadamer) should be hermeneutics. As Gadamer states elsewhere (1976), hermeneutics as a scientific method may actually represent three different methods. It can be a way to approach a text by interpreting a single word and sentence in light of the whole text—a technique that was developed for theology in early modernity. It can also be concerned with expanding the context of the text to include the historical situation, which was partly developed by Vico but completed by Wilhelm Dilthey (1972). However, Gadamer (1960/2013, 1976) himself represents the third understanding of hermeneutics, which includes the researcher as a part of the text's context. This is the existential version of hermeneutics, in which the hermeneutic circle is made circular from a logical perspective. This represents almost a subversion of ordinary

scientific methods, as it underlines the circularity in scientific discourses. Gadamer's concept of hermeneutics also formed one of the premises for this investigation. This is because it emphasized the importance of including all the individuals involved, as well as their backgrounds, in this analysis of the text about the Amazonian boatman.

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Part II
Courageous Methods in Application

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Chapter 4
Unfrozen: A Voice-Centered Listening Analysis of Self-Acceptance

Natalie Huf

> I hated the feeling of everybody staring at me …I became pretty much aware of my body sensation and how certain parts of my body just look a little bit different, and I wanted to hide myself as much as I could (ll. 4–8).

> Over the years I have not only learned to express myself better, I have also started to feel different in my body. When I look at myself in the mirror I do not feel so "split" anymore. […] I also know my disability belongs to me, it is a part of me, but is no longer what my whole identity is all about. I know that I am much more and have more to offer (ll. 123–129).

This research is something very personal to me. At the beginning of the process, I was uncertain if I should proceed, but at the same time I had in mind that it is important to present the disability issues within the academic debate. I have decided to use an introspective report for the project, to give it a subjective approach and to share my story. Having an intracerebral hemorrhage just after I was born led to my hemiparesis (muscle weakness on one side of the body). Since this affected the right side of my body and was visible, I always felt like the one who was different. On the one hand, it was normal to me, for I did not know a life without it. On the other hand, I had the feeling that people saw me in a special light, resulting in the fact that I also looked at myself through a specific lens. The analysis of the autobiographical text revealed that at the beginning of my lifetime, I internalized more self-critical voices than I did later on, with regard to my disability and what it meant for my identity. Over the years, however, some of these negative voices could have been overcome, and I hope this study will demonstrate how. In the following chapter, I would like to discuss and illustrate how introspection can be used successfully in a qualitative research context.

Before presenting the study, I would like to state a disclaimer: Because of my history and social context, I consider myself as belonging to the group of people with disabilities (PwD). I am, however, conscious that it is a diverse group and that not everyone perceives the world as I do. I understand, therefore, that the words I will use in the text to refer to this group—although absent any offending intentions—might reproduce stigmatization and discrimination in a different discursive

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context. This is especially valid for the language used, including “able,” “disability,” “people with disabilities,” and similar wording. Yet a consensus around accurate terminologies can only be built after more stories like mine have been heard.

4.1 What Is an Abled Body?

Previous studies have shown that in Western society, disability is seen under the medical gaze (Mik-Meyer, 2016). In addition to this, within modern culture, the body is an important tool for defining ourselves as humans. The body circulates around discourses of self-practise and what a person is “able” to do with the body (Gutgutzer & Schneider, 2007). Within these discourses, medical professionals have been designated the experts—therefore, we have the expression “medical gaze.” Throughout history, the “disabled” body was defined by the absence of the norm (Gutgutzer & Schneider, 2007), while some particular truths around the topic of disability were created and produced power over a certain group of people (Gutgutzer & Schneider, 2007). This dynamic facilitates the distinction between those who have power and can speak legitimately and those who cannot (Gutgutzer & Schneider, 2007). Disability studies have tried to deconstruct this view. In their tradition, it has been argued that in the West, what an “abled” body is and what it is not is culturally determined (Waldschmidt, 2014). This field of study aims to detect the mechanisms in the social–political organization around the topic of disability, such as power relations, normalization processes, and the use of language (Waldschmidt, 2014). With this in mind, PwD have to face various challenges to be accepted in society; for example, they have to confront labeling and stigmatization (Goffman, 1990). This affects how PwD perceive themselves and influences their self-awareness, because they are assigned certain attributes (Gutgutzer & Schneider, 2007). To adjust to these attributes, you are required to self-position yourself as a PwD in the social realm and to take on a specific role (Gutgutzer & Schneider, 2007). In addition, PwD often feel like the “others.” This process of “othering” may be traced back to its origins in postcolonial theories (Said, 1979), although it is applied here in a different context. It establishes rules of “similar and different,” as well as “inside and outside,” therefore linking itself to how identity is defined (Riegel, 2016). Furthermore, social situations can create tension for PwD, because interactions create the possibility of exposure (Goffman, 1990). The phenomenon of “passing” plays an essential role here (Smith, 2006), because, for the sake of the expectations within an interaction, PwD would hide certain aspects of their identity in order to protect themselves against exposure, and also to protect the person(s) involved against other sorts of discomforts (Goffman, 1990). Another important issue is the question of how accurately disability and the identity attached to living with a disability is represented in the medical discourse. PwD are very narrowed down in terms of their actions and possibilities and are often represented with stereotypes that trigger rejection in the social realm (Thomson, 2017). The labeling of a “disabled” person must be understood in its social context, especially taking into

account the socially constructed idea of a "good life" that prevails within that particular society (Wansing, 2007). To label someone as "other" is also a form of power relations, and it also affects the human on a subjective level, especially when a certain attribution does not fit the culture's norms. Consequently, people often see their disability as something undesirable, and therefore try to compensate for it so that others will tolerate them (Cameron, 2013). The possibility of developing a feeling of shame should not be forgotten, either, under these circumstances (Brown, 2007). This occurrence also dialogues with the description of the passing phenomenon described by Goffman (1990). With this theoretical framework in mind, the research question I asked myself was: How does identity development work when it comes to a person who feels like the "other" in social reality because of certain characteristics that she presents?

4.2 Making Yourself the Subject of Research

While studying psychology, and also addressing more critical points within this field, I have noticed that throughout my studies, I did not come across enough literature regarding the experiences of PwD and the discrimination processes. In the existing literature, the subject is often discussed in an objectifying way, without considering the people who are affected by this. For these reasons, I have decided to do a research project that should focus more on what it means for the individual to have a disability. But where to start? The person I knew best and who could be considered an expert for answering the research question was myself. Since I was personally involved with the subject, and since I have had a physical disability all my life long, I have also struggled from time to time to be on good terms with my disability. Introspection seemed to be a suitable approach to gathering the necessary data (Danzig, 1980). In the process of writing my introspection, I used the autoethnography method. It is an approach that helps analyze a personal experience in relation to the environment that surrounds the person (Ellis et al., 2011). What makes this approach special is that the researcher is the same person as the author, thereby making the researcher at the same time the subject of the study, intertwining the roles of the observer and the observed. Through this method, one can detect individual assumptions about the world as well as cultural identities and norms. Rather than analyzing through a traditional objective–scientific method, the autoethnography allows a more fluent and emotional narrative that also integrates elements of reflection on the self, as well as the culture (Ellis et al., 2011). Moreover, what strengthens this method is the fact that the researchers are encouraged to reflect on themselves.

Autoethnography is a combination of autobiography and ethnography. The autobiographical part consists of writing about your experiences, and the second part is the ethnographical study. The researcher will look at the written autobiography and then work out epiphanies (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). It focuses on subjectivity, such as the belief systems of the person, and on cultural and social norms. Writing about

yourself can be very revealing as to your life and thoughts. Common critiques of this method are that it can be read as too "arty," and not scientific enough (Ellis et al., 2011). However, since it embraces its subjectivity, the possible failures are more transparent, and therefore can be more scientific overall.

Before I started the process of writing the autoethnography, I did not know where it would take me. Once I started, I could not stop, and I felt like I was writing a long diary entry. What helped me in the process was making myself free of answering certain questions or addressing an audience: I just wrote for myself. I tried to start by writing about my earliest childhood memory and finished with stating how I am feeling now about my life. I have realized that the process of writing in English (which is not my native language) is challenging in terms of possessing the skills to write fluently and coherently. On the other hand, I could distance myself more from events that were very painful and felt more liberated to start the writing process.

4.3 Analyzing the Autoethnographic Text: Searching for Voices

Reflecting upon the material of the autoethnography, the next step to consider was how I could analyze and understand it. My written text revealed that I often mentioned how I saw myself in relation to my environment and how more than one perspective shaped my identity. To get a better understanding, I chose the voice-centered listening approach for my analysis (Kiegelmann, 2000). This evaluation method enables the researcher to analyze multiple perspectives (voices) of a narration (Tolman, 2005). Listening for voices as a method means drawing attention to the person who tells the story (Gilligan, 2015). The appeal of this analysis approach was that by bringing up hidden voices through the helpful tool of the listening guide, it highlighted perspectives that would have been overlooked by other research methods (Gilligan & Kiegelmann, 2009). In order to do so, Tolman (2005) and Kiegelmann (2000) suggest carrying out reading steps on the material (autobiography) to find the voices in it. I adapted these reading steps to my text.

First Reading The first time the researcher goes through the text, a summary of what is going on and is said in the narrative text should be given. Here I will sum up the plot of my autoethnography: The memory I started talking about is of being in school in Germany. I did not want to be seen there, and I was scared of public exposure. I explain that my thoughts were already circulating about the fact that I felt "different," and I drew attention to my body appearance. I describe how these unpleasant thoughts were stressful, and that I feared being judged negatively, although I mention that I never had been bullied. I go back to a time when I was still in kindergarten, and there was a day where suddenly I realized that I was not like the other kids and started to compare myself to them. Furthermore, I describe how I lived and behaved as a child and what was important to me. Afterward, I continue with my story to a point where I had more severe fights at home, because I wanted

to express the frustration I had about myself, and through the reactions I received, I started to suppress negative feelings and to behave quite apologetically about my actions, because I became less self-confident. The peak of not being able to express my needs was when I failed to do what my parents wanted me to do. The narrative depicts my internal conflicts during that time and how the situation made me feel. Then I talk about my life in the United Kingdom studying psychology after finishing school in Germany and about the slow progress that I made in my self-development. A disruptive moment in my life occurred after I saw the film *Frozen*, which I describe as liberating. Toward the end of my writing, I express more about how I feel in my current situation and my wishes to be more emphatically heard, but also how it is reassuring that optimistic developments have taken place.

Second Reading The second step is to reflect on and observe how the story or some aspects of it make the researcher feel while reading what was written; for example, which impression or emotion the narrative arouses.

At the beginning, I struggled with analyzing something that I had written myself, as I tried to evaluate my own reaction to the text through the researcher's eyes. In my memory, I thought I had cluttered the narrative through time but reading through it again, I realized that there were some time-jumps back and forth. What surprised me was that I got very emotional about some parts while reading them again. I tried to distance myself, but that did not work out so well, because I could still identify with the little girl who thought she was not allowed to feel a certain way. I found it difficult to summarize my feelings from those days, because I remember how I was feeling when I was little and my agony back then about believing that everything was my fault. Nowadays it makes me angry, because I believe I needed something in my past that was not yet there.

Third Reading The next step is to look more closely at the language and the word expression used in the text.

I find it interesting to notice that the language used in my autobiography was very self-centered. It was mainly written from the "I" perspective (I, me, myself, etc.). Therefore, in terms of language, it can be worked out that I saw myself as being quite separate from the rest of my environment, which indicates the existence of an othering phenomenon. Later on, I started to use the pronouns "we" and "one" on some occasions, which indicates a sense of belonging.

Fourth Reading Once this is done, the focus will be on the relational self: which characters are mentioned in the text, which are not; how the people relate to and fit into the story.

Since it was an autobiography, the text was basically focused on me. The other persons who eventually appear were always positioned in relation to me and to my experiences.

Fifth Reading The previous readings built the groundwork for finding voices. One starts to identify these voices by observing their characteristics, effects, and working mechanism. The aim is to display the hidden nature of these voices.

Sixth Reading As a last step, I recommend taking a look at how the voices relate to each other and how their volume changes over the course of the narration.

While analyzing my own text, I noticed that I needed to combine the fifth and sixth readings to make the analysis more coherent, less repetitive, and easier to understand. I also needed to answer the following questions: Which voices are in the text, and what do they represent? How many voices are there and do they change in the text? Often voices enhance each other or are in conflict; perhaps some of these voices are internalized, having originated from society or come from within (Tolman, 2005).

In the following paragraphs, I will analyze excerpts of my autobiography by presenting them and then identifying the voice(s) within them, explaining and developing these identifications—sometimes the language used and the social context mentioned—and also explore the characteristics of the voices and how they relate to each other.

4.3.1 The Self-Othering Voice

At the beginning of my narrative, I mention more negative experiences that made me feel different. For example, I brought up a situation that took place when a close friend turned away from me, which made me relate it to my disability.

> What was a big shock to me was that after I started primary school, my best friend from kindergarten, who went to the same school as me, but to another class, did not want to do anything with me anymore and she showed me that in a very direct and mean way. I mean her behavior was very mean towards me. When something like that happened, I would think, "Oh, it must be because of my disability." (ll. 24–28)

In the passage above, I can already notice the presence of what I will now call the self-othering voice. It was in this situation that I started to feel different from my friend. The association between my negative experiences and my disability developed a growing influence on how I saw myself: as someone who does not belong. Also, in relation to my peers, I wrote about a noticeable perception I had about myself in kindergarten:

> (…) during a play-time in the yard it came to me very consciously for the first time that my hand looked different, that my motor abilities were different, and that I had to do some things a little differently, because my right side was not as strong as the other kids. (ll. 14–17)

I also describe this one as a self-othering voice, because I saw myself as different and evaluated the other children as normal. It is as if I saw everybody else as equal

and normal but held a different standard for myself. Once again, I was the not-belonging one.

4.3.2 *Fear of Objectification, Hiding, and Acceptance-Seeking Voice*

Likewise, I could read an objectification-fearing voice in my biography:

> I hated the feeling of everybody staring at me …I became pretty much aware of my body sensation and how certain parts of my body just look a little bit different, and I wanted to hide myself as much as I could. (ll. 4–8)

By certain body parts, I especially meant my right hand, because according to me, it did not appear to fit in. Relevant in this excerpt is that the strong feeling of hate and fear of public observation directed me to a hiding narrative (hiding voice). It becomes clear that when there is a need to express negative emotions and situations, I tend to personalize it by referring to specific people. It seems that I feel a need to explain more deeply the negative experiences than the positive ones. Sometimes it becomes apparent that I internalized certain things about how people talked about me.

> (…) but after that I was taken to a therapist and his opinion was that I showed aggressive behavior, which stuck with me so much that I wanted to change the way I was and to act only good from then on. (ll. 44–46)

The sentence above illustrates very well how an evaluation from outside affected my image of myself, which I internalized and tried to change because of it. The above-mentioned scene is situated during a time when I argued a lot at home, because I felt frustrated at feeling different compared to others and did not know how to fix this. It depicts an acceptance-seeking voice, as well as a voice that already wanted to hide me (hiding voice) from the image I had of myself or from how I thought it defined me.

4.3.3 *Pleasing Others, Guilt, Responsibility, and Self-Blame Voice*

Furthermore, other kinds of voices are also present. Although they go in the same direction, they have a slightly different tone.

> (…) I thought that because of my disability, I could not be seen as aggressive, and I needed to behave extra kind, because I had something to make up for and for which I had to compensate. (ll. 46–47)

Here it shows that I evaluated my disability as a negative trait and therefore could not have any other characteristic that would show me in a negative light. I describe

it as a pleasing-other voice, which later in my life seems to end up as a guilt voice. When it comes to my social context, I have noticed that my family played an important role, especially at the beginning of my lifetime.

> I think it also had something to do with the intense training my parents did with me when they found out about my condition, to give me all possibilities in life. I had different types of intense physiotherapy and regular checkups with doctors, such as neurologists. And after my sister was born, I had the feeling that she suffered from coming along to all my appointments too, and this left me feeling not only that I was a burden, but that I owed my loved ones something. (ll. 36–41)

In this extract, I said that I often felt like a "burden" to my family, which is one of many examples of a guilt/over-responsibility voice. It is a voice characterized by a feeling of responsibility for people's unhappiness.

> I did not want to disappoint my parents, because they had done so much for me already. (ll. 85–86)

This quote was something that I would tell myself very often. Every time someone would do something for me, I would feel not worthy of it. Here, the guilt/over-responsibility voice was mixing with a slightly different one, the self-blaming voice. These overlapping voices were present in my life for a very long time.

4.3.4 Identifying with Hermione (Harry Potter) and Elsa (Frozen): A Path to Acceptance?

In order to cope with my negative view about myself, I developed what I would name the **escaping voice.** In my text, I made references to pop culture, such as mentioning *Harry Potter* (l. 53), because through these books I had a means of escape. I admired the character of Hermione Granger from *Harry Potter* when I was younger.

> I especially wanted to be like Hermione Granger, so I started reading a lot and studying really hard. Therefore, I started doing very well in school and I became interested in different subjects. I wanted to understand the world, how and why it's the way it is. (ll. 54–57)

I would call that an **idealization voice**, since I wanted to be like somebody else. At the same time, it helped me to define myself in other terms, apart from my disability. Furthermore, this identification with the book character of Hermione helped me to overcome my having been diagnosed with dyslexia and dyscalculia. Another significant pop-culture-related event in my life took place when the film *Frozen* came into the cinemas.

> (…) for the first time in my life, I felt that a character, Elsa, accurately represented how I was feeling. I could really relate to the struggles of fear of hurting someone and of being somehow isolated, because you cannot share how you feel or you are too confused about what you actually feel. (ll. 106–109)

In the quote above, the **represented voice** got strong, because it was a first for me to feel correctly represented as a person. It was like I saw myself on screen and not as someone I tried to be. Furthermore, it continues:

> The liberation scene in the movie, where Elsa decided that she would no longer act the way her social norms wanted her to act, made my heart melt. Since I always felt so different, I always felt that the "normal" rules never applied to me, and I felt somehow completed when Elsa accepted her own way of being. I think that because I identified so much with her, I felt that some burden was lifted from my shoulders, and I could see things from new perspectives. I felt like it was the answer to something. From there onwards, things with my family also became easier. (ll. 109–115)

The paragraph ends with a **positive reconnection voice with my family**, which was only possible because my **self-accepting voice** had started to grow strong in my self-reflection text. The use of positive emotional expressions, such as "made my heart melt," illustrates how connected I felt to Elsa's journey and how I saw it as a part of my path, too. For the second time, after Hermione Granger, I could identify myself with someone positive in the media. The context becomes more hopeful and peaceful through references like the one made to a "burden-lifting" moment. The feeling of "finding an answer" by visualizing a representative self can also be seen as the beginning of a healing process. Since *Frozen* seemed to play such an important role in my autoethnographic text, I decided to examine this transition in more detail.

4.4 Affective Explosions and Rupture Transitions: *Frozen* as Symbolic Resource

Watching the film *Frozen* (Lee et al., 2013) was an event in my life that allowed positive voices to actually be heard. The movie stimulated my imagination so comprehensively to a point that it made me reinterpret my own existence, and for that it can be seen as a key symbolic resource for understanding my biography. In particular, the analysis described in this chapter made me realize how important *Frozen* was in the overall process of self-acceptance, which is why I looked at this specific moment in my life more closely.

What Is Frozen About?

Frozen is an animated film produced by the Walt Disney Company and was released in 2013. The story takes place in a fictional kingdom, Arendelle, which is based on Norway. It tells the tale of two siblings: The older sister, Elsa, and the younger one, Anna, who are children of the land's king and queen. When both were young, they shared a very close relationship. Elsa holds the magical power of creating ice and snow, with which she liked to entertain her sister. However, one day an accident happened, which left Anna seriously hurt. After Anna was healed, their parents decided to hide Elsa's power from the world, meaning that not a lot of people would be allowed around or inside the palace anymore. Years pass, the sisters grow more apart, and, during a tragic event, their parents die, which means that

Elsa will be crowned as queen. On her coronation day, Elsa feels nervous about the tasks expected of her. On the other hand, Anna is looking forward to her sister's coronation, because she does not remember her sister's powers and is looking forward to meeting new people. She was also affected by the isolation policy of her parents and felt very lonely over the years. At the end of the coronation day, Anna and Elsa get into a conflict. Out of anger, Elsa loses control of her powers and accidentally freezes parts of the ballroom. When this happens, everybody witnesses her magic powers, and they react with terror. As a consequence, Elsa runs away from her sister and castle into the mountains. There, she reflects on what happened versus what she was taught all these years, concluding that she wants to live free of any fear. Meanwhile, Anna is very worried about her sister and also about the entire kingdom, which has started to freeze because Elsa's powers have been unleashed. Anna then decides to look for her sibling, so that Elsa can reverse the magic and bring back the summer. After finding and talking to her sister, she sees that Elsa still does not want to come back, and Elsa ends up unintentionally striking her sister with her ice power once again. Anna leaves Elsa, both not knowing that Elsa has frozen her sister's heart. Shortly afterward, other people show up to capture Elsa and force her to come back to the kingdom so that she can end the winter. However, the weather only gets worse everywhere, because Elsa's agony is reflected in the environment. After Prince Hans (the villain in the story) gives her the false information that Anna has died, Elsa breaks down in despair and the ice storms around her stop. Nevertheless, Anna has not died and sees her sister being attacked by Hans. She comes to rescue her and actually succeeds, but in doing so, she turns into ice, because by that time the ice in her heart has spread to her whole body. Elsa is devastated and shocked, but then Anna surprisingly starts to melt. By sacrificing herself, was Anna has been saved from the frozen curse. Finally, Elsa feels emotionally ready to accept herself, and with her sister's support, she is able to bring back summer and embrace her powers.

It has already been pointed out that *Frozen* was a global phenomenon, one that made many people feel bonded to the story (Kowalski & Bhalla, 2015). In particular, Elsa's struggles with negative emotions toward herself and a feeling of responsibility are something that children experience while growing up (Kowalski & Bhalla, 2015). Furthermore, the film shows us the representation of ambivalent relationships in families—conflicts that in the end can be overcome through mutual positive feelings for one another (Kowalski & Bhalla, 2015).

Fairy tales such as *Frozen* provide an open door to imagination, which is an important complex tool that humans possess. It has been argued that imagination can be activated by a disruptive event, leading to new creations. Some have theorized that a rupture can occur in various forms during the course of human life and that semiotic resources are a means for this (Zittoun & Cherchia, 2013). Using *Frozen* as a semiotic resource, I could find an echo of my own voices. Through my strong connection with the story and characters, I found an accurate representation of myself, which made this moment of rupture possible and made me see many parallels with the film. The imagination is a very important instrument, since it allows us to take a journey that connects us to our deep emotions and to how we relate to the outer world in return (Zittoun & Cherchia, 2013). We can experience different scenarios, where we can identify with or are shown different perspectives about issues that move us in our personal lives. This journey is described as an "excursion" from reality, and therefore a specific place of experiencing. Within the

rupture, a loop develops, making space for the imagination to fill the gap with new interpretations of certain events or feelings. This loop can change one's perspective on past and future events because of how the new reality is explored. In some ways, it can help to reorganize and shape past experiences, and how we will evaluate present and future ones (Zittoun & Cherchia, 2013). To understand my personal process in more detail, I wrote another introspection similar to the one described at the beginning of this chapter—but this time, I focused on the film *Frozen* and on the task of re-telling the experience I had while the film was strongly present in my life. Then I rewatched the film and paused it at relevant scenes, stopping to take notes on them. Further, I worked alongside the film's script and compared it to my first autoethnography, where I wrote about my experiences throughout life. This led to the following comparison (see Fig. 4.1), which will only briefly be introduced here (for a more detailed description, see Huf, 2021).

Figure 4.1 shows that an important element of the film was the sister-bond dynamic, which helped me to strengthen my relationship with my family again. During my rupture, I noticed that the path of the character Elsa resonated strongly with mine while I was growing up. In Elsa, I could also see frequent voices of self-blame, guilt, and responsibility that I evaluated as being very similar to mine, which deeply connected me to her since she was sharing my position. It was liberating to see that during the film, Elsa—someone like me—was able to let go of her past and

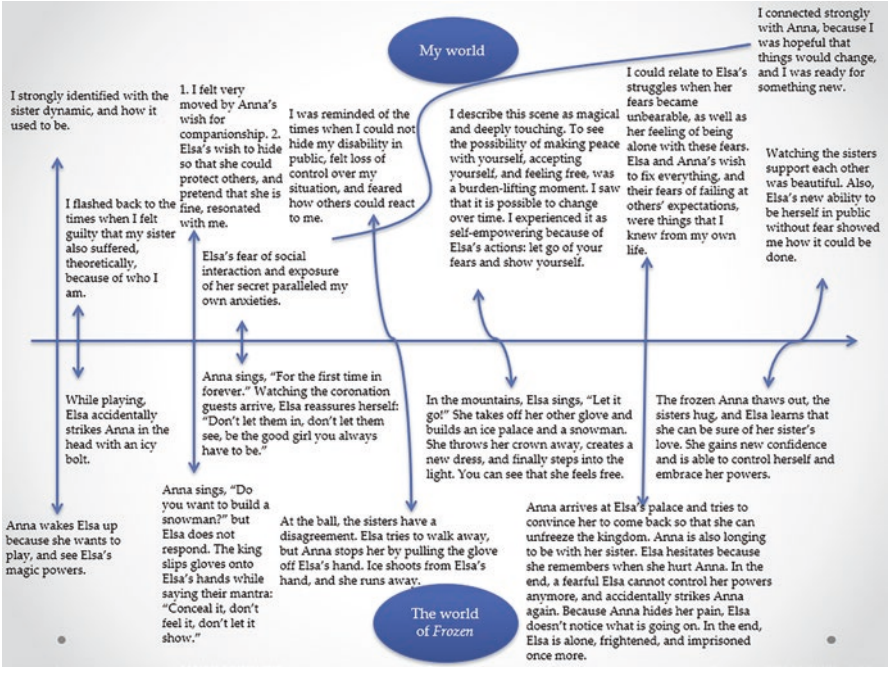

Fig. 4.1 Parallels between my world and the world of *Frozen* based on different movie scenes and life events/autoethnographical text excerpts

define herself: She grew from a passive character into a more active role. The possibility of change I witnessed not only made me think of my past, it also activated the imagination of how things could be in the future. Thereby, the positive voice of acceptance got stronger in my narrative. Thus, an effective explosion and rupture moment is a rich opportunity to analyze one's self. This rupture offered me the opportunity to develop stronger positive voices in my story, and the additional analysis helped me depict the process in more detail. But now we shall return to the analysis of voices.

4.4.1 Social Justice and Self-Care/Love Voice

I have noticed that I used pronouns like "we" (l. 95, l. 142), "our" (l. 141), and "one" (l. 94, l. 143) very rarely. That is why it is interesting to observe the context in which they are used.

> I learned over the years that both the individual/personal and the social/political are equally important for human life. One cannot exist without the other. Furthermore, I have learned that how we all treat each other is important. (ll. 93–96)

In this phrase, I could notice what I call the social justice voice, which has developed in the later years of my life. In a sense, it reflects my growth in two different directions. On the one hand, it shows a boost in my self-accepting voice as gauged by my including myself in society, which can be seen by the use of "we." On the other hand, it allowed me to express my political views. In another section, it states:

> (…) disability has been made invisible in our society, which makes me very depressed, because any individual matters…only when we discuss all these different people and their needs, the matter can be taken seriously and a process of normalization can start. (ll. 141–143)

In this example, the same voice is present: once again, I used "our" and "we" to include myself in society, but at the same time, to express my critique of it: I reveal an idea of how social/political organization should be structured. By strengthening the ability to express myself, other positive voices started to develop as well:

> Over the years I have not only learned to express myself better, I also started to feel different in my body. When I look at myself in the mirror I do not feel so "split" anymore. It is hard to explain, but before, I had the feeling that I only saw some parts of me, but never the full picture, because I avoided it. Now I even try to take care of my body and health. And nowadays I also know my disability belongs to me, it is a part of me, but is no longer what my whole identity is all about. I know that I am much more and have more to offer. (ll. 123–129)

In the paragraph above, more than one voice is showing itself. There is a stronger presence of the self-accepting voice, which in this sect. I would like to name the self-loving/self-care voice. When it comes to the intention of the voices, these particular two are very different from the other voices mentioned earlier, because they are not so destructive for the self. The strengthening of these more positive voices is portrayed by statements such as "I am in a healthy relationship now" (l. 129) and "I

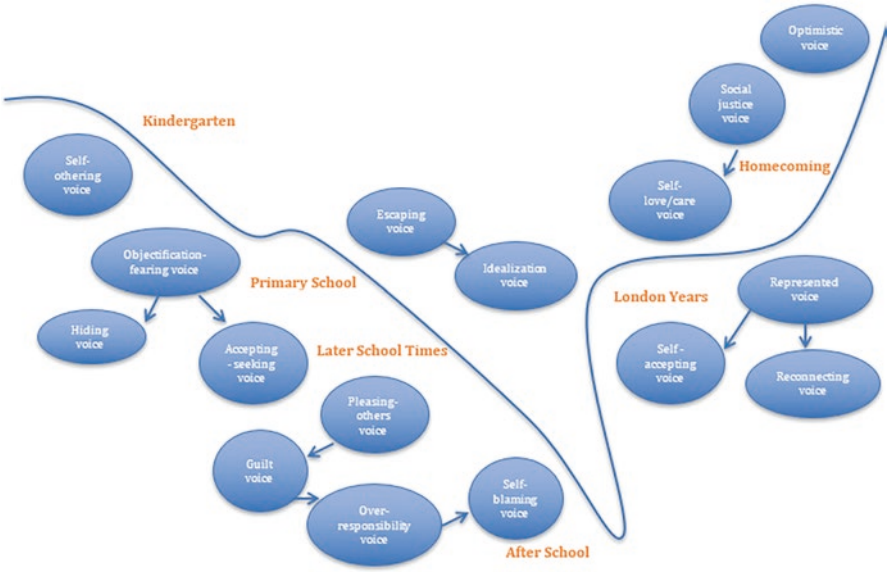

Fig. 4.2 Timeline of well-being with appearance of the different voices for the first time

have started therapy" (ll. 96–97). This hints at the idea of a hopefully fulfilled and **optimistic voice**.

Conclusive Reflections Interestingly, my introspection finishes in a hopeful tone, which has much to do with the fact that more positive and helpful voices for the self-started to establish themselves toward the end. The autobiography shows a journey toward finding my own voice. Growing up, I had internalized a rather negative image of myself that stuck with me for quite some time. These negative voices, such as guilt/over-responsibility or self-othering, were often related to myself, but also to how I reacted to other people in my environment. It took a long time to work through the struggles that I was facing, and still further time to accept myself as a person. I think positive events, especially a disruptive moment, helped to establish these positive voices in my current life so that I became more active and no longer felt the need for hiding. The hiding voice, however, is still somehow there, maybe as an **invisible voice**, because my attitude toward myself changed. I want to be heard, but I still experience situations where I do not feel seen. Moreover, it is necessary to point out the relevance of the other people for me. By this I mean that at the beginning of my life, I experienced myself as different and I saw everybody else as being held to a different standard. Furthermore, I had internalized the idea of seeing others as normal and myself as inferior when compared to them. Only in my adult life have I started to accept myself (accepting voice). Figure 4.2 might help demonstrate the development of my voices.

Another important voice for this process was the represented voice, which I felt was lacking while I was growing up. I think—and this is my social justice voice speaking—that is why society needs to create a greater variety of role models for children.

People are equal to each other, have different needs and wishes, but are all worthy of participating in society. We have to try to hear more experiences of people and try to understand their struggle with life. This exercise helped me to understand mine and, by doing so, to find my voice. And this is the message that it wants to send.

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Chapter 5
Breaking Down Complex Realities: The Exploration of Children's Prosocial Actions Using Photographs

Deepa Gupta and Nandita Chaudhary

Young children's social interactions are complex phenomena. They may not be as self-conscious as older people when they are being observed, and yet it remains a challenge to decide which methodological approach will allow researchers to capture what they are interested in. In order to obtain access to and understand complex social phenomena, it is valuable to take on multiple perspectives since this increases the chances of arriving at reasonable conclusions. When we conduct research in dynamic settings, maintaining focus on specific frames becomes difficult because of the changeable and interactive nature of events. Moments can be captured by using specific techniques, and access to technology has enhanced our capabilities to record and replay events. This access has also reduced costs and facilitated greater flexibility. Equipment that would have required a specifically designed room a few decades ago now fits in our pockets, thereby opening up a range of possibilities for researchers worldwide. Apart from cost and accessibility, laboratory conditions and controlled environments are limited settings, and results can fail the test of ecological validity. Thus, technological advancements have enhanced our capability of observing spontaneous events in real-life situations, thereby helping to reduce the gap between data and phenomena (Chaudhary, 2009).

In this chapter, we present examples of the use of photographs for capturing and analyzing spontaneous events from children's everyday interactions that have relevance for the study of a specific domain of behavior, namely, expressions of prosocial behavior. Rather than treating these as frozen encounters, we will demonstrate how the frames can in fact be used to supplement the body of data and also confirm observations through examining the emergence and resolution of specific social events. These images will not be taken as isolated from context but as frames that facilitate discussions of scene and sequence with the support of field notes and other

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recordings. In this manner, it becomes possible to minimize the error of representation by direct access to phenomena in collection and interpretation. Pictures can help in drawing focus on specific time–space coordinates by capturing a moment, the emergence and outcome of which potentially provide a short microgenetic event to work with. It goes without saying that the photograph is only a moment in a sequence of events and the context and background need to be elaborated in order to "complete the picture," to use an obvious metaphor.

The fact that this method can be a violation of the rights to privacy, the ethical procedures in gathering, using, and explaining the content is important to disclose, both to the participants whose permission is required and the research community in order to provide access to the process of using images. A picture can be, in fact, worth a thousand words, but these need to be chosen carefully. Images are powerful sources, and their value in reducing the gap between data and reality is profound, thereby helping to minimize errors in representation (Valsiner, 2000).

5.1 The Study

This chapter is based on a section of data gathered for doctoral research by the first author, aimed at investigating prosocial behavior of young children in care settings where multiple caregivers are present. Mostly, research on social conduct of children has been studied in dyadic settings, and children's negotiations of multiparty settings are relatively unexplored. The objective of the study was to examine how, in the context of multiple caregivers, the child's social interaction plays out, with a focus on prosocial actions. Furthermore, an attempt was made to investigate the everyday social screenplay between children and their family members in order to underline the processes operating in emergence and expression of prosocial behavior.

The study explores answers to research questions emphasizing understanding of prosocial behaviors, its construction, perceived domains, and expression through the cultural dimension. The research design was exploratory in nature and primarily qualitative in its approach. The study was conducted in rural and urban setting. The locales were carefully chosen to highlight ecological and social uniqueness of each research setting. Nonprobability sampling techniques were employed for selection of the sample. The sample of the study included multiple caregiver families with children aged 24 months (± 3 months). In rural areas, the families were largely multigenerational with many caregivers to attend the child. The families in urban area usually had three to four adult members along with the child, apart from two or three families where the number of adults varied from five to six. Hired helpers to assist with childcare were common in urban homes. A total of 50 children and their families were recruited for the study. Male and female children were included. All children were developing normally and were living with their family of birth.

Multiple qualitative methods were used to explore the complexities of children's commonplace experiences associated with prosocial behavior. Naturalistic

observations of the children and their families, detailed interviews of the primary caregivers, and videotaping semistructured play situations were the principal methods of data collection. In addition, field notes and photographs collected during data collection from both settings are being examined for analysis and to supplement the context of the study. Currently, data analysis is under process. Along with content analysis, the datasets are being scrutinized through qualitative data analysis software Atlas.ti, and quantified data will be analyzed through SPSS.

5.2 Using Pictures to Speak in Research

Through a cultural psychological lens, this chapter introduces visual images to complement and supplement some preliminary findings of the research study on prosocial events by examining negotiations between children and their social partners, particularly other children, in naturalistic multiparty settings in and around children's homes. The other children referred to here are siblings, cousins, relatives, and neighbors of the participant child. Recognizing other children as significant members of a child's everyday social world, we will focus on the phenomenon of sharing, an act of helping behavior, in the Indian cultural context. Elaborating on the interactions observed, we will discuss meanings and underlying messages of the voluntary and guided helping acts that are captured in selected pictures. Descriptions of prosocial behavior in familial settings in urban and rural Indian homes using nonexperimental empirical methods in everyday settings of homes, courtyards, and streets will also be given to demonstrate the methodological usability of pictures. Visual data provided context-sensitive details that are hard to capture in words. From our perspective, this approach qualifies as an example of courageous methods since it is an innovative approach to further narrow the gap between phenomena and data (Uchao Branco & Valsiner, 1997), providing an additional perspective on the processes under study.

5.3 Prosocial Behavior

Prosocial acts are positive events in social interactions; they can be considered an antithesis of aggressive behaviors toward others. While the development of anger and aggression has been studied in great detail, there is still a need to balance the scale toward positive sociality in children. Prosocial behavior generally refers to an action or behavior that is intended to benefit others, purely for altruistic reasons without any expectations of favors in return (Wispe, 1972). An important characteristic of a prosocial act is the "voluntary expression" of a favor. Prosocial behaviors can thus be understood as voluntary acts intended to benefit another (Eisenberg, 1982; Eisenberg & Mussen, 1989; Staub, 1979) or to produce positive outcomes for the recipient regardless of whether the action is costly, neutral, or beneficial for the

doer (Grusec et al., 2002). These behaviors toward others are believed to be pervasive and sustained during the life course through the motivation to act positively (Callaghan et al., 2011). In simple terms, prosociality is an expression of positive actions through helping, sharing, comforting, and cooperating with another person.

Through several laboratory-based experimental studies, researchers have demonstrated that children begin to show simple forms of prosocial tendencies from the start of the second year of their lives by assessing children's performances on selected tasks (Dunfield et al., 2011; Warneken & Tomasello, 2007, 2008, 2009). For instance, children's performance on the "out-of-reach" task (Warneken & Tomasello, 2006) assesses children's assistance to the experimenters when an object is out of their (the experimenters') reach. It is used to explore instrumental helping in children. Others have related children's developing understanding of cues, goals, desires, and shared intentions (Baldwin, 1993; Barresi & Moore, 1996; Meltzoff, 1995; Rapacholi & Gopnik, 1997; Tomasello et al., 2005) to responding in a distress situation or to completing a goal. Children's empathic responding, sharing, and cooperative behaviors are explained by their ability to take others' perspectives and in reference to their self-other differentiation (Brownell et al., 2016; Hoffman, 2008; Kartner et al., 2010).

Classification of prosocial behavior has been an area of debate in contemporary studies of social interactions. A unified categorization for a variety of prosocial behaviors becomes irrelevant since findings from different research studies are inconsistent (Dunfield et al., 2011). The emergence of prosocial behavior in various developmental models demonstrates the heterogeneity in the current understanding of early social development, which needs further exploration as children do not comply with the present models (Paulus, 2014). Some problems could relate to the fact that most studies these models rely on have been carried out under laboratory conditions. Further research, especially using ethnographic approaches for the exploration of intentions and motivations behind expressed behavior, will help to overcome the challenges of classifying and elaborating social advancement in children.

5.4 Interpreting Prosocial Behavior Through a Cultural Lens

Helping others and sharing things with them in casual situations that do not require any major sacrifice often seem effortless. However, there are times when assistance demands extra effort, courage, indulgence, or compulsion. Another factor that influences our actions is the degree of intimacy with a person. Social scientists have debated on virtues such as care, concern, helping, giving, and volunteering, and much attention has been devoted to shifting dispositions and determinants of various acts of positivity toward others. Looking at the history of prosocial behavior research, Batson and Shaw (1991) assert that understanding prosocial behavior

requires a consolidated review of existing methodology. Recognizing the importance of this statement, this chapter will focus on taking a different perspective on positive social acts by capturing moments using photographs. We will use images to discuss the emergence and outcome of the moments, a sort of event sampling with the assistance of pictures.

A conscious decision was made to study the emergence of helping behavior among children growing up in large families, where they had frequent opportunities to interact with several others. In the ideological niche of the Indian family, the role of others is usually regarded very highly, and children are commonly expected to show deference toward others. The presence of several kin members within a household is a culturally accepted and appreciated idea (Kakar, 1978). However, contemporary changes have resulted in several different kinds of family arrangements with the nuclear family, consisting of a single child and their parents, still remaining the least popular option (Keller & Chaudhary, 2017). It is a widely known fact that Indian families live in large numbers within hierarchical, primarily (but not always) patriarchal units within which age and gender relationships are defined and roles are distributed (Chaudhary & Shukla, 2019). Notwithstanding the given structural and social organization of the family and its participating members, we witness children negotiating these boundaries with ease. With regard to prosocial behavior, how do young children manage to permeate social boundaries? And how do adults present family ideology to children? We also wanted to investigate how children's immediate familial settings shape the emergence and expression of prosocial behavior.

In traditional Indian community life, prosocial behavior is not represented as a singular term but rather a range of behavioral attributes. For this chapter, we chose to focus on sharing by 2-year-old children in family settings. It is important to note that previous research, primarily conducted in Western countries, has documented that in comparison to instrumental helping, young children show very little sharing as it is assumed to be cognitively challenging for them (Brownell et al., 2009; Eisenberg, 2005). Although acts of sharing have been categorized under helping types of prosocial behavior (Bar-Tal et al., 1982), there are some subtle differences between sharing and giving that are often overlooked in research with young children. The common thread between giving and sharing that justifies their clubbing as helping behavior is the positive orientation toward the other person in order to overcome assumed inequality or real or apparent distress. For Indians, the interchangeable use of the terms is likely to result in misrepresentation of cultural meanings that are slightly different from the English terms. In this chapter, we will discuss mechanisms of sharing corresponding to motivations, individual predispositions, level of ownership associations and affiliations, socialization, and social context, but wherever possible, the differences between sharing and giving will also be discussed.

5.5 Sharing: The Act of Lending from What You Have

Sharing has a distinct meaning as action taken in response to another individual's need or desire for one's own resources (Brownell et al., 2013; Dunfield et al., 2011). Others see it as a giving away or temporary agreement for allowing the use of goods which belong to the sharer (Bar-Tal et al., 1982; Eisenberg-Berg & Hand, 1979). Sharing is translated in Hindi as *baantana* (literally meaning dividing, distributing, or portioning) which can be described as giving a person a part of what you possess. Sharing is similar to other forms of helping; however, there are few core characteristics that differentiate sharing from other forms of helping behavior, specifically that goods are shared in limited amounts or for a limited period.

Regarding observations during my (Deepa Gupta) fieldwork, it was found that older children were seen to be sharing objects such as stationery items with other children who had none. In Indian community life, giving has a moral–religious orientation and is seen as a virtuous quality that is actively introduced from an early age in the socialization of young children. In everyday conversations between adults and children, and between children themselves, goodness is glorified via the notions of "*acchi baat/gandi baat*" (good thing/bad thing) and "*achha bachcha/ganda bachcha*" (good child/bad child), and disapproval is often communicated with the label of *gandi baat* or bad conduct. These notions of *achha* (good) and *ganda* (bad) are an immediate evaluation of the child's act from the other person's perspective. The good child/bad child analogy is found to be commonly used with young children as socialization and disciplining technique, and making sacrifices and being generous, especially with a person in need, is highly appreciated.

In socialization, goodness is associated with having a caring attitude, and the pervasiveness of these moral virtues in everyday human life cannot be denied. Stories from Hindu scriptures and traditional books are steeped with lessons about the significance of sharing of tangible and intangible goods with persons in need. There is also an abundance of stories about sharing of social roles and responsibilities in large families and close communities, emphasizing that local knowledge perpetuates meaningful and relevant facets of social orientation and otherness. Field observations from our work illustrate that caregivers use the expression "good child" as a label to entice the child to behave in a socially approved manner. Caregivers were found to be playing with phonological and semantic aspects of this analogy to reinforce positive or negative meaning as an instruction or request for a proposed act. Acts of sharing occurred at multiple levels in a family setting. Pooling of resources to run a household defines the functioning of joint households. Despite the fact that spaces are loosely defined, most of the household spaces during the day are accessible to everyone. There is very little, if any, evidence of dedicated spaces for particular individuals in rural homes, much more clearly, there is the separation of space by activities that are shared by everyone. Urban homes have a more circumscribed distribution of spaces, but here too, sharing is frequent and there are common areas where everyone is welcome. Sharing among adults was common, voluntary, and spontaneous. Among young children, sharing was mostly guided or

mediated by an adult followed by other influencing factors such as cost of sharing. Sharing of food and toys were typical events where sharing with others present was expected and even demanded. Evidence of such patterns in family interactions has been repeatedly encountered in research on Indian families (Chaudhary, 2004; Seymour, 1988).

5.6 Giving: The Act of Dispensing What You Have or Own

As we can see from the above discussion, giving is a sort of sharing where an object is handed over permanently. Giving can happen on a formal platform, such as for charitable causes, or through informal ways, such as the direct handing over of something you own. Here, we focus on interpersonal acts of generosity and their significance for the young child. First, let us examine the language of giving. In Hindi, giving (*dena*) is described in terms of materials or possessions, it means complete passing of the owned material to another. There is an assumption of handing over the ownership of the material without an expectation of receiving it back. In the framework of everyday situations in Indian homes, acts of giving and giving away are expected, encouraged, and rewarded as relationships are given priority over ownership in socialization. Several social games of pretend giving are played with young children, either of materials or even of persons, like giving away a child to the visiting guests and watching their reactions and teasing them about it. In North Indian Hindu families, there is a common practice to offer the freshly prepared first *roti* (Indian bread) of the day to insects, animals, or birds. This giving away is believed to be a symbolic act of generosity, especially when cattle are fed from the household. Some people thus practice the placing aside of the first bite of their meal to be given away. Feasts are usually preceded by symbolic offerings, and children witness the importance of such actions by adults and are encouraged to join.

During fieldwork, the first author encountered many guided acts of giving. Children were seen walking up to a cowshed with an adult or older child to offer bread to cattle. It could be a stray cow or domesticated by the family or neighbors or the ones kept by the temple priest. These acts were noted, and conversations with adults revealed that the children were enthusiastic about such daily acts of giving, although it may be all the elements of the sequence (walking to the cowshed, accompanying the caregiver to the street) and not simply the handing over of the bread that kept children engaged. Yet, according to the caregivers, it is seen as an important lesson in generosity. The act of giving something away, even to an animal, is highly valued for a child's orientation to the outside world. Do such everyday practices orient an individual to be more generous? We do not have the evidence for any such conclusion, but at this young age, one could assume that it would impact a child's orientation toward the environment. The gentle, undemanding cow is perhaps the most revered in this regard.

In a religious framework, giving is desirable, spiritual, and a moral–religious act. Krishnan (2005) defines "giving" in terms of a moral, religious, and philosophical construct, namely *daan* (derived from Sanskrit) which is associated with charity, gifts, and alms. Giving as *daan* is rooted in traditional and contemporary Indian culture. In careful analysis, Krishnan delineates the characteristics that distinguish between a traditional view of *daan*, a moral–religious concept, and a contemporary view which is moral rather than spiritual that sees "giving" as *paropakaar* (doing good to others) and *sahaayata* or *sahaayyam*/*sahaayataa* (helping). These arguments index religious contexts, philosophical expressions, personal values, constitutive factors, and determinants, as well as conceptual departures as points of reference for differentiating between *daan* and giving. Krishnan (2005) upholds *daan* as a "significant indigenous, culture-specific form of prosocial behavior" (p. 26). The most complex stage of "giving" is expressed in complete self-sacrifice through the acts of giving-up personal ownership entirely for the other person, also found in Jain and Buddhist communities. Giving among Muslims is organized somewhat differently since the focus is primarily on *zakat*, or anonymous giving, where the recipient of any offering is unaware of the identity of the donor. This is believed to be the highest form of altruistic generosity since there is no record of the donation. The rules of *zakat* advise individuals to give away a portion of their earnings to charity. These observations support our thesis that "giving" is a distinct prosocial domain within a complex sociocultural system.

5.7 Sibling Interactions

Sibling subsystems co-exist within the larger family network, and siblings create their own subgroup based on individual characteristics and experiences. Young children's everyday interactions with adults and other children around them display diverse ways in which they express their interest, affection, care, concerns, disagreements, and conflicts. The study of sibling relationships can contribute considerably to insights into young children's capacity to understand social dynamics. When children act as caregivers for younger siblings, activities such as training and performing routine responsibilities toward younger children are expected (Dunn & Munn, 1986). Furthermore, opportunities to care for and interact with younger children allow older children to elicit prosocial behavior (Whiting & Edwards, 1992). Nurturance is an important dimension of prosocial behavior demonstrated toward younger children and is defined as "a behavior whose judged intent is to satisfy another person's need or want for any type of concrete or emotional aid" (p. 161). Thus, acts such as offering food, calming a crying baby, holding a younger child, sharing, helping, protecting, and carrying out other routine activities have been summed up as nurturance. Researchers have accounted responsibility of tending younger sibling or other children as childcare (Seymour, 1988; Weisner & Gallimore, 1977). In a study of parent–child relationships among Indian children in Orissa, it was found that the assignment of responsibility for completing chores to children

was based on a mother's own workload (Seymour, 1988). Girls were preferred partners for household chores and for the care of younger children. However, boys and girls were sought for assistance depending on the gender of the older child. Other studies have documented distinct ways in which children in communities under study are engaged in social and family activities (See Ochs & Izquierdo, 2009). Children's involvement in routine work was found to initiate social and moral responsibility through critical pathways—such as awareness of others' needs, responsiveness to others, and being self-reliant—and to encourage development of compassion.

Given the large, multigenerational households in which the present study was conducted, the number of people who children interacted with was quite high. Young children were found to have numerous opportunities to interact, engage with, and spend time with siblings, cousins (older and younger), and peers. Kin terminologies used by families and children for neighbors camouflaged the real affiliations through the phenomenon of fictive kinship where it was hard to discern the true nature of the relationships. In fact, the village neighborhood seemed like one large network of related kin from the perspective of children. Children were found to be caring of younger children as a matter of natural routine rather than assignment of responsibility. Adolescent siblings or cousins (also addressed with the kin terms for siblings) took care of the children after returning home from a day at school or work. Simultaneously, caretaking incidents were also opportunities of power assertion, authority, and unquestioned demand by older children on the young ones. This has also been found in other studies on sibling care in Indian families (Chaudhary, 2015) and the universality of sibling relationships and their multilayered longitudinal functions across societies of the world indicate the large role that these relationships play in the development of the individual (Keller & Chaudhary, 2017).

5.8 Data, Method, and Methodological Concerns

Literature on prosociality provides varied theoretical frameworks and methodologies for exploring distinct domains of prosocial behavior displayed by adults and children. The research studies devoted to exploring developmental underpinnings of emergence and development of prosocial behavior focused exclusively on quantitative approaches. Many previous studies of prosocial behavior have preferred to study children in laboratory settings with structured experimental conditions where children's performances were recorded and analyzed with respect to the objectives of the study. A few have been noted to include home observations as one of their methods (Dahl, 2015; Dunn & Munn, 1986), although their analysis was quantitative in nature. Paulus (2014) and Dahl (2015) describe models and views, respectively, that explain prosociality among children referring to seminal works in the field. Given our eagerness to examine children's interactions with others, we ascribe to social interactional models that view social experiences and interactions to be

significant for the facilitation of prosocial behavior. The results from experimental studies contribute to the pool of knowledge regarding children's prosocial behavior. However, we argue that studying children in their natural settings within their routine life from a qualitative perspective provides significant depth and detail that may otherwise go unnoticed. Furthermore, the use of images can facilitate a description of the setting, as well as the analysis and interpretation that can instantly capture the setting, sequence, and consequences, both for the researcher as well as the audience. In the social sciences, pictures are an important source of visual data as they provide a direct, immediate account of events under examination as seen by the researchers (Grady, 2008). However, they come with a caution that "pictures can confuse as much as illustrate, and distract as much as engage, because they are cluttered with information and encourage us to share the arousal of the picture maker" (p. 31), and there are ethical concerns regarding sharing pictures with others.

Domains of prosocial behavior have been hitherto investigated through tested, verified, standardized, and reliable tools and techniques. Since pictures can capture real-life experiences, cultures, ecologies, social complexities, signs, and symbols, they can potentially support elaborations for a framed phenomenon as authentic ethnographic visual data. For this purpose, we decided to conduct a qualitative analysis of a few select pictures as a pilot project. Based on our experience, we believe that the visuals have the capacity to fill the void between developmental emergence and social processes. This chapter is an outcome of this small experiment with visual ethnography.

Given the dense and complex nature of kin and neighborhood networks in this study, naturalistic observations facilitated the expansion of our understanding of positive social events like giving and sharing. Pictures collected during field visits provided an important iteration to events as well as access to details that may have been missed in the field notes, like the presence of another child in the background. Many pictures captured elements that provided critical cues to interpret prosocial events displayed by the people within that frame. The pictures included in this chapter were taken by the authors themselves during their field visits as researchers for different projects. In all instances, participants in the frame of the photograph were aware that their pictures were taken and that these would be used in the research process. A few participants were forthcoming and even excited about the prospects, asking for copies of the frames for their own records. Confidentiality of participants and their families was given utmost priority while handling the data and the pictures selected.

Pictures for this description include acts of giving, sharing, cooperation, or interaction, as well as communication between children and adults related to these events. Action-oriented domains of prosocial behavior were used for analysis of interactions between children regarding giving and sharing of food and material goods. Additionally, the study, the context, the process, and sequence were revisited through the selected frames.

5.9 Pictures and Their Analysis: The Depth and Detail of Visual Images

In this section, we will take specific images from the study to demonstrate how and why these provide an entry into fieldwork in special ways that are hard to capture through narrative. The first picture in the series demonstrates an older sibling feeding a younger one. The cultural details in this minimal scene are hard to capture in words. By providing the description outside of the immediate context, we can access the complementary advantage of different perspectives on the act of feeding a younger sibling that is commonplace in Indian homes. Given the singularity of the image, we chose the expression "illustrative" rather than "representative" because of the statistical connotations of the latter.

The picture in Fig. 5.1 was taken during a field visit to an urban neighborhood in Delhi-NCR, in the northern region of India. During the time of observation, grandparents, the mother, and her two children were present in the home. It was daytime on a hot summer's day, and the father was at work. Post-lunch, the grandparents had retired to the room for an afternoon nap, and the mother, a homemaker, was sewing a garment while keeping an eye on the sleeping child. This sort of co-occurring care (Saraswathi, 1994) is characteristic of the ways in which the supervision of children happens while also completing other tasks. It is not common for adults to spend long hours engaged in play with children. The older child, a 9-year-old boy, had just returned from school, and the younger child, a 2-year-old girl, had woken up from her nap after hearing her brother's voice. After his lunch, the son urged his mother to hand over her phone as he wished to play with it, and instantly the daughter also started asking for it (the phone). This led to a small tussle between the two, and the daughter started to cry. The mother intervened instructing the son to put down the

Fig. 5.1 Siblings sharing ice-cream

phone, saying "*kyu rula raha hai, chhoti hai na woh*" (Why are you making her cry, she is young). To distract from the conflict, she directed the son to bring ice-cream from a street vendor outside the home. On hearing this, both children forgot about the mobile phone as the boy rushed to get the ice-cream. The mother picked up the little girl in her arms and stepped out onto the balcony of their room and called out to the son to pick the flavors his sister would like. When he returned, both children sat and ate their respective ice-creams. The older child savoring his portion as the younger one hastily finished hers. Reaching out to her brother for some of his share of the ice-cream, the little girl received a few bites from him spontaneously as she opened her mouth toward him. However, when she wanted more, he refused and called out to the mother who had stepped into the kitchen to make some tea. He remarked that his sister would "develop a sore throat if she had so much ice cream," a common belief and excuse to distract children from cold foods. The mother calls out from the kitchen to the child saying that if she had any more ice cream, she would surely get sick and hinting to the son to rapidly finish eating his, so that the younger one would not feel tempted to ask for more.

What does this narrative and scene tell us? First, that spontaneous sharing by the older child happens when the younger one reaches out for more, but when it gets to be too much, he sets a limit and uses an excuse commonly used with children rather than simply refusing her. Although it cost him some of his precious ice-cream, a few bites were easily shared with the younger sister. As an older child, he was also able to savor his ice-cream for longer, but that also meant that he had to part with some of it. When it came to sharing time with the mobile phone, since he would have had to completely hand it over (one cannot share a mobile phone), he had refused and that led to a conflict. Second, we see that the mother's intervention focuses on the children's age and capability. There is a clear expectation from the older child to be generous and understanding, but also distractions and hints are provided for the prevention of conflict. Despite the expectation of generosity from the older child, the mother also suggested a solution so he would not have to give an "unreasonable" amount from his share, thereby protecting his right to his ice-cream. Her tone of voice was firm and decisive, demanding obedience, but also allowing some play.

Having described the event, let us examine how the picture supplements the narrative description. First, one sees the physical setting in which the event is occurring. It is a hot summer and the concrete floor always provides a wide play area for children indoors. The empty cup of the little girl's ice-cream is visible to her left and you can see the boy sharing some of his with her, but he is also simultaneously keeping the rest out of view and to himself, suggesting that, although he is being generous, there is some restraint as well. The physical act of offering food to another person is a very common practice in Indian homes, and often, eating happens on the floor or other informal arrangements. This is additional, incidental information that becomes open to interpretation, which may otherwise be lost in the verbal descriptions. Additionally, for the researcher as well, the scene becomes alive as one is describing it. Some things are unavailable here, and the fact that it is afternoon and reasonably quiet in a multiple generation household, which would otherwise be inhabited by other adults as well. This shows that there are quiet moments even in joint households, and daily rhythms can provide space and time for dyadic engagement and exclusive time with parents.

In the second picture (Fig. 5.2), a rural scene of a four-generation household is featured. The family is engaged in agriculture and lives in the northern region of India, not far from the capital city of Delhi. The whole community in this part of the village is engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry, although some members may also be employed in other jobs. The large courtyard outside two multistoried houses is the playground where children spend most of their time during the day, playing with each other, while adults go about their tasks. Each house also has its own separate courtyard in addition to the common area, a covered common space for receiving visitors and a common entrance. These recent additions have permitted families to develop some boundaries between different marital units while keeping the proximity with others with whom they have a common livelihood and close family ties. Inside the homes, there are no divisions per se. Some families keep their cattle close by, within the perimeter of the house, while others keep them in a shed near the farm at the outskirts of the village. The families lived cordially with each other. The movement of the family members, particularly of children was fluid and flexible, and they were welcome everywhere. The women spent most of the time performing household chores, including the care of children. Older women often stepped in to supervise children and work on cattle care. The men mostly worked outside the home, at the farm, and sometimes stepped in to care for the cattle. Three men from this family were employed in salaried jobs, and some were studying for competitive examinations for a government job.

In Fig. 5.2, one can see two young cousins, a boy and a girl, playing in the courtyard. Their respective mothers were busy with housekeeping, and their grandmother was lying on a cot nearby, watching over the household and especially the children. The older child, the brother of one of the children, came home with a packaged snack, approached the children, and asked the little boy if he wanted some. The boy

Fig. 5.2 Cousins sharing a snack

extended his hand, and he was given a few pieces. The little girl was watching them eagerly, also with a small hand forward, expecting to be given some pieces. Asking if she, too, wanted some, the older boy looked at her hand and asked: "*tu maati kha rahi thi na?*" (You were eating mud, right?). She did not answer him, but kept her palm outstretched, to which the older cousin warned: "*bolun teri ma ne? Fenk ise pehle, fir deunga*" (Shall I inform your mother? Throw it [the sand/mud] away first, then I will give you some). Instantly, the little girl dusted away the dirt and extended her palm again, silently receiving the snack. The grandmother overheard the conversation and in an aside to me (second author), mentioned that the little girl had a habit of eating mud and that was affecting her health adversely. She does it surreptitiously, so it is hard to catch her doing it.

In the above-photographed incident, we learn that the older cousin voluntarily shared the packet of snacks with the younger children. For their part, the two little ones were eager, but not insistent. The superior status of the older child was clearly evident as it is common among siblings as caretakers. They were positioned as in control and in charge, had the authority to correct the younger ones and to provide threats of informing, although that was not always followed through with. A warning from an older cousin is likely to be effective, especially in this instance when there was a reward. The asking by the younger ones was a nonverbal gesture of eagerness and compliance with authority and not an assertion of a right. The concern shown by the cousin about the eating of dirt by the little one was also seen on other occasions during the fieldwork.

In this instance, the picture offers us interesting details. The upturned palm as a gesture of requesting (nonverbally) is evident here. Also, the little girl (who has a red object in her hand) waits for the older cousin to attend to her. He (the cousin) is old enough to command respect, and the children are expected to wait their turn and comply with his authority. Sibling (and cousin) caretakers are placed in a quasi-parental authority. Also, one can see the encounter from a slight distance, which is also the position near where the grandmother was watching the children from, not interfering unless she would see the need. This provides evidence of the fact that even in a large household children have plenty of space and opportunity to interact at a distance from, but not completely out of the sight of, adult supervisors.

In Fig. 5.3, we see several children together in a village street in the same village as the family in Fig. 5.2. Here, the participant in the study, a 2-year-old, had gone out of the house and onto the street to play with a group of children: two of his cousins and two children from neighboring homes. In the village, the streets do not usually have any traffic other than cycles, and it is considered safe for children to play by themselves. Two adult women from the extended family from the grandparent generation can also be seen in the background. Other adults and children nearby cannot be seen in the frame. Sometime earlier, at home, one of the cousins (a 4-year-old girl to be seen on the left in the picture above) was repeatedly asking the child (the subject) to give her one of the balloons he was holding; he ignored her and walked away. The little girl followed him everywhere and kept asking for a balloon in a meek, low voice. The mothers and aunts were busy with work and generally do not concern themselves with children's interactions. However, in this instance, one

Fig. 5.3 Children at play

of the older women among the grandmothers directed the boy to hand over a balloon to the little cousin. The boy ignored her and left the home with the two balloons in his hand. He walked to the next street, closely followed by his cousin, continuing to plead for the object for 10–15 minutes. Before he could join the group of other children, one of the neighborhood aunts called out the girl and told her to take some *mithai* (local sweets) from her shop and leave the balloons alone. On hearing this, though she seemed a little confused, the little girl stretched out her hand toward the aunt. As soon as he saw this, our subject handed over both balloons to the little girl. The other children seemed quite surprised with this act of generosity since the subject had been quite possessive about these all day. On seeing this, the aunt who owned the little shop remarked to the grandmother "*ab dekh mithai lene khatar kitni jaldi gubbare de raha hai chhori ne"* (See, how quickly he has given the balloons to get the sweets). Following the offer of the aunt, the little girl went up to the shop and took a piece of sweet from her. The boy went up to his grandmother and kept watching the little girl.

In this event, it can be deduced that it is not easy for children to share their things with others. Experiences with children of different ages within the village kin network are an important ground for children to understand that things they have will be requested by other children. The negotiations related to when these are shared will be determined by surrounding events. The adults are obviously closely tuned into the events, and watching a younger child requesting an object motivated an aunt to intervene indirectly by offering another (desired) object, local sweets. This had an instant effect on the young boy. In this instance, the picture provides us with an idea of how many people are watching and participating in social interactions, although adults are not always around, and even if they are, they may not intervene as the aunt did in this situation. Also, it should be noticed here that the young boy

did not follow the grandmother's instruction for sharing his balloon with the little girl, but the indirect award of sweets worked where an instruction did not. Also, we can see that the nonverbal gesture of reaching out with an upturned palm is indicative of a request that may or may not be accompanied with words.

Peers create dynamic learning environments, and children benefit from each other through multiple opportunities of engagement. There is information sharing through variable modes of interaction, such as instruction, participation, observation, cooperation, competition, guidance, and negotiation. Through continuous information exchange, participating children practice learning and skill-building. In Indian communities, these groups are usually of mixed ages, and this provides even more opportunity for learning from and teaching others, albeit with mixed capacities.

The next two pictures depict moments in a rural environment, one inside an early childhood learning center (Fig. 5.4) and the other in the street outside, where children interact with each other as well as care for younger ones (Fig. 5.5).

Spotting children together in groups is a common experience in rural areas, but often also in large families in urban homes. These regular and spontaneously created playgroups are comprised of a mix of ages. Infants are carried around, cared for, left aside, passed onto another child in turn-taking, and other children are willing to share these responsibilities. Prudent observations of play-time interactions yielded insights that help understand children's worlds better. It is also noted that the older child was mostly instructed by the adult to take care of the younger ones by carrying them along if they were out playing. After these instructions, the children were mostly on their own but were willing and able caregivers in the absence of adults. This also provided them with an admiring following and unquestioned authority with younger children, as well as the feeling of being in charge.

Older children did not always comply with these requests. They sometimes complained, resisted, and even refused on occasion. They were heard ranting about their own freedom to participate in the activity of their choice. Children were also

Fig. 5.4 Children at play

Fig. 5.5 Simultaneous activities: Sibling caretaking and play

observed to invent solutions to permit them the opportunity to play when they could not negotiate their way out of a situation. Social skills of helping, cooperation, and social exchanges were very useful in these negotiations. Figures 5.4 and 5.5 provide us with visual scenes of children in groups and examples of the contexts in which they engage with other children of different ages.

5.10 Conclusion

Popular methods of studying children are largely based on their assessment of performance on tasks. The study of prosocial behavior has predominantly been advanced by Western research scholars in laboratories, although some have been cross-cultural comparative studies (Callaghan & Corbit, 2018; Kartner et al., 2010; Trommsdorff et al., 2007; Whiting & Edwards, 1992; Yagmurlu & Sanson, 2009) where culture and parenting have been argued as determinants for prosociality. However, young children's prosocial behavior has usually been treated as a separate domain without looking at spontaneous social events and interactions. This has been argued as a limitation of research on prosocial behavior (Dunfield & Kuhlmeier, 2013). There is a tendency to generalize the findings to other domains of prosocial behaviors, which leads to inconsistent and occasionally contrasting results. In response to this criticism, we suggest that an integrated approach to study young children's prosociality will contribute to a more holistic understanding of the layered complexities associated with social interactions. Cultural methods that are inclusive in their approach and designed to study the process of development are far more conducive to the study of social interactions (Chaudhary, 2004) as we have seen in the above examples of picture stories.

People are taking more pictures in a day than have been taken in centuries. Because of technological advancement and ease of access, pictures are valuable supplementary tools in the study of any behavior, but especially in studies related to

young children's naturalistic observations. Pictures have, in the past, been used to generate responses and narratives, a story from the respondents. It is a powerful method to explore people's opinions and perceptions to specific scenarios. They are also influential tools in creating memories. The temporal and spatial aspects embodied in an organized frame create the context for interpretation by the viewer.

The visual data in the form of pictures in this study have been used more directly, as evidence for microgenetic instances of sharing among children, analyzed to develop a narrative and initiate discussions about methods of study that address the research questions, as well as the study design. A picture has the potential of creating a story where the direction of a narrative is guided by an interface between symbolic meaning of the different perspectives, the picture itself, and its viewers. The presenter and the viewer's psychological and social repertoire co-construct the possible interpretations. Pictures can prove to be substantial in developing a frame of reference for overall description of setting, which is extremely important in qualitative studies, as our illustrations demonstrate. Identifying patterns, associations, deviations, similarities, peculiarities, and many such characteristics can be explored through pictures. Researchers' observations can further complement the events locked in the frame. During field visits, spontaneous sharing behavior of children was observed and parents' mediations were also noted. Parents' interactions with children illustrated their socialization strategies. For instance, on sharing food with the sibling, adults praised the children by calling them "*samjhdar*" (intelligent), "*achha bachcha*" (good child), or "*kehna mane hai*" (well-disciplined obedient child).

In human behaviors, the underlying motivation behind the explicit expressions require exploration through multimodal approaches to try to build as close to a real story as possible. A picture of a human activity is a composite of multiple symbolic elements that facilitates a viewer's agency to interpret the meaning. In the meaning-making process, an individual's own experiences and knowledge play a vital role. The construction of meaning relates to elements such as time, social class, and self-other differentiation creating boundaries for interpretation (Valsiner, 2007). To our knowledge, the potentials of visual data, that is the photographs, have not been utilized for studying the related context, messages, expressed and responsive behavior. The narrative of prosocial research needs methods that are rooted in the local socio-cultural and ecological settings, and we have demonstrated how this can be better achieved through the use of pictorial images as data.

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Chapter 6
How Do People Make Meaning? A Methodological Dialogue Between Social Anthropology and Developmental Psychology

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Our empirical research with children aims to examine the knowledge-building processes that take place during everyday practices. Taking a creative interdisciplinary approach, we have built a theoretical framework that combines anthropology and developmental psychology. The ethnographic method is thus combined with clinical interviews in a mutually enriching experience, allowing us to capture what is and is not said, but is done (Guber, 2008). The resulting integral approach addresses the question of how people make meaning in their social settings, a formidable object of research that requires a robust methodology. In other words, this method enables us to take inventory of the social meanings circulating in a community about a specific object of knowledge while also revealing the processes by which each subject incorporates these meanings, reproducing and transforming them along the way (Toren, 1999; Valsiner, 2014).

Historically, anthropology has been a risky discipline, one for researchers willing to abandon the comforts of the desk or laboratory and share other people's lives in an attempt to understand their practices and cosmologies. In order to reduce exoticisms and examine how people make meaning, we bring the tools of anthropology to bear on this question, which stems from the field of psychology. The challenge, then, is to make the construction of knowledge into an ethnographic issue without abandoning what the clinical method can contribute to the matter.

What, exactly, do we mean by ethnography? Willis and Trondman (2000) define it as "a family of methods involving direct and sustained social contact with agents, and of richly writing up the encounter, respecting, recording, representing at least partly in its own terms, the irreducibility of human experience" (p. 8). While ethnography is more than a toolbox for fieldwork, it is important to note its most common techniques, the first and foremost of which is participant observation.

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Systematic observation, as well as our own participation as researchers, yields data specific to a given context; later, the comparative method can be used for broader, and even universal, interpretations (Hymes, 1993). The ethnographic toolbox also includes approaches common to other qualitative approaches as well, like open or semi-structured interviews, questionnaires. Ultimately, it is the theoretical framework that distinguishes ethnography.

As our area of interest is the construction of children's ideas and its relation to social practices, we made the decision to enhance our ethnographic approach by integrating constructivist psychology. In the search for the most adequate perspective, Jean Piaget's approach clearly emerged as the most similar to an ethnography, as it establishes a dialectical relationship between the researcher's interpretation and the empirical materials (Duveen, 2000). Another consideration in the ethnographic approach was the limitations that anthropology places on the clinical—critical method as proposed in psychology; the theoretical framework of anthropology leads the inquiry, but also postpones the interview until the researcher has attempted to reconstruct the web of relations in which the interviewee is immersed. With this in mind, besides doing extensive fieldwork before our interviews with children, the questions we posed were based on our observations of the children's interactions with one another and with adults in different spaces where learning occurs.

In summary, while the clinical interviews provide an overview of subjects' thoughts on the different objects of knowledge, the ethnographic approach enables a reconstruction of the particularities of the sociocultural contexts of the subjects and the power relations at work there. In order to reveal the strengths and limitations of our methodological approach, we will draw from an ongoing investigation in Buenos Aires, Argentina, that examines what children living in a squatter building know about the state and government (Shabel, 2018, 2019).[1] The aim of this investigation is to study the knowledge-building processes in the everyday lives of children, specifically in terms of politics. The focus herein is on not the sequential process by which political notions are constructed but that by which meaning is assigned to specific categories as part of a shared experience in a context where politics and political relations are highly important. It is in this sense that ethnography becomes fundamental to capture the social dynamics in which cognitive processes take place, and thus to turn the question of knowledge into an anthropological issue, without denying its psychological aspect. The government's urban planning decisions, the agreements between political parties, and the vicissitudes of each electoral scenario directly affect the lives of children, who construct knowledge about them because they care about their homes.

In the first section of this chapter, we will delve more deeply into our methodological approach, further describing the most prominent features of both the clinical method and the ethnography. Following the summary of the methodology, we

[1] This investigation is the topic of the doctoral thesis of Paula Shabel, "'Estamos luchando por lo nuestro'. Construcciones de conocimiento sobre la política de niños y niñas en organizaciones sociales" ("Fighting for What Is Ours:" The Construction of Knowledge about Politics Among Children in Social Organizations).

will provide details into the empirical aspects of our investigation in order to demonstrate how the methodology was applied. In closing, we will reflect on the place of emotions in knowledge building and on how emotions can be recorded as part of fieldwork.

6.1 Methodological Dialogues to Study Knowledge in Context

As we established, the main objective of this work is to divulge the methodological dialogues developed as part of our empirical investigations to study the knowledge-building processes that occur as part of social practices. We have developed this approach in different investigations for almost two decades, building interdisciplinary dialogues between social anthropology and developmental psychology to study knowledge-building processes among children (García Palacios, 2004, 2006, 2012; see also García Palacios & Castorina, 2010, 2014; García Palacios et al., 2015, 2018).

Through this interdisciplinary approach, we propose to break with the classic dichotomy associated with scientific work, in which psychology is thought of in terms of generalizing theoretical constructs and anthropology is a descriptive study of certain particularities (Lave, 1988). In order to approach this complex object of research, we believe it is essential to draw on these two approaches and their methodologies given the limitations inherent to both: "When studying these bonds forging a dialogue between disciplines strengthens theory by allowing researchers to bring into focus what historically developed as blind spots in the investigations conducted in each field" (García Palacios et al., 2014, p. 53).

Theories that position the subject in ahistorical, homogenized cultures prevail in a great part of anthropological traditional production, making it nearly impossible to transform these during the socialization process. As for conventional developmental psychology, it devises an ideal universal subject who produces knowledge outside of their relations with other subjects and objects. This subject is always situated in the more or less established place of a socialized adult. As García Palacios et al. (2014) have affirmed with regard to psychology, "as traditionally outlined, the [psychological research] methodology does not capture the contextual features in which such notions are produced" (p. 53). At the same time, as Rockwell (2009) has noted, "The reconstruction of a subject's internal cognitive and affective processes requires the types of interaction and conception developed within psychology. (p. 26)".

These differences make the two methods—that of anthropology and developmental psychology—highly compatible, due to the dialectical perspective they share. As they search for the meaning that subjects build from their surroundings—an ongoing process of transformation and immutability that must be captured as it occurs—both tools oscillate between theory and practice in order to prevent tautological or teleological outcomes.

Of course, this is not the first investigation to search for the intersections between the two disciplines. As Duveen (2000) suggested in his article "Piaget Ethnographer," the work by the founder of genetic psychology identifies points in common between the clinical method and ethnography. Piaget, in fact, noted the dialectic between meticulous observation and the interpretation done by the researcher, who builds categories to make the social action in question intelligible. Similarly, (García Palacios & Castorina, 2010, 2014; García Palacios et al., 2018) have examined the points in common between anthropology and psychology through methodological reflections that emphasize the compatibility of the two approaches without overlooking what is specific to each.

In this regard, it is useful to review the history of Piaget's clinical method, which he developed after much reflection on its objective, that is, to analyze the development of human thought structures. Furthermore, we will focus on the particularities of ethnography and its tools to approach the problem of knowledge-building in context.

6.2 The Clinical Method

In his research, Piaget sought a method "which claims to unite what is most expedient in the methods of test and of direct observation, whilst avoiding their respective disadvantages" (Piaget, 1997, p. 167). The pitfalls he cites are, in the case of the test method, leading questions in a certain direction, and, in the case of direct observation, a lack of any direction whatsoever. Knowledge-building processes are not observable, meaning that a method must be found that allows researchers to access these processes. Clinical interviews were the outcome of this search.

In developmental psychology, these interviews have proven a precise tool for researching children's hypotheses, in which "The child is first presented with a practical problem, and when they have given an answer they are asked to give a justification for it. Subsequently, the interviewer starts to offer counter-arguments to the child and frequently to re-arrange the physical material to produce new forms of the problem" (Duveen, 2000, p. 90). Without overlooking the criticism this method has received (cited in Duveen, 2000 and Delval, 2007), we stress its potential to go beyond the "correct" or "incorrect" answers children give in response to the problems and focus on the arguments they make to back their answers.

From Piaget through current-day revisions of his theories, genetic psychology has guided the clinical method, proposing that knowledge is not acquired: it is the subject who builds them. Besides interacting with the objects, researchers (originally psychologists) gradually interpret the meaning given by the subject to those objects. This means that "the object of research is approached gradually as the researcher reformulates his or her hypotheses" (García Palacios & Castorina, 2010, p. 100). While acknowledging that the researcher has existing ideas that guide their questions, the clinical method rests on the dialectic of the conversation with the

children, which leads the researcher to reformulate certain questions and pose new questions that are impossible to predict with any degree of precision.

Castorina et al. (1984) have proposed a historical revision of the method that allows us to situate these processes within the complex social fabrics of the everyday lives of the children interviewed. The authors highlight, first, the interpretive facet of analyzing the data obtained, and second, the hypothetical and critical position of the interviewer, who must inquire into the reasons given by the children, and take nothing as given when posing a question. This is what allows these postulates to become method, not merely a data collection technique.

At the same time, it is clear that the subjects' involvement in daily practices is what both enables and limits their responses (Castorina & Faigenbaum, 2002), especially those in which the children themselves are the targets of the social practices in question (García Palacios et al., 2015). This is the case, for example, for the right to intimacy (Horn et al., 2013), religion (García Palacios, 2012), and politics (Shabel, 2018); children build knowledge about these notions through their day-to-day experience in these social fields within their communities. These considerations render the method more complex and diverse, enabling a dialogue with other perspectives like ethnography.

Ethnography

One of the approaches we consider interesting is the effort to build analysis units with a focus on encouraging researchers to think relationally (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) when it comes to building a research topic. In this regard, as in developmental psychology, the focus is on building relational analysis units. These units must be capable of capturing the social world on relational terms, not as isolated units (be these groups, individuals, etc.).

Now, when it comes to choosing these analysis units in terms of one's research practice, an ethnographic approach adds a layer of complexity to the task, as it establishes no guidelines for defining them a priori. When the research design is more flexible—precisely because the aim is to understand social complexity—the relationship between the information unit and analysis unit also becomes more complex (Achilli, 2005). Additionally, there can be multiple units of analysis that do not necessarily have a linear connection to the information garnered in the field (Rockwell, 2009). In addition, there are multiple contextual dimensions and the analysis must consider as many of these as possible in order to account for the production and meaning of social dynamics when drafting an ethnography. In our case, in order to understand the meanings that the children give to politics within the squatter house, it was necessary to reconstruct the social relations that the children establish beyond the limits of the house (at school, in other squatter houses, in the demonstrations, etc.).

Rockwell (2009) describes ethnography as the process and product of anthropological research. The social object of this research is limited in terms of both time and space in order to describe what makes it unique. Empirical by nature, it is research that is theoretically informed, but not based on deduction. Ethnography, Rockwell argues, should not be employed simply because a researcher is

anticipating lengthy fieldwork or embarking on a qualitative study. Instead, ethnography covers the full scope of knowledge construction; fieldwork is only the beginning. Anthropological theory, then, provides the conceptual groundwork for research, but also guides how such techniques will be used: theory precedes an ethnographic study, but is also an output (Wilcox, 1993; Willis & Trondman, 2000). Ethnography also emphasizes contextual reconstruction, integrating cultural meanings into the analysis in order to enhance the understanding of a network of social practices and relations.

Many techniques and methods are included within the broad field of ethnographic studies that include children's perspective. The principal one is participant observation, a technique amply utilized for the fieldwork described herein. Other complementary techniques for ethnographic research with children include drawings, interviews, stories, and audiovisual media. All compelling sources on their own, their analytical value is increased in the context of ethnography when they are used in a way that can build on existing data and serve for the purposes of comparison.

Ethnographic work is, specifically, a way of overcoming the contradictions between theory and building data on reality, since the observations and conceptualizations occur simultaneously. The ethnographic method is used for concrete, specific cases, but always considers the broader social systems in which these cases are immersed; with attention and patience, fragments can be carefully extracted. It is possible, paraphrasing Fonseca (1998), to avoid incurring in the type of sociological objectification that distances researchers from the subjects of our study and shift the analysis from the specific to the general, thus contributing valid and useful information to our understanding of the world. This understanding is always connected to the ethnographic experience (Rockwell, 2009) of having "been there" at a given moment; it assumes that the specificities of fieldwork encounters and situations leave their marks on the theoretical production about the object of knowledge, but without invalidating that knowledge in the process.

This type of research that we carried out in the squatter house draws on the constructivist tradition in psychology, making us privy to the constructions subjects produce about their lives in the squatter building, within the framework of specific relations that occur in the field. This, in turn, gives way to "the relations between the construction of children's ideas and social practices" (García Palacios & Castorina, 2010). The researcher positions themself within the interstices of this dialectic in a specific social relationship that also contributes to the knowledge built in the field (Guber, 2008; Rockwell, 2009).

6.3 Combining Methodologies in Practice

We have both utilized this courageous interdisciplinary methodology in our own empirical investigations, producing outcomes that shed light on how people make meaning in different areas of social life. In this section, we will reconstruct this

process in an investigation by Shabel (2018, 2019) on how children living in squatter homes in the city of Buenos Aires build knowledge about politics.

This anthropology study was conducted between 2015 and 2018 in the city of Buenos Aires with approximately 30 children ages 6–17. Its main aim was to analyze the knowledge about politics children built in their daily practices in the squatter house. This place has more than 30 rooms with approximately five people to a room. It was occupied in 2004 by the families of these children organized in a social movement, and since then, it keeps tense negotiations with the local government to avoid an eviction. This context makes the state a daily interlocutor for families, sometimes as an imaginary other that monitors their actions, sometimes in its repressive materiality shape. In every occasion, children are aware of the situation and make meaning of it.

Although the methodological framework principally drew on anthropology, clinical interviews were also used to reach those meanings created by the children in their daily relationship they keep with the state through the squatter house. In 2016, we conducted 24 interviews equally divided among six age groups: ages 5 and 6, 7 and 8, 9 and 10, 11 and 12, 13 and 14, and 15 and 16. Later, in 2018, we again did one interview in each age group, selecting children who had already been interviewed in the previous round except in the case of the youngest cohort (ages 5 and 6).

6.3.1 An Ethnographic Survey and Reconstruction

Shabel's investigation, which draws on lengthy fieldwork with children living in squatter homes in the city of Buenos Aires (2014–2018), addresses the question surrounding categories within the field of politics from an ethnographic focus. As a result, most of the data was gathered from daily observations of the children in the different occupied spaces, noting the dynamics between the children and the adults who also inhabit these buildings, talking with young and old alike, taking a few pictures and playing a great deal.

For the children, squatter occupation is part of their everyday social relations, allowing them to build knowledge about the predominantly political world around them. In other words, we are assuming here a direct connection between subjects and notions, meaning that the analysis focuses on the subjects' day-to-day experience with the object. In this experience, the children come up with notions about the field of politics—specifically, notions about the president, government, and police that do not correspond to the theoretical or usual definitions of these categories—always from a situated and relational perspective.

In other words, this anthropology investigation starts by situating children in their everyday settings, where politics is a key dimension. This is because they live in occupied buildings, leading to constant conflict with the local government, but also because it assumes that children are always subjects who reflect and act on their reality, constructing and questioning its meanings (Rabello de Castro, 2002;

Qvortrup, 2011). The following excerpt made by the ethnographer provides a description of the building:

> The privately owned, four-story building occupied by the squatters takes up almost half of a city block. For decades, a public school operated there, but it was shut down in the 1990s during a severe economic slump that affected the entire country. In the city, squatting had become a common strategy for weathering the crisis, transforming the urban landscape and the lives of thousands of children.
>
> When the building was occupied, every classroom in the former school was turned into a small room for a single family, where at least four people live. The organization built a tiny bathroom in each of these rooms and a kitchen on every floor with a gas stove and several burners. The kitchen is a common area shared by the ten housewives living on each floor. We use the term "housewives" since it is the women who generally take care of cooking and cleaning the rooms, and are thus the ones who mostly gather in the common areas.
>
> These areas are empty for most of the day except when the mothers cook and clean (lunch and dinner time), though, given that the common area is small, there are never more than three people doing chores there at the same time. In terms of employment, most of the adults living in the building are either unemployed or underemployed, receive child-based welfare assistance, and are thus constantly in debt. There are frequent arguments about this, and all of the occupants know that they could be evicted en masse for not paying their utility bills.
>
> Although the Movement and its activists have consistently lobbied the city to avoid eviction in both this building and others it has occupied, there is constant tension between the government and the Movement; residents are aware that the precarious agreement could be overturned at any time. When tensions are particularly high, the whole building feels it, because the leaders of the Movement spend more time there, more meetings are held, and more marches are organized to demand that the city let them stay. On the second floor of the building, there is an announcement board in the hallway where all of these activities (meetings, marches) are posted, besides a list of responsibilities of the adults. The children often play in this hallway.
>
> Whatever the level of tension, families continue with their day-to-day routines. The children attend school and the older ones often work a few hours at local shops in the neighborhood. More than 30 families live in the building with more than 50 children who share this particular way of growing up and learning about the world. They spend most of their free time out of their small rooms, running up and down the hallways of the building with the other children. Sometimes they come up with games to pass the time, at others they simply chat. The kids tend to be noisy in the hallways and often dirty these common areas with candy wrappers, marks on the wall, spittle, etc. This has been a source of some intergenerational conflict, but nothing too serious. Therefore, the little ones are free to move about this space and find out what is happening in the building, seeing what people do and say.

This is an overview of the social universe of the subjects with whom we work, their personal histories, troubles, and achievements, and the day-to-day challenges faced by each child and by the entire population living in the squatter building. Diverse historical dimensions of the context also sketch a path for investigation, and this reconstruction laid the groundwork for the clinical interviews later conducted.

6.3.2 Context-Specific Interviews

In this framework, the interviews always take into account the ongoing field observations, enabling us to survey and theorize about the social categories and norms of the particular context in which the research is done. In anthropology research, no assumption is made that the interviewer and interviewee share symbolic universes; the challenge is precisely to bring differences into the dialogue. As a result, both the questions that are formulated as well as the data interpretation differ from those of psychology, because the purpose is to bring to light the cultural worlds where children's knowledge is forged, not the cognitive process in and of itself. This process contributes to calling into question the hegemonic conceptions of reality—concepts that tend to homogenize—by uncovering the multiple ways of living life, putting cultural norms into practice, and getting to know social objects.

In keeping with the standards of anthropology theory, our initial work stage serves as an introduction to the universe of meaning of the subjects with whom interactions occurred in the field. This will then allow for a deeper exploration of some of the most outstanding aspects and those worthy of investigation. In this regard, the first few questions of the interview allude to the interviewee's daily routines, tastes, and opinions:

Interviewer: Where do you live?
Betania (9)[2]: Who, me? At 4130 Honduras Street.
I: And who do you live with?
B: My Mom, Jaime, Malte, Rosa and Chino, Rosa's dad.
I: And what's the place where you live like?
B: Nice. I like it.
I: What do you like about it?
B: Being there, playing with everyone. We play all day long, so you never get bored. But there are problems sometimes.
I: What kind of problems?
B: Well, sometimes the adults scold us because we're playing. And sometimes they want to take the house from us.
(…)
I: Who wants to take the house?
B: The president.
(Clinical interview, the Movement building, March 2016)

The aim of the first few interview questions is to initiate a dialogue about what the child knows, in this case, the particular situation of the building where they live. After reconstructing the social practices in which the children participate, we determined that the clinical-critical method was precisely what we needed. This method can shed light on the core aspects of an investigation—aspects the children themselves recognize as meaningful—that aims to explore the knowledge-building process of specific types of knowledge.

[2] The names of both the organizations and individuals have been changed to protect their anonymity. The age of the children is next to their names between brakets.

Based on the initial fieldwork approximations, it was possible to offer a dense description of the context for the subjects' daily practices. The interviews then provided a doorway into their conceptualization and the ties to the field of politics and power relations. Living in a squatter building conditions the lives of the children, making it fundamental to establish certain categories that the children themselves create to make sense of this reality. In this scenario, the way in which the president is conceptualized as a figure with the power to evict the children from their homes is central to their knowledge as subjects, as it can be seen in the following interview:

The interviewer prepares a series of pictures taken during the first few months of the fieldwork. Some show the children playing in the house; others show the adults in the building; and still others, the Movement activists at a march to defend the occupied building.
Interviewer (pointing to a picture of the march organized by the Movement): What do you see in this picture?
Andrés (8): A march.
I: How did you know what it was?
A: Because all the people are on the streets, walking with signs.
I: And where are they going?
A: To where the president lives.
I: And why are they going where the president lives?
A: Because they're going to tell him not to take our houses away.
I: But what does the president have to do with your houses?
A: If we don't go to the march, the president sends the police to take the house from us.
(Clinical interview, the Movement building, April 2015)

The use of pictures taken during fieldwork as an interview resource was one of the strategies that arose from this interdisciplinary dialogue, which enriches the dialogue of the clinical interviews by exploring what was recorded as part of the routines of the squatter building. In these exchanges, certain concepts were reiterated, like that of the president and police. This enriches the next round of fieldwork, allowing us to pay more attention to certain aspects of their reality before doing a second round of individual clinical interviews. Through all of the data constructed in this process, meaningful ethnographic production becomes possible, teaching us something we did not know about the ways that children living in an occupied building think and live.

C) Triangulation of Information with Different Sources.

Ethnography has been a privileged tool for investigating children's cultural experiences, as it allows us "to capture the enormous human diversity embodied by each of the children with whom we do research. This helps us understand them in all their complexity and avoid simplifying the notions they build on the research objects" (Shabel, 2018, p. 56). The toolbox that ethnography provides has been used by a wide range of investigations into children's expression. This toolbox includes participant observation, interviews (both unstructured and semi-structured), the use of drawings (on their own, or as a resource for interviews), games, asking children to write texts from prompts, and the use of audiovisuals (Pires, 2007; García Palacios & Hecht, 2009).

The term triangulation is used to refer to this combination of different techniques, allowing "social scientists to be able to make more precise judgments by working with different types of data covering the same phenomenon" (Sirvent, 1999, p. 163). Therefore, the initial descriptions and reflections offered by the children during the interviews take us into ethnographic production. During an extensive period of regular visits to the squatter building (between 2015 and 2018), we were able to observe situations like the following:

> I head over to the house at about two o'clock. It's February and the kids are on summer break so they might be kicking around the ball out in front of the building to try to get some air, because it's terribly hot. Although they rarely play outside the house during the school year, all of the routines change slightly during the summer months. Mauricio (12) sees me coming from the corner and kicks the ball in my direction, yelling, "Get it, Pau!" I do my best to stop the ball but it curves and bounces out onto the street in front of an oncoming car. Startled, the driver slams on the brakes and gets out of the vehicle. When he realizes it's just some kids playing, he swears a little under his breath, shakes his head, and gets back into the car. When the car drives off, the children discuss what happened.
>
> Paola (16) (holding in her arms her younger brother, Valen): What are you doing? Are you crazy? What if that guy calls the cops?
>
> Mauricio (12): Why would he call the cops? He already left.
>
> Paola: But what if he did call? And a whole bunch of cops came to evict us because of you?
>
> Teo (11) [Paola's brother]: Like they're really gonna come with a bunch of guns and shoot us to make us leave. [He brings his hands together to form a "gun" and pretends to shoot.]
>
> Andrés (9): If the cops come, they'll kick us out of here.
>
> Jeremías (7): But we'll tell them it wasn't us.
>
> Paola: With that face, you think they'll believe it wasn't you? [All laugh].
>
> (Fieldwork notes, squatter building, February 2017)

The police category was difficult to observe at the beginning, given that after several years of fieldwork with the children, there has been no type of confrontation recorded with the police either on the street or during a demonstration. However, the ethnographic perspective reveals the importance of the police category, which is closely connected to living in a squatter building and the threat of eviction. In the interview with Andrés (age 8) cited earlier, the police are mentioned as those responsible for carrying out an eviction; this reflects the idea the group of children have formed in which the police are responsible for carrying out an order to force people from their homes.

In a line of succession, the children commonly construct from the president on down (Castorina & Aisenberg, 1989), it is the president who gives orders to the police in children's first conceptual connections within the field of policies. Within the specific setting of the squatter building, the children have produced original ideas about how power relations work from the state down to their day-to-day lives: the president gives the eviction order and the police execute it.

In this regard, the state is depicted as an entity that forces people from their homes, a concept children base on their daily practices and the particular situation of living as squatters. Here police and president are primordial concepts that organize the field of politics. Through extensive fieldwork conducted at the squatter

building, it was possible to see that for the children, political thought categories are overwhelmingly connected to all that occurs in their home and from this position, they interpret the world at large and, more specifically, power relations. But the state does more than just evict people from their homes; at a more subtle level, it also shapes the social relations among building residents.

> Giselle (9) and Ema (10) are sitting in the second-floor hallway playing a kid's card game. They play a few hands and note down how many points each of them has earned on a sheet with both of their names; I do not manage to capture the logic of the game. They laugh and talk about the game and its rules. Suddenly the building door opens and a woman starts coming up the stairs. I don't know her name but we've seen each other many times before and usually say hello. She stops to read the announcement board where last month's utility bill is posted. The bill is divided among the residents, with the amount each household owes; the room numbers that have not yet paid are highlighted in red. As she looks up at the board, another woman, Susana (45) comes out of her room and greets her. They say something about the utility bills and one of them raises her voice, clearly a little annoyed, and exclaims, "It's unbelievable—Irene always owes money!" The girls look up from their card game for a moment and look at Susana; then they glance at each other and giggle, as if they had overheard a secret. Then they go back to their game. Susana notices the girls' reaction and also takes note of my presence; she says hello and continues down the hall to the kitchen. (Fieldwork notes, squatter building, October 2016)

The announcement board hanging in the second-floor hallway serves as a graphic depiction of this mediated category that harnesses children's knowledge about the state. Covered with notices about marches, meetings, and unpaid utility bills, the board reveals the state's constant presence in the house and in the children's daily relations, the same relations that form a basis for the knowledge they build.

The state, here, acquires a materiality that allows ties to be forged with the subjects: in this relationship, the families are debtors, and the state is the eternal debt collector. The state is like a mediator with which the children engage in dialogue, and even mediates the ties between them.

> Teo (10): Yo, yo, yo! I scored, bro!
> Mauricio (11): What are you talking about? I caught the ball and tossed it over to the stairs.
> Teo: You cheater! Just like your dad who cheats the house and won't pay what we owe the government!
> Mauricio: What? You're talking out your butt, kid. My dad pays what he owes.
> (Fieldwork notes, squatter building, October 2015)

Although the children managed to resolve this conflict within less than a minute, it reveals their knowledge about the payments the families must make on the building and the indebtedness that is common among a population with no fixed income and little in terms of state assistance. If a dialogue is structured between this fieldwork scene and some of the statements the children made during the interviews, it is possible to put together a corpus of data. In turn, this corpus lays the groundwork for a better understanding of how subjects make sense of what is happening around them.

Political relations configure these childhoods in a particular way and the children then build their own meaning. The children thus construct an idea of a state that evicts people and takes away their homes, a state that is always owed money and

supervises household accounts. At the same time, the close ties between family and state—a proximity owed to the fact that the building is illegally occupied—generate daily routines that also build meanings:

> I arrive at the squatter residence and walk right in because the door is wide open, as usual. But unlike other days, today I don't hear the sounds of the children playing in the hallways. I climb the stairs to the second floor, look in both directions, and see no one. This is pretty strange, given that it's six o'clock, an hour when the children tend to be playing together in the halls. I climb up to the third floor and since I still don't see anyone, I knock on the door of the room where Teo (age 10) lives with his siblings. After a few seconds, the door opens just a crack and Teo's face appears. He looks serious. "What is it?" he asks. I ask him if he knows why no one is in the building and he says, "They're here but they're all in their rooms because there's an important meeting downstairs and we can't make any noise." Then he closes the door, leaving me alone in the hallway. (Fieldwork notes, squatter building, March 2017)

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, where we provide a detailed description of the context of the investigation, the children's daily routines can be altered by some of the Movement's political activities, most of which are aimed at avoiding evictions and maintaining the building as a residence. Some of the meetings coincide with peak moments of tension with the state—tensions that play out in the nerve-wracked adults, increased number of meetings, and the duration of these meetings. The youngest residents perceive all these occurrences, which can affect their moods and behaviors, as seen in Teo's reaction in the fieldwork notes.

In these practices, the children share what they know, deepen this knowledge, or modify certain knowledge in their interactions with others. This knowledge is, in all cases, fused with their class experience and the ties to illegality that stem from living in a squatter building; in this experience, an emotional bond is forged along the social margins. Even within the fieldwork excerpts, there are indications of diverse knowledge and feelings, as always occurs when more than one subject is involved. Nonetheless, it is possible to affirm that these children's knowledge about the building is closely linked to a sense of fear that the ethnography is also able to capture (Leavitt, 1996; Lutz & White, 1986; Reddy, 1997; Stodulka, 2016).

If we understand fear as the "effects of anguish and upset in the face of a looming threat, real or imaginary" (Reguillo, 2008, p. 70), this is always manifested in connection with living in the squatter building, since eviction is a daily possibility for these children. Thus, the experience of living as squatters generates feelings of fear toward those who could give the order or carry out the eviction, including the police, the government, the president, and even the adults within the building, who become visibly tense as the social conflict worsens. The ethnographic record is built on participant observation and also through interviews, like the one in which Betania (9) mentioned not liking the fact that "sometimes they want to take the house from us."

The meanings assigned to the field of politics and the notions of president and police are tinged by the fear that these figures invoke among the children. Both feelings and meanings, then, are forms of social ties: far from defining abstract notions about objects, they reveal the ways in which subjects relate to their settings, modifying them as they experience feelings and think about them (Toren, 1999). To return

to Reguillo, fear "constitutes an individual experience that is both socially constructed and culturally shared" (2008, p. 70), as manifested in the ties the children forge with the state.

6.4 Final Thoughts: How to Connect Knowledge with Actions and Feelings

Based on this research, it is possible to say that living in a squatter building, and government policies on such occupations, contribute to children's conceptional notions on what the state is and how it affects the Movement, which the children are part of (Shabel, 2018). Daily practices thus become sources of knowledge for these subjects, who build meanings of the world through what they do, what they discuss with others, the social meanings circulating in each context, and the particular meanings each crafts from their own experience (García Palacios, 2012). In addition, these practices are articulated with emotions shared by the children, thus building meanings in what they think is coupled with what they feel.

We have tried to account for some of the mutual contributions that exist between ethnography and the clinical—critical method. We have shown that it is possible to incorporate the clinical—critical method in an ethnographic approach under the conditions we have been developing in our research (García Palacios & Castorina, 2014). An ethnographic record of these interwoven meanings was possible thanks to a courageous methodological approach that combined ethnography with the clinical method. Both of these proposals share a framework of relational epistemology that involves complex but congruent units of analysis and a theoretical assumption of the dialectical relationship between subject and context. This context both produces and is produced by the subjects—in this case, the children—who also shape this context as they make sense of the world around them (Toren, 1999; Valsiner, 2014). On the one hand, in clinical interviews, we can see the ways in which children name, make sense, and produce certain uses of social categories, as well as the synthesis of how they understand power relations and the world of politics. This method informs us about that cognitive construction. On the other hand, from ethnography we can reconstruct the social practices in which these concepts are built and how they are presented to children. Social practices are necessarily loaded with affectivity, sensations, and emotionality that are linked to those same concepts. Methodological dialogue enables the apprehension of phenomena that occur together in social reality.

Throughout the investigation, the children proved active subjects in producing meaning about their surroundings. In this cognitive production, they also challenge the cultural meanings of diverse social objects. The resulting dialectic between the cognitive and the cultural ultimately lead us to abandon the concepts of transmission and internalization and instead focus on the intersections between individual and society, in the hope of understanding how these children relate to the social production of life.

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Chapter 7
Studying the Stream of Experience at Memorial Sites: The Subjective Camera Methodology

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From William James to many contemporary approaches, theories in psychology have frequently emphasized people's embodied, situated, and lived stream of experience. However, much less has been done to translate these ideas into concrete methodological strategies for making theoretical advances with empirical research results. Yet, there have been some promising recent developments, such as an increase of interest in experience sampling (for a review, see Scollon et al., 2003). Researchers have recognized the problems inherent in simply interpreting verbal data, detached from activity and context, at face value and searched for more experience close methods. Approaches, such as the so-called mobilities turn (Büscher & Urry, 2009), offer new methods, empirical sensitivities, and analytical orientations aimed at grasping the ongoing flow of experiences while moving around and engaging in different physical and social settings. Kusenbach's (2003) walk-along methodology – explained below – can be ascribed to this methodological paradigm. Additionally, there has been a development in more visual methods (Reavey, 2011; Rose 2001; Pink, 2013). One of the most recent additions to this area has been the use of subjective cameras (subcams), which record individuals' ongoing experience from a first-person perspective, in both video and audio (Lahlou, 2011). Subcams in combination with interviews enable the researcher to enter and analyze the

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"phenomenological tunnel" of participants, thus producing experientially rich, situated ethnographic data. One may, without exaggeration, say that subcams offer the most contextualized, sociomaterial, holistic, multisensory, and process-focused data collection devices currently available.[1]

This chapter describes our use of subcams to explore how people experience and relate to different kinds of memorial sites. Whereas previous research on this area has mainly focused either on architectural features or observations of people on-site (e.g. Stevens & Franck, 2015), our focus is on the situated, ongoing interaction between individuals and memorials with different material affordances, as they occur from the participant's perspective. In the next section, we briefly introduce the mobilities turn, paying special attention to Kusenbach's (2003) walk-along methodology—also used in some of our studies—and Lahlou's (2011) use of subcams. This will be followed by a presentation of our three case studies, carried out at both traditional and contemporary memorials. Examples of data collection and analysis in each case study will be provided. Different uses of subcams across the three studies will be discussed by highlighting the possibilities and constraints of each methodological procedure. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the usefulness of subcams as a methodological tool in the field of cultural psychology, especially in the study of the ongoing flow of experience in the encounter between humans and the environment.

7.1 Methods on the Move

The mobilities turn (Büscher & Urry, 2009; Fincham et al., 2010) encompasses a wide range of methodological approaches in social sciences—such as walk-alongs, ride-alongs, shadowing, participatory interventions, etc.—aimed at capturing individuals' sensory and situated experiences as they move along and engage with the environment. In opposition to those approaches based on a clear separation between mind and body, mobile methods bring to the fore the dynamic and multisensory nature of human experience as it unfolds in specific social contexts. As Büscher and Urry (2009) point out, "while it is important to study how worlds are made in and through the ways in which people make sense of them, it is equally important to investigate how worlds (and sense) are made in and through movement" (p. 110).

In line with this approach, Kusenbach's (2003) walk-along methodology is an ethnographic research tool that enables the researcher to participate in individuals' mobile habitats, while simultaneously interviewing them in real time and their everyday spaces. Conceived for the development of a "street ethnography," this method combines some of the advantages of ethnographic observation and interviewing when it comes to examining informants' flow of experiences and practices

[1] Mobile eye-trackers do the same with greater precision, in that they also record more exactly what people are attending to. They however require calibration and are much more expensive than subcams.

as they move through different physical and social settings. While asking questions, listening, and observing, fieldworkers take a backseat and give the lead to informants as they walk along. In Kusenbach's own words (2003):

> I tried giving my informants as little direction as possible with regard to what I would like them to talk about. If they insisted on instructions, I asked them to comment on whatever came to mind while looking at and moving through places […]. On occasion, I pointed to a nearby feature in the environment that was difficult to overlook and asked my subjects what they thought of, or felt about it […]. In any case, I could have never anticipated which places and environmental features stood out in their minds and how they perceived and interpreted them. (p. 465)

According to Kusenbach (2003), the walk-along method provides a phenomenological sensibility to ethnography by highlighting aspects of individuals' daily mundane experience of environment. It allows, for instance, focusing on informants' way of perceiving and reacting to the environment over researchers' own perceptual presuppositions and biases. Walk-alongs reveal spatial practices by showing the extent to which informants engage with the environment and relate themselves to certain places, by describing them in terms of warmth and closeness or in terms of estrangement. Furthermore, the sensory aspects involved in the ongoing flow of spatial experience prompt a range of personal associations between places and life histories, easily missed in observations and off-location interviews. In sum, the walk-along methodology offers insights into how people interact, experience, and give sense to specific settings by weaving their memories, interests, knowledge, concerns, etc. into immediate situated action. As Kusenbach (2003) points out, walk-alongs "ultimately point to the fundamental *reflexivity* of human engagement with the world" (p. 478).

While the walk-along powerfully situates an interview within an environment meaningful to participants, the data produced takes the form of a verbal report without visual accompaniments. Thus, it is difficult to fully bring in the environment in a multisensory way and precisely identify when and what aspects of it trigger participants' reflections. As mentioned above, recent interest in visual methods has aimed to further bring the world as experienced to the fore, both analyzing and presenting it as part of a wider set of movements, sensations, and interactions in space. In this connection, Lahlou's (2011) Subjective Evidence Based Ethnography (SEBE) is the most advanced method for doing this that we have identified to date. The method involves the use of a subject camera (subcam), which are small, wearable devices placed at eye level and recording the actions of participants from their own perspective. The method involves three main steps: (1) first person audio-visual recording of activities with the subcam: showing what respondents saw, heard, and did; (2) follow-up interviews based on recording to collect personal experiences: enabling participants to access and explain their experience and actions, which were unfolding during the visit; and (3) an interpretation of the recorded content and formulation of findings together with participants: ensuring researchers understood correctly what happened and why. Through this procedure, Lahlou aims to overcome the emic/etic or insider/outsider dichotomy in research, by coordinating perspectives in an intersubjective encounter between researcher and research

participant, focused on unpacking the meaning of the audio-video trace of experience made by the subcam.

The audio-video data provides a detailed and temporal record of the participant's actions and sensory field for both the participant and research to see and hear, but this is only the beginning of the process. It is well-known that not everything in one's visual field is registered nor attended to, only those aspects that the organism is actively interested in (Gibson, 1966; von Uexkull, 1992). That is why the follow-up interview with video playback is needed. Lahlou claims that the video works to powerfully activate participant's episodic memory with a bundle of multimodal sensations. This does not easily occur with 3rd person cameras, where the subtle cues for action provided by the environment are not put in relation to one's body and action possibilities—for example, we see our arms in the video and can tell what is reachable in the environment. Furthermore, to create as faithful a recording to one's experience as possible, it is important to place the camera at eye level, rather than above or below. GoPro cameras (placed on the head) are problematic in this regard, in that they give a feeling of action from a higher, more dominant, and removed perspective. Conversely, sensecams (worn around the neck and situated on the chest) are below our field of action and produce a fish-eye image with their wide-angle lens, which provides a broad perspective of the scene but in a way quite different from how it is experienced.

In our studies, we have explored using subcams as a mobile method with different combinations of other methodological approaches: walk-alongs, playback interviews, and even focus groups. We found that each site we investigated had different affordances and histories that required methodological adaptation. In all cases, however, we aimed to capture and analyze participants' flow of experience as they explore the environment. In what follows, we will describe our research focus on how people relate to and experience memorial sites, as well as the specific method we used at each one of our three field sites.

7.2 Three Case Studies

Three case studies have been carried out at (1) the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin, Germany, (2) the National September 11 Memorial in New York, USA, and (3) The Valley of the Fallen in El Escorial, Spain. Data collection took place in April 2017 and October 2018 in Berlin, May 2017 in NYC, and November 2018 in Spain. These three studies form part of a broader research project focused on collective grief and memory at memorial sites (see Brescó & Wagoner, 2019a, b; Wagoner et al., 2019). We are especially interested in how people interact and make sense of different types of memorial sites –with particular architectural styles, genres, and material affordances – and how this results in personal ways of connecting with collective memory and public grief. The rationale behind choosing three different memorials is twofold: First, from a methodological point of view, the differences in the architectural structure across the three memorial sites enabled us to

test specific ways of collecting data with subcams (explained below); and second, from a more theoretical perspective, studies on the radical transformation of memorials over the last decades (Young, 2016) led us to compare traditional memorial sites and contemporary memorials, also referred to as "counter-memorials" (Young, 2016).

The Valley of the Fallen memorial in Spain is a paradigmatic example of a traditional memorial. In general terms, this type of memorials: (1) celebrate heroes and victories; (2) redeem death and collective loss under higher causes (viz., the nation, freedom, revolution, religion, etc.); (3) and feature a figurative style, embedded in a self-certain historical narrative, thus conveying a univocal official meaning. This single committed perspective to the past gives these sites the character of *temples*, where the past tends to be worshipped and revered (Linenthal & Engelhardt, 1996). Conversely, the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin and the National September 11 Memorial in New York are two prototypical examples of the so-called counter-memorial turn. The latter architectural form emerged as a response to historical events (e.g., Second World War. Auschwitz, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki) that disrupted the traditional forms in which collective loss had been so far represented. Counter-memorials reverse the rationale behind traditional ones as (1) instead of epic deeds and heroes, commemoration revolves around tragic events and victims; (2) rather than redeem death into a higher abstract cause, the focus shifts to the individuals lost; and (3) the figurative style of traditional memorials gives way to a minimalist and abstract form that opens up the possibility for different interpretations and ways of interacting with the site. As such, instead of *temples*, counter-memorials are best described as *forums*, where disparate memories and discourses can meet (cf. Wertsch, 2002).

The possibilities and constraints of the environment in different kinds of memorials, together with the range of potential ways in which individuals can experience these sites, are central elements of our study. They lead us to the following research questions: How does memorial design (traditional vs. counter) feed in individuals' way of interpreting, experiencing, and interacting with the site? What sensory elements of the memorial site stand out in experience? How do individuals' social, cultural, and political backgrounds shape their interpretation of the site? How do individuals make sense of other people's behavior on site (i.e., appropriate norms)? How do individuals' interpretation of memorials develop and fluctuate as they move through the site? These questions are addressed in the three case studies through three different ways of using subcams in combination with other data collection methods adapted to each site.

Post-visit Replay at the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin. Participants walk through the memorial alone with the subcam, and the resulting video recordings are then replayed back to them in a post-visit interview.

Walk-along Interview at the National September 11 Memorial in New York. The researcher visits the site together with the participant, who commented on her/his feelings, thoughts, and memories while moving around the site.

Walk-along Interview and Focus Group at Valley of the Fallen in Spain. Same procedure as in the previous case but followed by a focus group with members of the same family.

In what follows, we will describe each case study in detail, providing context for the site and a flavor of the data collected and some preliminary results.

7.2.1 Post-Visit Replay Interview at the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe

Inaugurated in May 2005 in an accessible public space in the center of Berlin—between the Brandenburg Gate and Potsdamer Platz—the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe is Germany's central Holocaust memorial. It consists of 2711 grey concrete stelae arranged in narrow aisles that visitors can freely walk through. The heights of the stelae and ground are varied, such that the former generally becoming taller and the latter deeper; the closer one moves into the center of the memorial, where one becomes disoriented and isolated from other visitors. The architect, Peter Eisenman, intentionally left the form of the memorial ambiguous and abstract, arguing that its goal was to "[…] begin a debate with the openness that is proposed by such a project, allowing future generations to draw their own conclusions. Not to direct them what to think, but to allow them to think" (Eisenman, 2005). Its non-didactic architecture leaves the memorial ripe for different interpretations channeled through individual memories and associations. Hence, there is only a "metaphoric" link between the memorial and the Holocaust itself. The different individual interpretations give rise to the co-existence of various norms of behavior inside the memorial. Stevens (2012) describes people running and laughing, talking on their phone, sitting on the stelae, eating food, kissing, hugging, or taking photographs of themselves or others. These non-reflective behaviors at the site can be contrasted to people enacting more typical behaviors for a memorial setting, such as leaving flowers or small stones on top of the stelae. This makes the memorial a highly interesting place to study the perception, enactment, and enforcement of norms, as well as how the sensory, bodily experience of the visit translates into different interpretations and experiences on a more personal level (Brescó et al., 2020).

Participants Three participants were recruited from a university in the city to be part of the in-depth subcam data collection and post-visit interviews. All participants were men in their 20s to 30s and of German nationality. In addition to these, we also did short interviews with visitors that were randomly approached on-site interview (Brescó & Wagoner, 2019a, b), which will not be discussed here, but provides a background to our interpretations of the subcam interviews.

Data Collection We first attempted walk-along interviews but the site's design with narrow passages and many corners made this form of data collection difficult.

In a second attempt, the method was adapted so that the participants first freely walked through the memorial on their own while wearing the subcam, and the second video of the walk was played back to them at an off-site location immediately afterward. While watching the subcam video of their previous visit, participants were then able to comment on the video, their personal experiences and associations (similar to Lahlou, 2011). The audio of the interview and the playback video were simultaneously recorded to connect the spoken word with what was seen (see Fig. 7.1). The interviews were done primarily in English, but there were also moments in which participants switched to German to better express themselves.

Results In the following section, we will focus on two different aspects in our analysis: (1) individual interpretations of the memorial along with what they are prompted by and (2) how participants negotiated appropriateness of different behaviors displayed by people at the site. Screenshots from the subcam videos are used to underline the connection between what is seen and said.

To begin with participants, corresponding with Eisenman's intention, give various interpretations of the site: "This perspective is kind of […] peaceful. And then my imagination, like the concrete; it stands for the people who had been murdered. […], it's very abstract" (participant 1).

Prompted by looking at one of the lower stelae, participant 1 directly associates the memorial with the people being killed during the Holocaust (see Fig. 7.2). Additionally, he emphasizes the calm and peaceful atmosphere that he experienced at the site. Like other participants who were interviewed briefly (Brescó &Wagoner, 2019a, b), he seems to interpret the memorial as being like a graveyard.

> Maybe it's supposed to be like brutalistic and about how technical and emotionless and strong the holocaust really was, but […] that's not really how it feels in there. It's just […] or actually it's nice to walk through really. It's very comfortable walking through these passages. Looking up somewhere you can dream a little bit […]. You can reflect on things and in that regard it's really nice. (participant 2)

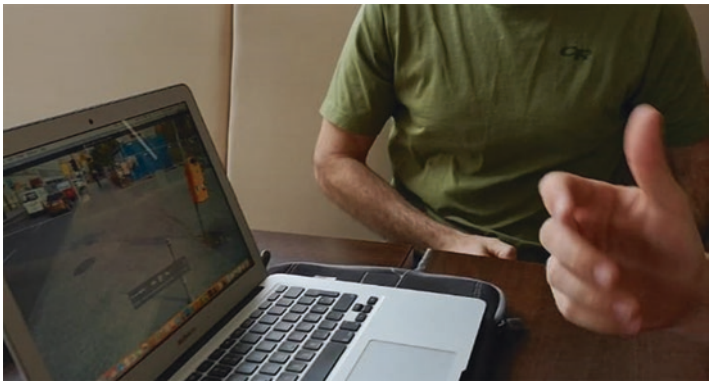

Fig. 7.1 Scene from playback interview, where participant describes their experience while watching the video

Fig. 7.2 Screenshot from subcam video when participant 1 was describing his personal interpretation of the memorial

In contrast to participant 1, participant 2 associates the memorial with a more general feeling of coldness and lack of emotion created by the Nazi regime rather than their victims (see Fig. 7.3). Nevertheless, he highlights the quietness of the site that gives people a chance to pause and reflect.

> […] the main take away I think is that everybody […] builds their own interpretation of it. Mine is that I see the stones as the, the size of obstacles that German Jews had to overcome if they wanted to continue—or European Jews had to overcome if they wanted to continue to live in our societies. On the outside the stones are very few and they are very low, you can easily walk around them, step over them, whatever. As you get into the middle there, quite high, it's very […able?], it's kind of overwhelming, it's sort of this progressive built up to what the Nazi machine really, really was. (participant 3)

Like the first participant, participant 3 makes a direct connection to the Jewish community and the victims of the Holocaust but in a more abstract way. To him the concrete stelae do not represent the victims directly but the obstacles they had to overcome. This association is prompted while standing on the outside of the memorial overlooking the gradual built-up of stones in front of him (see Fig. 7.4). With this interpretation, the memorial turns into something to actively engage with to "overcome the obstacles" and find your way through and out of the memorial. As such, participant 3'interpretation is like participant 2 in his focus on the embodied feeling of navigating through the memorial.

In short, all three participants have their own interpretation of the site. These interpretations are tightly connected to different sets of behavioral norms they see as being appropriate at the memorial. Consider participant 1's reaction to selfie-taking:

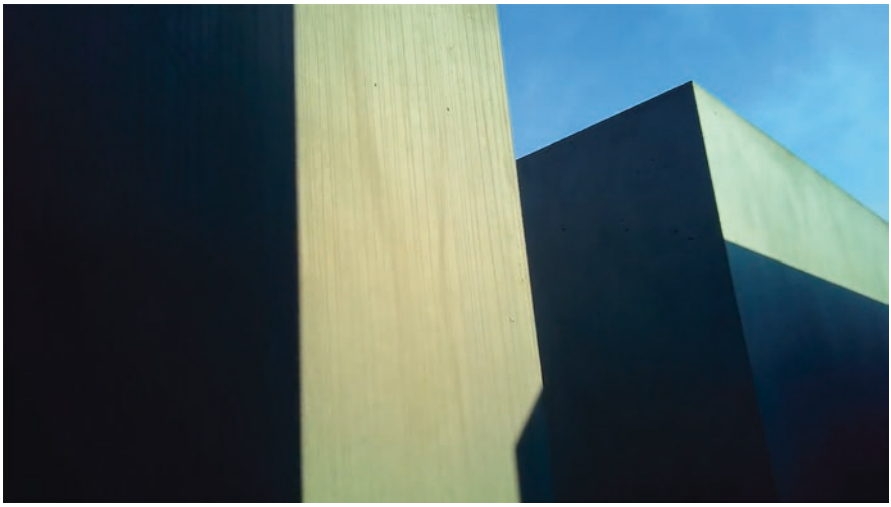

Fig. 7.3 Screenshot from subcam video when participant 2 was describing his personal interpretation of the memorial

Fig. 7.4 Screenshot from subcam video when participant 3 was describing his personal interpretation of the memorial

Participant 1: […] well at some point I was getting like kind of more; mad is maybe a strong word, but also a little upset. This is one example. You can tell […] this is a good example.
Researcher: Why?
Participant 1: Because, she […] you will see. But she was taking selfies so far all the time. Actually […] yes. I will have a better view on it.
Researcher: Why did it upset you?

Participant 1: I don't know. I just had the feeling that […]. That's a place to […]. It's an, maybe an opportunity, or an offer to memorize, or maybe to think of something, to experience something. […] in my mind some people just use it like a common tourist site. It's just like, maybe I can take a picture at like, you know, what's an example? Alexanderplatz maybe, like the big tower […]. Sometimes it doesn't feel like they respect the place. You know? People should respect the place but it's fine.

According to his interpretation of the site as a dignified place, representing the people being murdered, participant 1 shows a strong negative opinion about the behaviors at the site he sees as disrespectful. His statement is prompted by watching a woman taking selfies in the video played back to him (see Fig. 7.5).

In contrast, participant 2 understands the memorial as a place that invites all kinds of different behaviors. From his view, the very architectural design invites children to play around the stelae (see Fig. 7.6) and adults to behave in ways that might be seen as disrespectful.

He even talks about his own previous norm violations at the site. In line with his interpretation of the memorial as something symbolizing the Nazi regimen itself and not specifically the victims, he is more at ease with the diversity of behaviors seen onsite.

Ah, well it's sort of inviting. The, also the architecture is inviting the running through and it's not […] I mean no one can expect that people actually go through there all dignified and thinking about the losses. […]. I think I also went there one time late at night to urinate actually. I heard there were also people like, sometimes condoms and so on, on the ground. It's of course also inviting to that. If it's inviting for children to play it's also for all kinds of other nonsense and not so nice things. (participant 2)

Fig. 7.5 Screenshot from subcam video when participant 1 was commenting on the woman's non-normative behavior

Fig. 7.6 Screenshot from subcam video when participant 2 was commenting on children running and playing at the site

Participant 3 emphasizes that people can actively engage with the site in a variety of ways. His interpretation opens for behaviors that participant 1 saw as disrespectful, although he showed some awareness that some behaviors might be offensive to some—he ends by saying people do "not so nice things." Taking photos, selfies, and playing around is totally fine with him as long as people obey the official rules at the site (e.g., not to stand on the stelae), which mostly are in place for safety reasons. In his opinion, it is not disrespectful to stand on the stones, as can be seen in Fig. 7.7, but he refers to it as being "against the rules."

> Some people take a glorified Instagram photo, as I'm sure you're aware. Some people take selfies, some kids run around—which I think is totally fine, because they're kids, and if I were a kid and I saw that, I would think it would be […] like that kid right there is completely amazed by it. Sometimes you see people that do stand on the stones, and of course that's against the rules. Some people just don't know. Some people do know and just wanna get to the top of the stone in the middle for a good photo opportunity. So, it's just, you have a variety of different opinions, of worldviews and just sense of awareness that comes with this place. (participant 3)

While doing the post-visit interview, researchers can easily switch back and forth between three different modes:

- looking at the concrete experience (e.g., what path they take through the memorial, what they see and focus on, who they meet and engage with) while giving participants a chance to freely comment on their previous actions, feelings, or thoughts;
- asking specific questions about the subcam video (e.g., What are you doing here? Why are you doing X? What do you think about this person's behavior?);

Fig. 7.7 Screenshot from subcam video when participant 3 was commenting on non-normative behaviors

- asking specific questions that are of interest for the research project (e.g., Would you consider yourself a religious/political person?).

As we can see from the previous examples, the post-walk playback interview method used at the "Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe" nicely illustrates participants' contextualized experiences and thoughts. In line with Lahlou's studies (2011), the post-visit interview allowed participants to access and explain their experience at the site, while the interpretation of the recorded content jointly with the participants ensured researchers to have an accurate understanding of what happened. Through the simultaneous subcam video playback and interview, interpretations and associations can be directly related to the embodied, situated, and lived stream of experiences at the site.

7.2.2 Walk-Along Interview at the National September 11 Memorial

The National September 11 Memorial at Ground Zero answers the question: How to articulate a void without filling it in? The architects Michael Arad and Peter Walker answer to this question was a design they called "reflecting absence" (Young, 2016). In the footprints of the twin towers, they proposed two memorial pools, each with water cascading down the sides and again in the center of the pool, the bottom

of which the viewer standing at the edge of the pool cannot see (see Fig. 7.9). Water is used as a powerful symbol of life and transition, and with sensory qualities that create a calming effect for visitors. As we will describe below, this was a dominant feature in visitors' experience. Around the edge of the pool are metal panels with the names of all the victims of 9/11 etched into them, grouped according to association. Thus, in contrast to the Memorial to the Murdered Jews, there are numerous elements that make this memorial more concrete and interpretable: the names of victims, creating an absence memorial on the site of the disaster, and the fact that it refers to a historical event in living memory. Finally, the numerous trees around the site give it an urban park feel. The fieldwork was done in May 2017, 4 months after President Trump had issued an executive order that would allow illegal immigrants to be deported on lesser charges than previously. Besides NYC being a "sanctuary city," immigration raids were conducted there after the order, leading to numerous deportations. Thus, immigration was a key issue on the minds of many in New York.

Participants Participants were recruited from a New York University and through existing contacts. In total, eight walk-along interviews were conducted. Six participants were in their 20s to 30s, and two were in their 70s. Politically they were all center to left leaning and a couple of them had strong religious convictions.

Data Collection We met participants at a café 7-min walk from the 9/11 memorial. This was done in order to familiarize them with us and the subcam, as well as capture the transition from busy New York streets to the memorial site (the path taken to the site is represented as a solid line in Fig. 7.8). The researcher walks together with the participant, who comments on his feelings, thoughts, and memories to the researcher as they are activated through different features on the site (Kusenbach, 2003). This version of the method is the closest to the ongoing flow of experience on the site as it happens (Wagoner, 2009). This was followed up a post-walk interview, sitting on a bench on-site. All interviews were conducted in English and took between 30 min and 1 h to complete.

Some Results On hearing the instructions, all participants immediately walked over to the first memorial pool (indicted by the dashed line in Fig. 7.8). This was probably done because they heard the sound of cascading water and could see that people were crowded around something of importance. As they approached, participants tended to comment on the sensory aspects of the site. Again, the water was first experienced through its sound and only later did visitors get a visual of it. Some even commented on the smell—one said: "the strong smell of chlorine always gets to me, as though, it is like, a cleansing. But it is very harsh to think of it as a cleansing." If there was a little wind, one would get a light spray of the water when one got close to the pool. And one can touch water in a basin at waist level, below the metal surface with victims' names etched in it. The following quote was said during a participant's final steps toward the pool and then her reflections upon it as she stands in front of it scanning its different features:

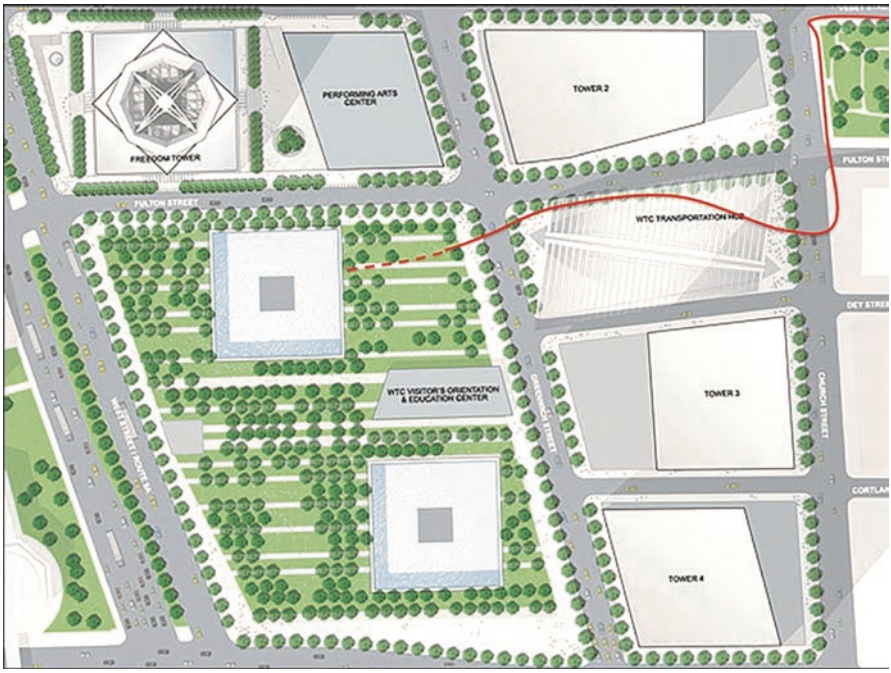

Fig. 7.8 9/11 memorial and path walked to the site

> I'm just noticing how it has individual streams of water coming down the sides, instead of a solid sheet of water. And how the edge has a pool of water that reflects some and is very still. And that [making gesture indicating a waterfall] has a lot of movement. And now I'm seeing all the names written here. I'm seeing 'm56'. I don't know what that means. I'm seeing a rainbow down there. That's very pretty. [pause] And how the water all goes into that pit [makes downward gesture with fingers together in the direction of the pit—see figure 10]. Hmmm. It is kind of ominous in a way. Just like you can't see the bottom [gestures downward again with hands] and it is kind of like the water just slowly goes over the edge. I think it is cool. I like it, but it has something [pause], to me it reflects some of the darkness that happened in addition to being a nice place. It reminds me of like the gravity of it all. It also reminds me of in my hometown there are some man-made lakes and they have, I don't know what you call it, it is a drain basically, and it is called the waterhole. When I was young and the lakes were full the water would flow into it. It was always terrifying [laughs]. It has like little ropes that make like don't swim or take your boat past this. It was like terrifying. What if someone somehow slipped down there, it would be awful. You'd see somebody in a little tin boat just outside the buoys and think oh my god.

The participant transitions from a description of the significant physical features of the memorial to an interpretation of what it stands for (in the line "it reflects some of the darkness that happened"). Ecological psychology would describe this as a movement from direct to indirect perception of the environment (Heft, 2001). Interestingly, this movement is accompanied by visually attending to different features of the pool (e.g., the cascading water, a rainbow, and the pit), as well as movements of her hands, which can also be seen in the video. As she comes up to the edge

of the pool, she touches the names etched into the metal slab (as all but our oldest participants did), and when looking into the pool, she at multiple points imitates the water's trajectory with her hands. This is particularly interesting when her hand seems to go down into the pit that seems bottomless to her (Fig. 7.9 shows her gesture from her point of view). From this point, she begins to relate to the "darkness" of the place through personal place memories from her childhood, which mixes nostalgia with fear. Although a surprising result for us, it was by no means a singularity within our sample. The memorial pools seemed to powerfully afford making these kinds of experiential connections with familiar water spaces from the participants' past and in some cases present spaces of daily life. Thus, we found participants relating to the collective event through significant personal memories. The form of the pools and movement of the water there created an affective site for collective and individual memory to coalesce. The architecture of the memorial appeared to be successful in setting up the right conditions for putting personal feeling into the collective event, represented by the memorial.

7.2.3 Walk-Along Interview and Focus Group at Valley of the Fallen

The Valley of the Fallen is a clear example of a traditional memorial. Unlike the two previous study cases, it displays a clear ideological message, strongly linked to Franco's National-Catholicism ideology. Located at 55 km north of Madrid, in Sierra de Guadarrama, this memorial was built, mainly by republican prisoners

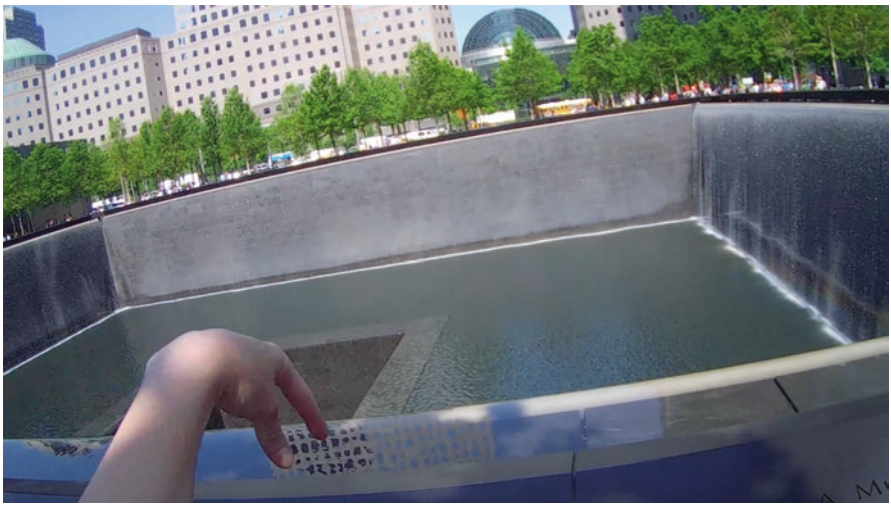

Fig. 7.9 Participant reflecting on the different features of the memorial pool and the associations they have for her

(Preston, 2005), after the Spanish Civil war (1936–1939) to commemorate Franco's victory over the democratic Spanish Republic. As shown in Fig. 7.10, it is a colossal monument featuring a 150-metre cross (the tallest in the world), an esplanade, a basilica, and an abbey run by Benedictine monks. Facing the big esplanade, and carved inside the mountain, the basilica contains a huge, albeit shadowy, nave leading to the main altar, next to which Franco's and Primo de Ribera's (the founder of the Spanish Falangist party) tombs are displayed. The site is both a memorial and the biggest mass grave in Spain. Apart from Franco and Primo de Ribera, a crypt underneath contains over 33.000 unidentified combatants from both sides of the war, many of them (mostly from the republican side) being brought without informing their relatives (Ferrándiz, 2011). This, and the fact that it remains a monument of exaltation of Franco makes this memorial a highly controversial site and a living proof that collective memories of civil war are still a lingering issue in Spain (Aguilar, 2001). To remedy this, in 2019, the newly formed Socialist government ordered the transfer of Franco's remains to his family pantheon in a municipal cemetery. Fieldwork was conducted in November 2018, some months before Franco's exhumation, amidst a heated public discussion over the memorial's future. This coincided with a period of high political tension in Spain: On the one hand, with the Catalan pro-independence movement putting the Spanish state under great pressure (see Brescó & Rosa, 2021) and, on the other hand, with resurgence of the Spanish

Fig. 7.10 Basilica entrance carved into the mountain topped by a 150-metre cross. (Photo: Pablo Forcén Soler, public domain)

far right, which would eventually be elected into the Parliament in the next elections for the first time since the dictatorship.

Participants Apart from interviewing people visiting the site—ranging from supporters of the dictatorship to foreign tourists—the main study was conducted with three members of the same family with whom we arranged the visit beforehand. These family members, from three different generations, are:

- a mother, in her early 60s, a civil servant originally from a rural area nearby Toledo, but established in Madrid a long time ago,
- her daughter, in her early 40s, a labor lawyer from Madrid,
- her young cousin, in her early 20s, a biochemistry student also living in Madrid.

Overall, these three participants, positioned on the center-left of the political spectrum, come from a Spanish middle-class family. It is also important to point out that, of these three members, only the mother had visited the memorial before, many years ago. The rationale behind choosing family groups is their key role in the exchange and transmission of collective memory (Halbwachs, 1992), thus providing a rich place to analyze generational differences (Welzer, 2005).

Data Collection The family members were contacted by one of the authors days before the interview. We met all the three participants on the esplanade in front of the basilica, where the general objectives of our project were explained to them. A brief group interview was carried out in order to obtain their first reactions of the site. This relatively informal interview also served to make the participants familiar with the interviewers. After this initial interview, we all entered the basilica. Once inside, and after handing out the subcams to the participants, each researcher began the interview with a family member separately. Like in the second study, each participant was told to freely visit the memorial and to share their reactions, thoughts, emotions, and memories with the interviewer as they came to mind. Upon finishing the three interviews in the basilica, a focus group (Markova et al., 2007) was conducted outdoors by one of the authors on a bench situated on a quiet corner of the esplanade. The focus group's main goal was to share the reactions experienced during the visit and to discuss the memorial's meaning and its possible future. Both the three walk-along interviews and the focus group were conducted in Spanish.

Some Results This section will focus on the specific part of the walk-along interview with the mother conducted inside the memorial's basilica. Some screenshots from the video recorded through the subcam are included in order to show how this participant's flow of experience changes in the course of her visit (see Figs. 7.11, 7.12, 7.13, 7.14 and 7.15). The mother's experience of the site will be set against that of the daughter and her cousin expressed in the focus group.

Fragment from the walk-along interview with the mother. She says: "I see some sculptures up here with very harsh angles, and there are some beautiful angels too. This seems to me warmer than I remembered. I remembered it gray, empty, cold […]".

The interviewer asks: “What is it that transmits coldness to you?” The mother replies: “Excessively long, harsh and heavy. The building, the nave, the stones but not the sculptures of the angels. The dimensions are huge. This place does not convey any warm emotion, just coldness.” Then the interviewer asks: “What kinds of elements transmit warmth to you?” She replies: “Well, I see benches, as if it were any church, I see the dome, which is also like any church, it’s pretty […]”.

> We’re going there, to the choir area. It’s like in all Spanish churches and cathedrals. This latticework over there could be that of a cathedral. I think the basilica has more warmth than the façade of the building. (mother)

> […] Ah! That must be Franco’s grave. […] Here is the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, and this also gives me a sense of closeness. It’s a chapel that smells like a church, like celebration. This gives me a little more warmth, because it is like a church, you can see now a confessional over there […] I can notice now a familiar smell. (mother)

There are two sets of elements shaping this participant’s experience of the site. On the one hand, some elements inside the basilica contribute to the monument being experienced as something distant, cold, and empty (similar to participant 2’s interpretation of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe). On the other hand, there are some elements—viz., smells of the sacristy, the chapel’s latticework, sculptures of angels, the confessionary—this participant associates with any Spanish traditional church, thus making the site warmer and less distant to her. Thus, the walk-along interview, in combination with the subcam, enabled us to capture the participant’s ongoing flow of experience in the site, fluctuating from feelings of coldness at some points of the visit to warmer feelings whenever her experience is anchored through something more familiar to her, such a Spanish church. In other words, this method allows for matching the participant’s impressions with the specific elements she attends to as she moves around the site.

Fig. 7.11 Basilica’s nave captured from the participant’s subcam

Fig. 7.12 Sculptures with harsh angles captured from the participant's subcam

Fig. 7.13 Basilica's dome captured from the participant's subcam

However, in stark contrast with the mother's fluctuating experience of the site, the younger family members did not anchor the site through the notion of a church. As a result, in the absence of such association, the site became for both the daughter and her cousin something grandiose but devoid of any emotion or personal meaning. This can be seen in excerpts from the focus group with the three family members:

> I thought that at least I was going to be moved by what it is […] But, it has not evoked me the Civil War or anything. Even knowing that this is one of the largest mass graves in the world! Apart from Franco being buried there, does this place say anything else to you? (daughter)

Fig. 7.14 The choir area captured from the participant's subcam

Fig. 7.15 Franco's grave captured from the participant's subcam

> But that's precisely why I was impressed not to feel anything, it's not a tribute to all those people who died. These people are not present at all. This is an imperial… This is an act of power showing a single tomb… or two. It is nothing more. It does not transmit anything else. (young cousin)

These two excerpts show how, instead of associating the memorial with a church, the daughter and her cousin interpreted the site basically as a large tomb—as Franco's tomb to be more precise. Not a single element of the memorial allowed for a connection with the huge mass grave, with over 33,000 corpses, laying underneath the basilica; something that shows the extent to which the very style and disposition of the site constrains the way in which the memorial can be perceived.

7.3 Discussion and Conclusion

The subcam allows for flexible adaption to different sites and research interests. We have tended to use it in an open-ended way, letting participants' rich experience at each site guide the themes we focus on. First, at the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, the interrelated themes were interpreting the abstract memorial and the appropriate norms of behavior ascribed to the site. Second, at the 9/11 memorial, we explored the microgenetic process (Wagoner, 2009) of relating to the memorial and the collective loss it represents through touch, embodied sensations, and personal memories. Finally, at Valley of the Fallen, we focused on participants' ongoing experience of the memorial, looking at how it fluctuates from a cold and distant perception of the site to a closer way of relating to some of its elements, associated with personal memories of a traditional Spanish church. In all these cases, the use of subcams allowed us to examine how participants engage with the environment through multimodal forms of expression and communication. Thus, memorials become a meaningful context as participants tie different aspects of their selves—memories, associations, feelings, thoughts—into some of their architectural aspects, as they move around the site. Mobile methods—or a combination of them—seem to bring us closer to the phenomenological quality of environmental experience in capturing the various *qualities* of this engagement, as studied by the geographer David Seamon (1979), ranging from a "person–environment separateness" to a "person–environment mergence."

Importantly, these differences in themes and participant experiences at the three sites are a result of both architectural features as well as each individual's particular way of engaging with the site. From a cultural psychology perspective, we can argue that memorials, as historically situated material artifacts, create possibilities and constraints for people to engage in social practices of remembering and mourning. The sociocultural environment and mind cannot be analyzed as independent and dependent variables, but rather need to be seen as being mutually constitutive of one another (Wagoner, 2018). Recognizing this dialectic between personal and collective aspects of culture leads us to be careful in not taking the intended meaning and use of cultural artifacts at face value. A statue, a flag, or a memorial are social and endowed with specific material affordances and preexisting meanings, but these simply provide constraints on the manifold of different ways in which they can be experienced and appropriated by individuals with different life circumstances. The three case studies show how people do so by anchoring their experience through the use of metaphors and personal episodes of their life story. By connecting collective events to their own individual stories, people can personalize memorials in a way that makes sense to them, thus establishing different affective connections with the group's past. Contemporary, abstract memorials—like the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe and the Ground Zero National September 11 Memorial—seem to leave greater openness for more personal associations (such as childhood memories of artificial pools), whereas associations in traditional memorials seem to be more institutionally guided. For instance, the association between Valley of the Fallen and

a church somehow shows the extent to which sociomaterial elements of nationalism (as a secular religion) are socially anchored and inserted in a range of religious practices, particularly in the Spanish case.

While the use of subcams in research is not without theoretical and methodological challenges —ranging from the epistemic status of images to questions of how to analyze them in a systematic way—it can also be a promising methodological tool in cultural psychology in order to study how semiotic mediation regulates the affective engagement with the environment (Valsiner, 2007). As shown in the three case studies, subcams are useful in capturing the emergent meanings that mediate the here-and-now setting of the human experience, thus transforming spaces into meaningful places (Kharlamov, 2012). In other words, subcams—combined with other methods, such as walk-along interviews—can contribute to a multimodal and microgenetic study of the ongoing, here-and-now process of meaning-making. Interpreting the concrete stelae as the size of obstacles that German Jews had to overcome (participant 3), associating the memorial pools with familiar water spaces from childhood, or connecting certain elements in Valley of the Fallen to a traditional Spanish church, are examples of emerging personal signs regulating the cognitive and affective relation to each memorial site. As Kharlamov (2012) points out,

> from the standpoint of individual experience, signs that we draw from our personal culture and create on the basis of it function in the domain of spatial experience as those meanings that space attains for us, thus becoming *identified as meaningful place.* (p. 291, italics in original)

We hope the introduction of mobile methods, such as subcams, can help us to better understand how people make sense of spaces; something particularly relevant when it comes to study how people experience modern memorials, purposely built to generate a wide range of different meaning-making processes and ways of interacting with them.

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Chapter 8
Multimodal Interaction Analysis in Cultural Psychology Research

Carolin Demuth

Cultural psychology can be considered an umbrella term for a variety of approaches that address the cultural nature of human psychological functioning (Valsiner, 2014a). Crucial in all these approaches is an understanding of psychological conduct and experience as dialogically intertwined with the participation in social activities within historically evolved societal and material structures (Cole, 1996; Valsiner, 2007; 2014a, b; Vygotsky, 1981; Wertsch, 1991). Accordingly, human psychological functioning needs to be understood in its situated and dynamic evolvement in engagements with the world. This calls for process orientation in the study of human experience and conduct, and accordingly for methodological approaches that do justice to this understanding (Gergen, 2014; Valsiner & Brinkmann, 2016).

Another aspect of cultural psychology is that it is concerned with higher mental functioning, that is, "the intentional construction of meaning" (Valsiner, 2014a, p. 11) in ordinary life. Moreover, it is concerned with the role of social norms in the organization of the psyche (ibid). A crucial question that arises from these considerations is how to study meaning-making processes and normativity in human conduct and experience. While most of the literature in cultural psychology is theoretical in nature, various suggestions have been made over the years of how to study the dynamic and dialogic nature of human conduct and experience from a cultural psychology perspective (e.g., Ratner, 1997; Branco & Valsiner, 1997; Valsiner, 2014b; Valsiner et al., 2009).

In the light of the current explosion of new approaches in qualitative research (Demuth, 2015a, b; Frost & Nolas, 2011), one might be tempted to think that what

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we need are newly developed methods. Rather than suggesting yet another "new" approach in the currently flourishing pluralism in qualitative research, I suggest to reflect on whether we actually need new methods and whether new methods would actually add anything to what already exists (Demuth, 2015c). Some authors have suggested that we should go back to the ways how qualitative research was conducted in the "early days" in the history of psychology (Brinkmann, 2015; Valsiner, 2014b). As Valsiner and Brinkmann (2016) state: "Psychology does not need new methods—there are too many of those already—but a methodology that is adequate to grasp its phenomena" (p. 77). This quote hints at an important point: We need to understand methods not in terms of "tools" or "techniques" but as methodologies, that is, procedures that only make sense within the logic of the theoretical research tradition within which they have been developed and in line with the epistemological (and sometimes also ontological) assumptions that go along with it. The field of qualitative research is a very heterogeneous one with methodological approaches ranging from realist to extreme constructionist ones (e.g., Willig, 2013)—an important aspect that sometimes risks getting forgotten when presenting qualitative methods merely in terms of analytical techniques.

In this chapter, I take the approach that perceiving of, and acting in, the world is primarily rooted in socially shared normativity (Demuth et al., 2020). "Sharedness" of certain ways of understanding the world and the normative dimension of social life, accordingly, can be understood as action based, as processual, mutually shaped, dynamic and fluid, ever-evolving meaning-making in situated social interaction. While it is primarily language as practice that binds us to view the world in a specific way and as intersubjective form of life (Brockmeier, 2012), little attention has been given in the past to the role of other modalities, for example, embodied practices in social interaction, the shape of which is always situational and ecologically embedded.

For cultural psychology's concern about meaning-making processes and social norms, I consider various established methodological procedures as fruitful. These procedures are rooted in ethnomethodology (Garfinkel, 1967), as well as social constructionism (Gergen, 1985) and Wittgenstein (1953/1958) philosophy, for example, positioning theory (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré, 2012), discursive psychology (Edwards & Potter, 1992) and narrative psychology (Brockmeier, 2012), and Goodwin's Action Theory (Goodwin, 2013). The analytic procedures that have been developed within such epistemologies are conversation analysis (CA) (Sacks, 1992), discursive psychology (DP) (e.g., Potter, 2012), narrative/positioning analysis (Bamberg, 1997, 2012), and multimodal video analysis (e.g., Goodwin, 2000, see Dicks, 2014, for an overview and comparison of various multimodal approaches). These approaches share the critique of treating language as "carrier" of messages (referring to "hidden" mental entities like attitudes, memory, identity) as is common in most psychological research. Rather, they treat language as an activity and study discourse in its own right. They go, however, beyond studying merely verbal utterances as I will outline in the following. Their relevance for cultural psychology lies in the potential to study meaning-making processes and "shared" normativity as they arise in mundane every-day social interaction (see Demuth et al., 2020, for further discussion).

In the following, I will briefly lay out how the above approaches contribute to the study of human conduct and meaning-making in the field of cultural psychology. I will then provide examples from my own research to illustrate how we can study meaning-making processes by studying embodied aspects and semiotic objects in social interaction with children. I will conclude by discussing challenges and potentials that I encountered in applying such an approach and giving an outlook for future research in cultural psychology.

8.1 Ethnomethodologically Informed Discursive Psychology

One methodological approach that addresses exactly the aspect of cultural normativity and accountability, as it is co-constructed in social interaction, is ethnomethodology (Garfinkel, 1967) and ethnomethodologically informed discursive psychology (Potter, 2012; Wiggins, 2017).

Ethnomethodology was developed within the field of sociology and "is a special kind of social inquiry, dedicated to explicating the ways in which collectivity members create and maintain a sense of order and intelligibility in social life" (ten Have, 2004, p. 14). In contrast to classical sociology, however, it does not treat "social facts" as given and trying to explain them but treats them as "accomplishments" through social interaction. The focus of inquiry hence lies on how people make sense of each other's actions. "Ethno-methodology" is interested in the methods that members of a group (ethno) use to produce order in social interaction, that is, intelligibility or explicability, which Garfinkel (1967) referred to as accountability. By that he meant the "understandability and expressibility of an activity as sensible action" (ten Have, 2004, p. 20). Ethnomethodology has highlighted numerous ways in which cultural forms of perceiving and acting in the world are primarily rooted in socially shared normativity (Forrester, 2019). In his famous breaching experiments, Garfinkel (1967) could demonstrate that we implicitly follow common sense expectations in everyday life and that we make sense of other's actions based on invisible rules of normative conduct.

Ethnomethodolgy is not interested in anything that "goes on in the mind" or any internal psychological phenomena that may "cause" a specific behavior. Rather, it is interested in overt activities, that is, directly observable sense-making processes. It might therefore not be straightforwardly obvious, how this approach could be useful for psychological research. In fact, while not denying the existence of a cognitive realm, it has treated social interaction as the primary arena for sense-making, that is, a mutual achievement of the interactants. Ethnomethodology considers people as agents, and of a social order as grounded in contingent, ongoing interpretive work (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2008). As such it has a lot in common with cultural psychology: It is interested in studying meaning-making practices and normativity that guide us in our everyday experience and conduct.

The methodological procedure that was developed from this research tradition is conversation analysis (Sacks, 1992; Sacks et al., 1978). Conversation analysis (henceforth CA) treats talk as a form of action; the focus is on what people do with

talk. CA is interested in the orderliness of talk-in-interaction which it considers largely independent from purported psychological states. It therefore focuses on observable aspects of social interaction while not denying the existence of a cognitive realm (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2008, p. 61). As Potter and Edwards (2012) point out, in CA there is

> no attempt, nor ambition, to make underlying cognitive structures, mental processes or neuronal objects the touchstone for explaining the patterning of conduct. Instead of starting with cognition, Sacks started with interaction from the perspective of its participants, and focused on how its visibility/hearability is crucial to its operation. From this perspective, mind, thoughts, knowledge and so on (what contemporary psychologists would collect together as cognition) would be relevant to that interaction through the way they are seen or heard in the interactions themselves. (p. 704)

However, talk-in-interaction is assumed to create and maintain intersubjectivity—and this is what locates CA firmly within the domain of psychology (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2008). Interactants can display "shared knowledge" through collaboratively completing another speaker's utterance, for instance. They display their understanding through the sequential unfolding of their talk. Understanding itself is conceived of in terms of a public demonstration and *"not as an internal psychological state for which those public demonstrations are merely evidence"* (Potter & Edwards, 2012, p. 710, emphasis in the original). When mutual understanding is threatened, this becomes evident in various "repair mechanisms" that the interactants draw on (see, e.g., Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2008, for further details on repair mechanisms). It is in this sense that intersubjectivity can be studied analytically.

So, as becomes obvious, knowledge is not treated as cognitive representations as is the case in cognitive psychology. In sharp contrast to cognitivistic approaches in psychology that treat language as a conduit for transmitting ideas (information) from one mind to another, CA conceptualizes talk as a "medium for action and interaction, a normative system, involving a range of ordered practices" (Potter & Edwards, 2012, p. 707).

The procedures of CA have over the years been increasingly adopted by discursive psychology (e.g., Potter, 2012; Wiggins & Potter, 2008; Wiggins, 2017).

Discursive psychology (henceforth DP) considers language as activity in itself that serves to constitute specific versions of social reality (Potter, 2012), that is, "doing attitude," "doing remembering," "doing identity" in order to manage issues of stake and interest (Edwards and Potter, 1992). It conceives of discourse as situated (in the ongoing interaction as well as institutionally), action oriented, and constructive and constructed (Potter, 2012). Accordingly, psychological matters need to be studied there where they occur in every day interaction. Discursive psychology analyzes psychological phenomena as discursively constructed and rejects a cognitivistic view of mental states as entities in "the mind," "causing" a specific behavior. Like CA, it considers interaction as the "primordial" human condition (Potter & Edwards, 2012, p. 708) and discourse as the primary arena for human action (Potter, 2012). Psychological phenomena are accordingly studied in terms of how they are made relevant by participants in social interaction to accomplish some business in the here and now. One could say that DP has introduced CA to the field of psychology and made it applicable to psychological research (Potter & Edwards, 2012). Psychological

concepts such as attitude, intention, memory, identity, personality traits are not conceived of as dispositions hidden in the mind that "cause" a person to engage in a specific behavior but rather as situated practice in social interaction.

DP shares with cultural psychology the interest in studying how people construct meaning. It is also concerned with normativity, in the sense that it studies how people manage accountability in social interaction, how they interpret each other's actions and display specific expectations. Notable research has already been undertaken on the issue of accountability in relation to children's behavior. For instance, research by Sterponi (2003, 2009) has investigated the situated practice of accountability in Italian family dinner interactions as an avenue for understanding the making of morality. Fasulo et al.'s (2007) study on everyday lives of families unveils culturally organized ways in which parents' discursive and embodied practices socialize children toward cleaning practices and hygiene activities. In their Los Angeles middle-class family sample, embodied interference was withheld in favor of less controlling formulations. Parents in middle-class families in Rome, on the other hand, used embodied practices that were more direct, thus diminishing the child's agency while at the same time creating an emotional bond (Fasulo et al., 2007).

Various studies have looked at human affect and emotion from a cultural discursive psychology perspective. Forrester (2019), for example, investigates how socially shared normativity emerges during infancy and early childhood. Fantasia et al. (2019) address shared normativity by studying the relational dynamics in interactions of mothers suffering from postpartum depression with their infants. Wiggins (2019) studied how the enjoyment of food and the sharing of mealtimes become a normative cultural and social practice by studying video-taped infant mealtimes in families in Scotland within a discursive psychology framework. Within a somewhat different research tradition, Cekaite and Ekstroem (2019) and Cekaite and Andrén (2019) studied emotion socialization practices in Swedish preschools from a multimodal interactional approach (Goodwin, 2000). They identified specific cultural communicative practices through which the expression of negative emotions is responded to as well as how laughter functions as an intricate process of inviting others into the common emotional and experiential ground. The studies shed light on the varied societal circumstances for learning and developing the norms and values that are communicated through these practices. In a similar vein, Takada (2019) studied the use of the term *hazukashii* (indicating shamefulness or embarrassment) in caregiver interactions with small children in Japanese families.

CA and DP studies have originally been based on audio-recorded conversations. Scholars like Charles Goodwin (e.g., 2000, 2013, 2018), Christian Heath (e.g., Heath et al., 2010), and Lorenza Mondada (e.g., 2013) extended CA studies to include visual aspects of social interaction, including not only bodily comportment like eye gaze, gestures, or body movement but also semiotic resources in the material world such as manipulation of objects or touching a screen (ten Have, 2004, p. 19). With the recent turn to visual methods and the increasing use of video analysis in the social sciences (Demuth, 2012, 2018, 2020a), Discursive psychology also increasingly draws on multimodal analysis that goes beyond analyzing merely verbal speech (e.g., Wiggins et al., 2020).

8.2 Laminated Social Interaction: Charles Goodwin's Action Theory

In his groundbreaking theory and research on social interaction, Goodwin (e.g., 2000, 2013) argues against the common analytic and disciplinary boundaries that isolate language from its environment, and thus create a dichotomy between language (as primary and autonomous) and context (everything that is not language). He argues that studying human interaction needs to take into account the *simultaneous* use of multiple semiotic resources that participants draw on, as well as the embeddedness of the interaction in a historically evolved material environment. Interactants draw on a variety of

> sign systems that are built through the use of distinctive properties of a specific medium, e.g. spoken language builds signs within the stream of speech, gestures uses the body in a particular way, while posture and orientation uses the body in another etc. (Goodwin, 2000 p. 1494)

Goodwin refers to this combination as *semiotic fields* (ibid). Interaction (and hence meaning-making) is built through deployment of multiple semiotic fields which can be used simultaneously. Modalities like body position, body orientation, gaze, as well as the material environment constitute a specific participation framework (Goffman, 1981) from which actions emerge and are situated.

Goodwin distances himself strongly from common psychological theorizing that locates meaning-making and other psychological phenomena to cognitive processes inside the individual. He points out that interactants orient toward each other based on what is publicly available (i.e., what they see and hear the other person do). The various resources that interactants draw on are publicly available and can hence be studied analytically.

His approach also arose from a critique on conversation analysis which only considers how social interaction (and meaning-making) develops sequentially on a turn-by-turn basis. In order to understand how participants jointly create meaning in an interaction, he argues, we need to consider what happens simultaneously on the level of different modalities (gaze, mimic, gesture, body position, body movement) as well as on the level of the ecological environment, including material objects and other semiotic devices. Analysis accordingly includes a variety of semiotic devices that people deploy to jointly co-create meaning and action, such as speech, prosody, mimic, gesture, body posture, body movement, as well as relevant aspects in the material world in which the interaction takes place and to which the interactants orient to. His approach takes into account simultaneously "the details of language use, the semiotic structure provided by the historically built material world, the body as an unfolding locus for the display of meaning and action, and the temporally unfolding organization of talk-in-interaction" (Goodwin, 2000, p. 1517).

What Goodwin's work shares with discursive psychology and cultural psychology is a rejection of the view of psychological matters as residing inside of people's mind (which then cause some external behavior) and a shift to studying human meaning-making processes as dynamically evolving in social interaction. Recently, embodied modes such as touch have also been discussed as a fully semiotic,

communicational resource for meaning-making in the field of semiotics (Bezemer & Kress, 2014), as well as in studies on socialization practices with young children (Burdelski, 2010; Cekaite, 2015; De Leon, 1998; Goodwin & Cekaite, 2018; Tulbert & Goodwin, 2011).

While discursive psychology and ethnomethodology pursue a strictly sequential analysis of social interaction, Goodwin has convincingly shown that discursive practices need to be understood as part of a complex, multilayered (=laminated), collective and cultural human activity composed also of bodies, material artifacts, and the space. Analysis hence needs to look also on what is happening simultaneously across various modalities in order to understand social interaction.

Multimodal video analysis examines how meaning emerges from within the course of action, via actions coordinated with each other and with talk, as well as material objects (see Dicks, 2014, for a comparison of Goodwin's approach with other multimodal approaches).

8.3 Studying Meaning-Making and Normativity in Early Childhood Educational Context

For cultural psychologists, it is particularly interesting to understand the developmental processes of how humans are socialized toward a normative perspective on the world (Demuth, 2015d). Within the field of anthropology, the language socialization paradigm (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984) argues that children—through learning to participate in language practices in mundane everyday interaction, also acquire a cultural world view and learn to perceive of the world and of themselves in a specific cultural way. Language socialization goes beyond studying mere language practices. Ochs et al. (2005), for example, point out that child-directed communication (CDC) is constrained by preferred configurations of participation that are made up of various dimensions:

1. CDC ideologies (implicit and explicit beliefs and values linked to codes, modalities, and social positionings of persons involved in a communicative exchange).
2. CDC habitats (microhabitats, that is, how a young infant is held or carried, as well as macro habitats, that is, environments such as architectural structures of housing and landscapes).
3. CDC participation frameworks (e.g., corporeal alignment of participants in relation to each other as well as to artifacts and spaces relevant to the situation at hand).
4. CDC activities (in which children routinely participate in a given community);
5. CDC semiotic repertoires (e.g., somatic, visual, vocal, and musical resources, along with artifacts that mediate and enable these resources).
6. CDC artifacts (e.g., books, writing tools, video- and audio recordings, children's computer games, toy calculators, simplified musical instruments, and other objects).

Moreover, for the understanding of how socialization practices bring about normativity, i.e. a cultural world view of how things "ought to be" and how to interpret one's own experience, the affective-embodied dimensions inherent in these practices, for instance, how emotions are co-constructed, deployed, and negotiated in social interaction (Cekaite & Andrén, 2019; Cekaite & Ekstroem, 2019). These socialization practices start as early as in infancy (Demuth, 2013a, b).

In the following, I will provide examples from multimodal analysis of children's everyday interaction in preschool to show how such methodological approach will fruitfully contribute to the field of cultural psychology. In the examples that I will present, we will see how various bodily modalities, as well as material semiotic devices (in this case, a bell) are resources deployed in social interaction to construct meaning and normativity. The excerpts are taken from a recent study by Demuth (2021) in which she studied interactions with children at an English-speaking preschool in India. The 3-month's ethnographic study comprises an analysis of video-recordings classroom interactions as well as field notes and interviews with the preschool teachers in which they were asked to explain what they were doing in these video recording (Malmkjær, 2016). The examples below are from teaching sessions in a class of 5-year-old children who are in their third year. It is their first year in which teaching is exclusively in English, so most children had been exposed to English language previously. The class comprises approximately 30 children and one teacher.

I will illustrate in the following how embodied resources, such as gaze, gestures, and physical touch/manipulation, as well as material semiotic devices, are deployed as interactional resource in tandem with talk to construct meaning and normativity in teacher–child interactions.

The first example focuses on the teacher's use of a bell as semiotic device as well as the use of her body (body movement, body positioning, hand gestures). The second example serves to illustrate how the teacher uses not only her own but also manipulation of the child's body as interactional resources. It also demonstrates how the child achieves interactional moves exclusively through embodied devices. The transcription follows the transcription notation by Jefferson (1984, see Appendix).

Example 1: What Is the Meaning of the Bell?

Example 1 is taken from a transition between two activities. Transitions between activities can be a challenge to manage in classroom interaction. They take place when a current activity finishes, simultaneously the contextual organization of the activity changes, and then the previously established order is lost (Icbay, 2011). In order to ensure a smooth transition between activities, teachers need to re-construct the order before the next activity starts. In this example, the teacher uses a symbolic device (a bell) together with a number of embodied and discursive strategies to manage orderliness during this transition.

The ringing of the bell has been a common routine practice by this teacher to make the children sit quietly while she is preparing for the next activity. As we enter the excerpt, the children just finished a play-song activity and are still standing scattered at different places in the classroom. The teacher now wants them to sit down and lay their head on the table so that she can prepare for the next activity (Fig. 8.1).

Excerpt 8.1a

```
01    ((teacher walks in front of class))
02 T: ↑Okay let's sit do::wn
03    ((clapping hands swiftly))
04    (4.0)
05    ((rings a bell for 5 seconds as she walks towards the children,
      Figure 8.1))
```

Fig. 8.1 Teacher walks toward children

```
06    ((several children start to sit down))
07 T: Now when I ring the bell (.) what does it mean?
      ((walking backwards while she speaks))
09 C1: SI:TTING
10 T:  A:::ND? ((turning her head towards C1 and nodding with
       her head))
11 C2: HEADS DOWN
12 T:  Yea:h but [I don't see any heads down ((open palm hand
       gesture))
13                [((turning her head to the class))
14     (.) except for Nikit[1] ((pointing at Nikit, Figure 8.2))
```

[1] All names are pseudonyms in order to grant anonymity of the participants.

Fig. 8.2 Teacher pointing at Nikit

The teacher uses a number of embodied and material devices in this excerpt in tandem with verbal talk. First of all, she is standing in front of the class (line 01) and thus creates a specific participation framework that positions her as an instructor. Second, the activity shift marker ‘okay’ (line 2) followed by a directive with collaborative first-person plural pronoun (let’s sit do::wn) is produced in parallel with an embodied attention seeker (clapping hands).

By ringing the bell in line 5, the teacher produces an auditive (and visual) sign of an activity shift. By moving her body from the front into the middle of the classroom, the teacher further displays an intentional orientation toward a specific child that she is approaching. This becomes even more obvious through her pointing at a child who walked to his place but who is still standing. Pointing is a display of a focus of current attention (Goodwin, 2003)—a child who is not complying—and can be seen as an embodied upgrade of the previous directive (see also Cekaite, 2015, for the use of touch as upgrade of directives). In line 7, the teacher produces a triadic IRE question format (short for: Initiation by the teacher, Reply by a student, and Evaluation by the teacher), reported in the literature to be typical of teacher /student interactions in classrooms (Mehan, 1979, see also Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975). Interestingly, she does so while moving backward without turning which allows her to keep the direction of her gaze toward and to maintain a face-to-face participation framework with the class (Goodwin, 2000; Ochs et al., 2005), that is, to monitor the ongoing activities. She then stops in front of the class and displays what Cekaite and Björk-Willén (2018) have called a “lighthouse gaze,” that is, a sweeping gaze across the children in the classroom to solicit and sustain attentive

listening and monitor the children's participation. So, we see here a number of embodied resources that are deployed in tandem with verbal discourse to manage interactional work.

While the teacher uses a typical IRE question—which implies that there is a correct answer and that she expects the children to be knowledgeable of the correct answer—it becomes clear in lines 06-14 that her question is not an information-seeking question but that a *behavioral* response was expected (i.e., demonstrating compliance by laying the head on the table, see Demuth, 2020b, for a more detailed discussion). The way the question is phrased also implies that the teacher expects the children to be familiar with the interactional move produced by her ringing the bell.

The bell thus can be seen as an icon that is indexical of the teacher's instruction to sit down and lay the head on the table. This also implies that the children are treated as knowing about this meaning of the bell. Within the history of classroom interaction which the teacher shares with the children, it becomes a symbol, that is, an arbitrary code that, by convention, we attach to the object (Valsiner, 2014a, b, p. 91f).

This example thus illustrates how a material object is deployed as an indexical sign for everyday meaning-making construction. In the continuation of the interaction, the bell is continued to be used as a symbol for requesting compliance (Fig. 8.3):

Excerpt 8.1b

```
16 T:  okay
17   ((rings bell for 3 seconds and stops in front of a table where 2
       children are still sitting upright, Figure 8.3))
18 T:  hurry
```

Fig. 8.3 Teacher stops in front of table

The ringing of the bell now serves as a generalized directive that does not need any further verbal explanation. Several children orient to this by laying their heads on the table. This is also evident in the imperative construction "hurry" with no further instruction. The symbolic meaning of (ringing) the bell continues to be made relevant as the interaction continues (Fig. 8.4):

Excerpt 8.1c

```
19    What is the meaning of the bell?[(.) Bhaskar?
20                                    [((Bhaskar lays down on the
                                      table))
21 T: Ridhi? Yuraj?
22    ((puts bell down on the desk))
23    [((walks into the classroom towards Karun))
24    [Karu:n (.) what's the meaning of the bell?
      [Let me(inaudible)
25    [((points at Karun))
26    [((stops in front of Karun))
27    [Put your head down (inaudible).
        [[[pointing at Karun, Figure 8.4))
```

Fig. 8.4 Teacher points at Karun

The teacher repeats her initial question ("What is the meaning of the bell?") but this time addresses a specific child directly by name (line 19). It is clear by now that the appropriate answer this question is embodied compliance. In

that sense, just like the bell in the previous turn, the question about the meaning of the bell has the function of a directive. What we see in lines 21–24 is a repetition of this interactional move (calling individual children by their names followed by repetition of the teacher's initial question). In doing so, the teacher indicates that the "correct" response—embodied compliance—is still missing. The generalized meaning of (ringing of the) bell hence is made relevant to hold non-compliant children accountable for their misbehavior (see Demuth, 2020b, for a more detailed discussion on accountability in preschool interactions).

Besides the material object of a bell, the teacher uses a number of embodied resources in the above interaction: In Excerpt 8.1a, the open palm hand gesture (line 12) is produced in tandem with the utterance "but I don't see any heads down," which is likely to be heard by the class as a complaint, since the open palm gesture works as question-marker (Cooperrider et al., 2018). The pointing gesture (line 14, Fig. 8.2) is produced in tandem with verbally singling out one specific child (Nikit) who provided the presumably correct response. Her pointing gesture can hence be seen as an embodied upgrade of her verbal talk.

Moreover, the body movement of the teacher does some additional interactional work:

In Excerpt 8.1b, by walking over to the table and positioning herself in front of the table (Fig. 8.3) she orients toward and in a way "confronts" two noncompliant children (see also Excerpt 8.1b, line 17).

Similarly, in Excerpt 8.1c (line 25 and 27) she moves her body over to Karun, stops in front of him and produces a pointing gesture together with the verbal directive "Put your head down." In all of these examples, thus, she uses various embodied resources as upgrades of her verbal directives.

Example 2: Good and Bad Touch

The following excerpt is taken from a circle time activity with the same class. Circle time activities typically consist of a smaller group of children sitting with the teacher in a circle. It is a time of sharing experiences, playing movement games, but also for learning about specific topics. It is noteworthy here that the way how the bodies of both the teacher and the children are arranged affords a specific participation framework and hence can be said to already contribute to meaning-making: The teacher is seated on the floor in a circle with the children which puts her on the same level with them, that is, in a less hierarchical position then in the above example. This participant framework facilitates lower threshold interaction than frontal teaching settings and allows for a more intimate conversation.

In the following example, we discuss a sequence in which one child's preoccupation with a side activity disrupts the group activity and is scolded by the teacher. As we will see in the following excerpts, both teacher and child draw on a variety of (verbal and) embodied interactional moves that allow them to maintain a sense of agency.

It is interesting to see how the boy in this interaction uses subtle embodied ways to display his resistance. Bearing in mind that teacher–child relationships in this

cultural context are often constructed in a hierarchical structure (Clarke, 2003) and children hence may not be in a position to overtly protest against the teacher as an authority figure; this interactional move may be understood as a culturally acceptable way for children to express defiance in an embodied way rather than verbally. Teachers for their part risk losing face if they do not succeed in making children comply. One way of managing face work in their attempts to resolve the conflict is to rephrase the instructions given to the child, thus reframing the situation as compliance. This is what we will see in the following example:

The topic of this circle time has been "good" and "bad" touch. The teacher had just given some examples of "good" and "bad" touch and used the "thumb up" and "thumb down" hand gesture along with the explanation. While she is going on to explain what "*very* bad" touch is, one child (Rahman, on the left side in the picture below) starts experimenting with the "thumb up" gesture, by holding his arm with the thumb up gesture before himself or in front of the faces of the children sitting next to him. The teacher several times pushes Rahman's arm down while she continues to talk to the group. Rahman continues and holds his hand in front of the child sitting to his right (Fig. 8.5).

The teacher's eye gaze toward Rahman while continuing to talk to the other children can be seen as monitoring Rahman's activities. In what follows, the teacher uses a series of directives and embodied upgrades that start with more distant embodied actions (clapping hands, gaze, pointing) and culminate in actions that involve direct manipulation of the child's body (grabbing his arm and pulling him up).

Touch can serve as a resource for meaning-making in various ways (Bezemer & Kress, 2014)—it is, for example, always addressed at someone and always communicates something. It can have an intertextual function, in that it is coherently used with other semiotic modalities such as gesture or speech (p. 79). The

Fig. 8.5 Rahman holding hand in front of another child

authors point out that intensity can be a meaningful feature here. What we see in the below example is that the teacher uses a variety of embodied resources, particularly touch together with verbal talk to create meaning, in particular to hold Rahman accountable for his "misbehavior" and as we will see, to do some face-saving identity work. The child in this sequence (Rahman) interestingly does not use talk at all in this interaction but uses exclusively embodied resources to communicate.

Excerpt 8.2a

```
T = teacher, R = Rahman
01  T:   ((turns to Rahman and claps her hands))
02       RAHMAN
03  R:   ((takes arms down, turns to T, Figure 8.6))
04  T:   >stand up< (.) [please leave the circle time
                        [((pointing to door, Figure 8.7))
05                      [UP
                            [((head gesture))
06  R:   ((slight head shake))
07  T:   [>STAND UP<
         [((raises eyebrows))
08       (0.8)
09       UP
10       (0.2)
```

Fig. 8.6 Rahman takes arms down

Fig. 8.7 Teacher orders Rahman to go

In line 01, the teacher issues a summon ("Rahman"), that is, a presequence that seeks attention, and opens the way for the talk to follow (Levinson, 1983). The warning intonation in her utterance indexes urgency. This is, however, not achieved through merely discursive devices but by a simultaneous array of embodied communicative devices: She changes her body position (turning to Rahman), uses eye gaze and an auditive summon (clapping her hands). She thus establishes a participating framework that sets the stage for what follows.

Rahman responds by taking his hands down and looking at the teacher (line 03, Fig. 8.6). Taking his hands down can be seen as displaying compliance to the teacher's summon and warning intonation. His gaze at the teacher displays attentiveness to what the teacher is going to do next.

The teacher produces an imperative (line 04), that is, a command (to stand up) which requires immediate obedience, followed by a request to leave the circle time using the discourse marker "please." She does not provide any account for her request though, from which we can infer that she presupposes that Rahman is knowingly misbehaving. He is thus treated as being accountable for his misbehavior and the punishment that goes along with it. This interactional move is organized in a multilayered way drawing various embodied communicative resources in parallel with talk: pointing to and gazing at the direction where she orders Rahman to go (Fig. 8.7). This is followed by another imperative ("UP," line 5) together with a head gesture which serves as an upgrade of the imperative here.

Rahman's embodied expression of resistance (slight head shake, Fig. 8.8) is followed by another imperative produced by the teacher in a louder voice and faster speech (>STAND UP<, line 07), again together with an embodied resource, in this case, a mimical expression (raising eyebrows). The solemn delivery points at the severity of his misconduct. She thus demonstrates strong disapproval of him not complying immediately. This interpretation is supported by what follows after a pause of 0.8 seconds: Another imperative ("UP") uttered in a loud voice (line 09)

Fig. 8.8 Rahman shakes head

which demands immediate compliance. Rahman, however, stays seated. By doing so, he displays resistance and noncompliance. The interaction continues as follows:

Excerpt 8.2b

```
11  T:   [GET UP
         [((gets hold of R's arm, Figure 8.9))
12       [UP UP UP
         [((pulls R's arm up, Figure 8.10))
13       [STAND UP
         [((pulls R's body slightly up, Figure 8.11))
14  R:   ((resists teacher's pulling and tries to get back to
         a sitting position))
```

Fig. 8.9 Teacher grabs Rahman's arm

Fig. 8.10 Teacher pulls Rahman's arm up

Fig. 8.11 Teacher pulls Rahman's entire body up

The next move by the teacher (lines 11–14, Figs. 8.9, 8.10, and 8.11) consists of a series of imperatives that are produced simultaneously with increasingly directive haptic acts of enforcing an embodied response (Cekaite, 2015): first grabbing, then pulling the arm and eventually the entire body of the child. Increasingly directive behavior management practices by caregivers when faced with resistance to advocate conduct have also been reported in studies carried out in parent–child interactions in the United Kingdom (Hepburn, 2019) and Sweden (Cekaite, 2015).

The teacher's repeated failure to get Rahman to stand up and leave the group and his continuous and rigorous embodied resistance then leads to a shift in the interaction as we see in the continuation of this sequence:

Excerpt 8.2c

```
15 T:   ((lets go of R's body))
16      [Go (.) Sit in the back
        [((pointing to the back of the room))
17      [IF YOU WANNA BE HERE YOU WILL LISTEN (.) [SIT PROPERLY
        [((index finger gesture, Figure 8.12))    [((stern look))
18 R:   ((re-arranges sitting position))
```

Fig. 8.12 If you want to be here, you will listen

The teacher eventually lets go of Rahman's body (line 15) and rephrases her directive (`Go sit in the back`), together with a pointing gesture. This is followed by an if-then construction (line 17) which invokes a general rule of classroom conduct. By formulating it in the second-person singular though, she constructs it as Rahman's responsibility to respect this rule. This utterance is produced in parallel with an index finger gesture that indicates scolding (line 17, Fig. 8.12). This is followed by a new directive ("`SIT PROPERLY`"). Together with her facial mimic (stern look, line 17), the teacher thus reframes the required action of the child from leaving the circle time to staying but behaving in accordance with the general rule of classroom conduct. The if-then construction together with the new directive interactionally deletes Rahman's noncompliance and provides him with a new opportunity to comply. Again, this is achieved by a fine-tuned calibration of embodied resources together with verbal utterances.

Interestingly, Rahman responds by slightly re-arranging his sitting position—he actually was already sitting, so the rearranging movement can be seen as an explicit display of willingness to comply. Again, Rahman deploys embodied rather than verbal interactional moves. The teacher obviously interprets this as a sign of compliance as she then turns to the class and continues with the circle time activity thus bringing this side sequence to an end. What is interesting to note in this interaction is that the teacher does not actually succeed in her attempt to make Rahman leave the group. Changing her instruction to Rahman from "leaving the group" to "staying and sitting properly" can be seen as attempts to pre-empt losing face as an authority figure and allowing the child opportunities to remedy his behavior. What might risk looking like "giving in" is now reframed as still requesting compliance, yet in a different form. Rahman, on his part, succeeded in insisting on staying in the group (i.e., against the teacher's order), however, displays compliance by rearranging his sitting position slightly. Through their joint interactional moves that comprise a variety of embodied resources, both teacher and child produce a choreography and manage to not threaten the teacher's authority while allowing for the child to resist certain power exertion in culturally acceptable ways.

8.4 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to illustrate how established procedures such as conversation analysis, discursive psychology, and multimodal video analysis constitute a fruitful avenue for future research in cultural psychology that goes beyond language. Particularly, I have argued that Goodwin's work, which is gaining increasingly popularity in CA and DP research lends itself to study socialization practices toward shared normativity and accountability. Cultural psychology is concerned with meaning-making processes and language certainly being the most powerful semiotic device to construct meaning, other embodied resources like body position, body movement, gaze, mimic, gesture, touch and bodily manipulation, as well as material objects and the historically evolved environment in which the interaction takes place play an enormous role in this process.

The presently growing field of multimodal video analysis that has developed from the above approaches contributes to cultural psychology in a variety of ways. In the presented examples, we can see how children and preschool teacher position each other in specific ways and manage to do interactional work in culturally appropriate ways. Semiotic repertoires in the above examples include somatic, visual, and vocal resources, along with artifacts that mediate and enable these resources. Specific participation frameworks are created through, for example, the way the materials in the classroom (tables, seats, board, etc.) are organized, the interactants are physically seated (standing in front of the class, sitting in a circle on the floor, etc.), and bodily orient toward each other. It is from these participation frameworks that action—and meaning-making—emerges as a joint achievement of the interactants. These corporeal and material arrangements in preschool activities can be seen

as culturally organized habitats that differentially organize children's access to communication (Ochs et al., 2005; Rogoff et al., 2003).

The situatedness of human interaction and meaning-making, on the one hand, and the historically evolved organization and social traditions of these interactions raise the question of generalizability. As I have argued elsewhere (Demuth, 2017), in meaning-making processes, the interlocutors are in dialogue with their past experience and in their spontaneous reactions they orient toward the future based on their experience. The interlocutors then are bound to seeing things in a specific perspective based on how meaning was constructed in previous interactions. Human action and thinking then can be understood as being constituted by both learned ways of acting and thinking (which implies a cultural aspect, i.e., normativity) and the individual use of a repertoire of thinking and behaving in the immediate environment. Generalization then is possible to the extent that there is similarity in the learned ways of acting and thinking and similar contextual conditions, that is, to the extent that there is 'transferability'.

Obvious challenges in conducting multimodal video analysis with material from another society are specific semiotic resources (e.g., raising the eyebrow in an Indian preschool context) can only be correctly analyzed when the researcher shares the cultural knowledge of this practice (Demuth & Fasulo, 2022; see also Demuth & Fatigante, 2012). Another challenge concerns conducting research of classroom interaction: interaction analysis usually focuses on dyadic interactions or interactions with a very small number of participants. Classroom interactions are very complex settings in which many things happen in parallel. The researcher needs to make decisions on what to focus on. This will, on the one hand, be guided by the general research questions, but often what becomes a phenomenon of interest that will be further investigated only develops as the analysis proceeds.

I have argued that rather than inventing new "methods," cultural psychology can profit from drawing on established procedures that are adequate to grasp the phenomena one is interested in. It was my endeavor to show how multimodal interaction analysis rooted in ethnomethodology, social semiotics, and discursive psychology are powerful approaches to study meaning-making processes and shared normativity in ways that go beyond language.

New technologies of communicating as well as recording and analysis of video material (Demuth, 2020a, b) open up new fields of research that are very promising for cultural psychologists: online vlogs that document how individuals cope with the current (2020-2022) Corona crisis or the construction of togetherness through software programs that allow for joint activities to be carried out online are just a few examples.

Appendix

Explanation of transcription conventions used in the above excerpts (Jefferson, 1984):

↑↓	Vertical arrows precede marked pitch movement
Underlining	Signals vocal emphasis

CAPITALS	Mark speech that is obviously louder than surrounding speech
(4)	Numbers in round brackets measure pauses in seconds
(.)	A micropause, hearable but too short to measure.
:	Colons show degrees of elongation of the prior sound
> <	"Greater than" and "lesser than" signs enclose speeded-up talk
< >	"Lesser than" and "greater than" signs enclose slower talk.
((text))	Additional comments

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Chapter 9
Multisensory Ethnography as a Tool for Reconstructing the Subjective Experience of a City

Bogna Kietlińska

Warsaw is a rapidly developing capital city best identified by its Palace of Culture and Science—a landmark whose monumental stone structure is reflected in the glass facades of the ever-rising skyscrapers. Here, the modern world clashes with the painful past: World War II, the Warsaw Uprising, and decades of communism. Flattened by the war, the city lost its former layout, which—for political reasons—was never restored. Warsaw residents have long been accustomed to the never-ending works in progress, and to the fact that construction sites emerge all over the city. The city is trying to counterbalance all those years when it struggled with urban development. However, what is even more striking about Warsaw is its green areas. The city itself covers an area of nearly 200 square miles. Green space covers over 77 square miles of that area, 27 square miles of which belong to Warsaw's 76 parks. As imperfect as the city's spatial planning has been, a lot of care has been devoted to the development of its green areas. As a result, there are more than 750 square feet of green space per capita, which is significantly more than the size of an average Warsaw apartment. Warsaw is also known for the wildness of the Vistula River and the riverbank. Warsaw residents tend to see this unusual feature (which is hardly intentional, but rather a result of a serious lack of initiative) as something very positive, emphasizing how unique it is compared to what is characteristic of other European cities.

When I think of Warsaw, it is always in terms of cracks and contradictions. Warsaw is a city of layers, overlapping in apparent disarray, that only upon closer observation reveal the successive stages of the city's development. I could not help but wonder why the city evokes such extreme feelings in those who live here, as well as those who visit. It is either love or hatred, either fear or a sense of security. Where do these feelings come from? And, also, what will Warsaw be like if we stop

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perceiving it only visually? What is the multisensory experience of Warsaw, the experience of its scents and stenches, its silence and noise, its smoothness and roughness, its beauty and ugliness?

The aim of this chapter is to showcase a method I have used to research the multisensory perception of Warsaw by its inhabitants. The main conclusions from that research, which was conducted between October 2012 and October 2014, will also be presented towards the end. The research helped me to understand the role of the senses in the way Warsaw residents perceive, and then describe, their city, as well as to create a multisensory description of the Warsaw area. For the subject of my research, I chose the five basic senses: sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste. Social sciences (both globally and in Poland) have long held an interest in the senses, but there has been a tendency to focus on just one, which is the sense of vision. Thus, my approach can be seen as innovative not only with regard to Polish but also to European disciplines, such as sociology and anthropology—two fields that intersect with cultural psychology.

Prior to my field research, I had formulated a number of initial research questions, which later, gradually, gained both detail and scope:

- How do Warsaw residents perceive and describe their city?
- What role do the senses play in this process?
- Are the participants aware of how each of the senses influences their idea of the city (discursive awareness of the role of the senses)?
- How can the relationship between spatial memory and sensory experience be described in the example of Warsaw?

9.1 (Re-)Constructing Realities: What Are We Actually Looking At?

A sociologist who chooses the senses as the subject of her research is bound to experience a whole range of "problems," both theoretical and methodological. Senses, just like emotions, belong to the category of human experience that stretches between what is perceptible and what is unconscious. Both should be treated as inseparable from everyday life. The way we express emotions and describe sensory experiences is always influenced by social and cultural context. Thus, the only way to study the senses is in their natural context, with regard to social and cultural conditions in which the sensory experience occurs. Only in this way we can get to the core of the human sensory perception of an individual or of a whole community.

Language is equally inseparable from the cultural context: The way we talk about the senses always depends on the language we use. Visual and auditory perceptions are relatively easy to describe, but this can be very difficult when other senses are involved. The multitude and richness of sensory experience rarely translates into the richness of linguistic expression and the ability to talk about the senses (the same difficulty arises when we try to describe our emotions). At this point,

metaphors prove to be useful: by comparing our sensory perceptions to something that is shared, we make them commonly understood.

Anticipating my research, I had become fully aware that—as a sociologist and as an anthropologist—I would not have access to mental processes and states of mind and would not be able to describe them in a precise way. What I would be able to access are the subjective, but culturally determined, ways and rules of expressing sensory perceptions. Furthermore, I could not be sure of the extent to which the methods I had proposed would truly allow access to the fundamental reality (the ways in which the city is perceived through the senses) or whether they would only go as far as the conscious level of the participants. There was a risk that my research would not reach beyond what the participants *declare* about the reality. After all, there is no need in their everyday life to thematize different aspects of perception, so, in a research situation, they might construct rather than reconstruct them.

9.2 Preconceptions: An Inherent Part of Research

My research was conducted in accordance with the idea of grounded theory. As such, particular categories and interactions emerged from the gathered field material. Accordingly, I started the research without preconceived theories; however, as noted by Berleant (2011, p. 33), it is impossible to avoid all preconceptions, because they are assumed in the very act of doing research. They are the assumptions about our own existence, about language and the act of thinking itself. In no way does this preclude the grounded theory approach. However, maintaining an awareness of such limitations, and the fact that the researcher is always partially determined by their environment, is necessary in order to avoid methodological missteps. In the case of my research and sensory anthropology, it was necessary to attempt to understand the relationship between the space and the body, the nature of the embodied experience, and the ways in which those experiences are translated into verbal expressions. The question there was not just whether and how respondents thematize their own sensory experiences, but also how the researchers themselves experience their "field" in an embodied manner. After all, the researcher doesn't just stay in the same space as their respondents, but also, just like them, "has a body." Embodiment is an experience, the act of giving meaning to people, places, and oneself through the medium of the body. Paying attention to the embodied character of ethnographic experiences is nothing new, and neither is a self-reflecting attitude, especially in the growing area of autoethnographic writing. Furthermore, it is difficult to imagine any kind of ethnographic research without those two layers. In sensory ethnography, awareness of the researcher's own body is especially important. However, consciousness of how a researcher conducting investigations in a particular field is always to a degree affected by such bodily awareness, it is necessary to locate blind spots and avoid methodological issues. With this in mind, and following Berleant (2011), I assumed wide theoretical frames that, from one side, set a certain direction for thinking, but on the other did not introduce narrow assumptions. They

allowed the researcher to draw a wide epistemological horizon and render their own approach to the subject matter of research more precisely.

My first theoretical axis was Maurice Merleau-Ponty's (2001) phenomenology of perception, where the concept of perceptual experience is at the foundation of the process of cognition. It allowed for examining the conditions of cognition, and, consequently, describing experiences, their characteristics, and their place within the stream of consciousness, all in a methodical and controlled manner.

My second theoretical axis, namely aesthetics, was in fact correlated with the perceptual experience. The concept of *aesthetics*, first introduced in the eighteenth century by Alexander Baumgarten (1735/1971), at one time suggested being sensuous and potentially beautiful. Berleant (2011) proposed a more comprehensive understanding of this concept. According to Berleant, an aesthetic experience starts and ends with a sensory experience. He emphasized the fact that there is no such thing as pure perception, since any sensory impression is filtered by concepts and structures provided by language and meanings embedded in culture. Aesthetics is what brings together the sensory experience and the awareness of going through this experience.

9.3 Who Was (Not) Invited to Participate in the Research Project?

The participants for my qualitative study were selected purposefully. The basis for the selection was the establishment of specific criteria which, in this research, turned out to be rather limited. The key requirement was that all participants had to be permanent Warsaw residents (although not necessarily Varsovians by birth) and had to have long-term Warsaw-related plans. The lower bound for the duration of their residency in Warsaw was set at three months. Narratives by people who had lived in Warsaw all their lives, and by the city's new residents, were equally valuable for me. However, it was important that the respondents should see their future in relation to Warsaw (and so were not transiently present, but sought a longer stay). With the long-term-perspective criterion, I could safely assume that the participants were really getting to know the city and were experiencing it in myriad ways.

Broad age range was also an important consideration in the sample-selection process. I decided to set only a lower age boundary for my respondents, and sought to communicate with people who were at least 16 years old. As such, children and younger teenagers were excluded from my research, a decision motivated partially by my lack of experience in working with those age groups. Furthermore, including children in the research process would demand adjusting my research tools, which I wanted to avoid.

In general, limitations in the selection of respondents mentioned above had to do with the assumption that the city is a democratic space available to all, and in which (at least in theory) all are subject to the same laws. To increase the scope of my

project, I expanded the pool of participants to include a comparison group containing people whose senses were impaired (people with impaired sight, hearing, and movement). Initially, I had also intended to conduct comparative interviews with synesthetes.[1] However, during my research, determining on a verbal level whether a person really was a synesthete turned out to be impossible. Therefore, because of methodological concerns, I decided to exclude that group from the study.

During my research, I was ready to expand the number of participants to avoid overfocusing on any single research group. I assumed that the initial selection, within the parameters outlined above, was going to happen based on availability and the snowball-sampling approach. Yet I was constantly attempting to steer the selection in a way that would lead to a more complete picture of the phenomenon of interest. Such adjustments could come from finding out new, unexpected components, or from the need to add new perspectives that would help answer the research questions.

9.4 Multisensory Ethnography and Interpretative Sociology

Multisensory ethnography was used to collect the data for this project. I see it as a way of thinking and practicing ethnology that takes as its starting point the multisensory experience of the environment, and connections with other subjects who are functioning in that environment. The theoretical basis for this approach is the paradigm of embodied cognition, which states that the physical characteristics of an object have an important influence on the form and quality of the process of its cognition. The physical body and its functioning may therefore substantially limit or facilitate cognition. The senses, moreover, are not only receptors that receive stimuli, but features that play an active part in structuring the information they receive, and therefore, influence the process by which the individual gives meaning to the surrounding world. Apart from individual predispositions, a large role in the assignment of meaning to sensual experiences is played by sociocultural conditioning. The role of an ethnographer in studying the senses is therefore the uncovering of the sensual experiences embodied and located within the studied space—those of the subjects studied as well as her own—and the reconstruction of their meanings. In this case, my task was not only to understand the meanings I discovered, but also to consciously share them, renegotiate them, and, in effect, describe how they relate to the environment as well as to the other participants. Multisensory ethnography may make use of existing ethnographic techniques even as it forges its own methodology: How this was accomplished here will be described in detail below. What is important is that the chosen research methods be appropriate for the polysensory nature of sensory experiences. Apart from this, reflection upon whether a certain

[1] Synesthesia—"co-feeling, mixing and transformation of various sensory impressions. In psychology it is when a specific sensory stimulus (e.g., auditory) is accompanied by sensory experiences of a different kind (e.g., visual or tactile)" (Głowiński et al., 2008, p. 551).

methodology allows the researcher to access the profound, unverbalized stock of embodied knowledge is fundamental. This is why I knew that I should always remain aware of the limitations of my chosen method and continuously reevaluate its risks and advantages (Kietlińska, 2015).

In combination with multisensory ethnography, interpretative sociology concerning the researcher's place and role in the field was applied to the relations with the subjects and any ethical problems. As per Jean-Claude Kaufmann (2010), the interpretative approach is

> rooted in the assumption that people as acting agent are not mere carriers of structures, but active creators of what is social, and so are depositors of important knowledge, which can only be grasped from the inside, through their individual value systems. (p. 37f)

It is therefore the work of the researcher to construct, step by step, the object of research. Theoretical framings are created in parallel to fieldwork. They are the consequence of being situated in the field, and stem from hypotheses formulated during fieldwork (Kaufmann, 2010, p. 36). According to this principle, when working on research tools, and when testing them in research, both pilot and primary, I was also writing a researcher's journal. Here, I noted down my observations on the tools, the respondents, and the field, and on my own role as a researcher.

As my research was exploratory, its aim was to shed light on an issue that had previously evaded attention. Furthermore, as mentioned, I was working in accordance with the idea of grounded theory. That is why it was crucial to gather extensive material dealing with research questions and to formulate a particular methodological approach for every stage of research. By this I mean the use of data collection and analysis, but also ways to visualize the results created in cooperation with Piotr Obłudka, a cartographer. Therefore, I decided to triangulate my research methods, utilizing common and well-understood techniques that were modified to fit the conditions. The methods used are presented below; they consist of 20 sentences about Warsaw, mental maps of the city, expert interviews, ethnographic walks through Warsaw, and journals of sensory experiences (i.e., research diaries).

9.4.1 Twenty Sentences About the City

As a first step in the research process, I created a tool inspired by the so-called unfinished sentences method (Reber, 2008, p. 922). Respondents received a sheet containing brief instructions, a sentence to complete, and 20 empty, numbered spaces. For an unfinished sentence, I chose: "Warsaw for me is…." On the flip-side of the sheet, the respondent's sociodemographic information was to be filled in (age, gender, education, place of birth, city district inhabited, amount of time spent living in Warsaw), and the participants were asked what city they were from, to help determine whether or not the given person felt attached to Warsaw. On the front side of the sheet, respondents were directed as follows:

> Below you will find 20 numbered spaces. Please finish the following sentence in 20 different ways: "Warsaw for me is…." Please list them in the order in which they come to your mind. All responses are equally valid. The filled-in part does not have to be grammatically correct—you can finish with a single word, a full sentence, a verb, a noun, an adjective, and so on. What matters is what is associated with your idea of Warsaw. Please spend no more than 10 minutes on this task, and don't forget to fill in your personal information on the flipside.

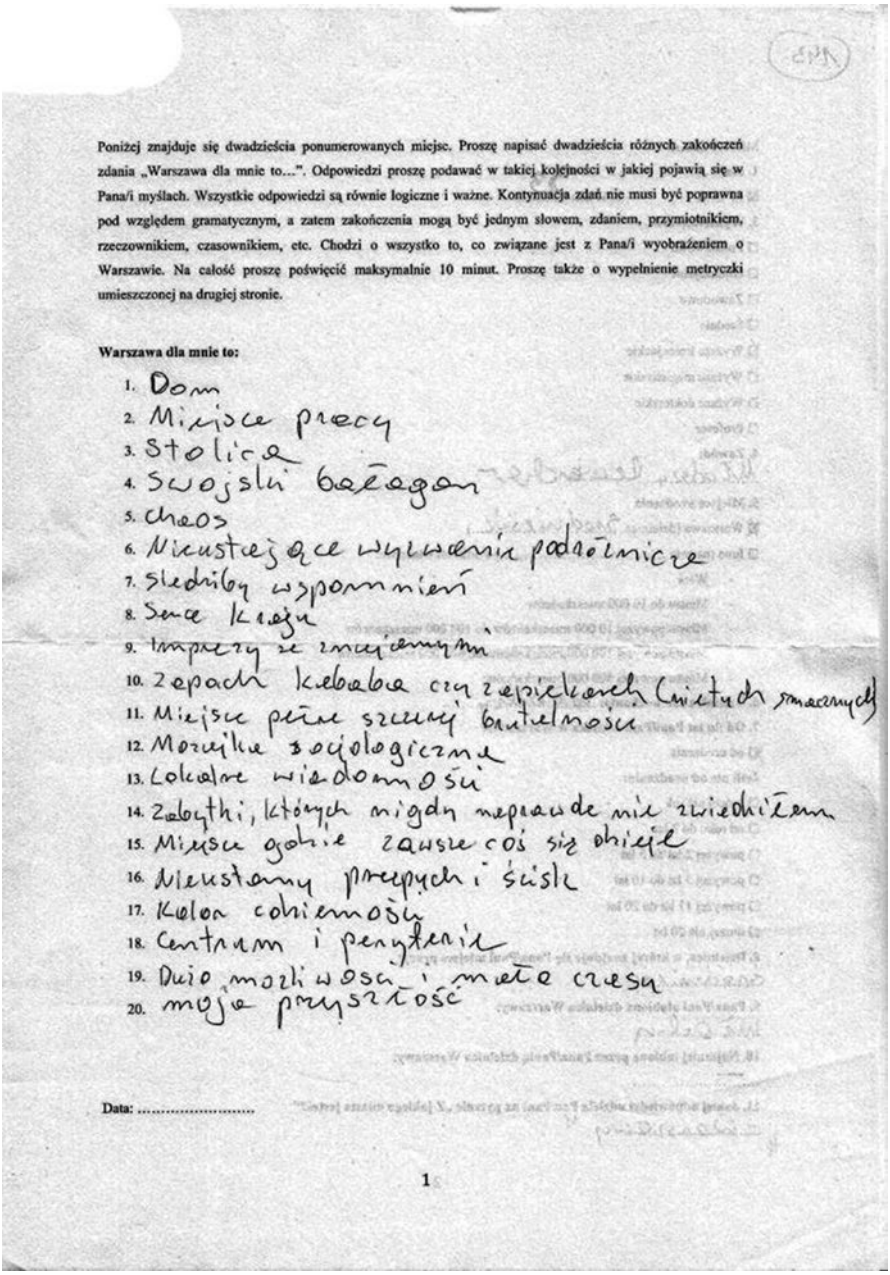
To create this tool, I used elements from the Twenty Statement Test (TST; Kuhn & McPartland, 1954), as I was asking the respondents to spontaneously finish a phrase 20 times without over-thinking this task. During analysis, I was taking into consideration all the responses, including those providing fewer than 20 answers. The respondents were to stop writing the moment they needed a longer interval to think about their answers, as at that point they had depleted their instantaneous associations. In using this method, I sought to investigate the relationship between the respondents and the city as it appears to them. What interested me is how particular people experience Warsaw, what draws their attention, what they focus on, and whether they use their senses when attempting to describe it. The emotional temperature of expression (neutral, positive, ambivalent, negative) was also significant (Fig. 9.1).

Initially, my goal was to use the method as a supplementary one. I assumed that I was going to collect data from 150 people living in Warsaw and its suburbs. I exceeded this goal (200 filled tests, N = 3.291 phrases). Furthermore, during my research, it occurred to me that the material gathered using this method may play a more significant role. Grouping particular responses into broader categories allowed me to frame the entire research matter and to establish starting points for the analysis of data gathered in the subsequent stages of research.

9.4.2 Mental Maps of the City

Mental maps are a so-called projectional method of data collection taken from psychology and often utilized in city studies. The mental map method for the study of cities (e.g., Boston, New Jersey, and Los Angeles) had been used in the 1950s by Kevin Lynch (1960). The next time interest in this method increased was in the 1970s. Brian Goodey (1974) used it to investigate the perception of downtown Birmingham (UK), David Ley (1974) mapped out the parts of Philadelphia that were causing anxiety in residents, while Stanley Milgram and Denise Jodelet (1976) conducted research on psychological maps of Paris. Peter Gould (with Rodney White; 2002) wrote a book under the telling title "Mental Maps," in which the authors showcased the imageries of Great Britain, the United States, and Canada, among others, and linked those imageries to migration choices. In the 1980s, the method was utilized by Hanna Libura (1998) in her research on Sanok, Poland.

Mental maps allow researchers to capture the spatial arrangement of sites and phenomena being analyzed, and also the hierarchy of elements contributing to this



Poniżej znajduje się dwadzieścia ponumerowanych miejsc. Proszę napisać dwadzieścia różnych zakończeń zdania „Warszawa dla mnie to…". Odpowiedzi proszę podawać w takiej kolejności w jakiej pojawią się w Pana/i myślach. Wszystkie odpowiedzi są równie logiczne i ważne. Kontynuacja zdań nie musi być poprawna pod względem gramatycznym, a zatem zakończenia mogą być jednym słowem, zdaniem, przymiotnikiem, rzeczownikiem, czasownikiem, etc. Chodzi o wszystko to, co związane jest z Pana/i wyobrażeniem o Warszawie. Na całość proszę poświęcić maksymalnie 10 minut. Proszę także o wypełnienie metryczki umieszczonej na drugiej stronie.

Warszawa dla mnie to:

1. Dom
2. Miejsce pracy
3. Stolica
4. Swojski bałagan
5. Chaos
6. Niekończące wyzwanie podróżnicze
7. Siedliby wspomnień
8. Serce kraju
9. Imprezy ze znajomymi
10. Zapach kebaba czy zapiekanek (nie tych smacznych)
11. Miejsce pełne szczerej brutalności
12. Mozaika socjologiczna
13. Lokalne wiadomości
14. Zabytki, których nigdy naprawdę nie zwiedziłem
15. Miejsce gdzie zawsze coś się dzieje
16. Nieustanny przepych i ścisk
17. Kolor codzienności
18. Centrum i peryferia
19. Dużo możliwości i mało czasu
20. moja przyszłość

Data: .....

1

Fig. 9.1 An example of a filled-in "20 sentences about the city" test (1. Home; 2. Workplace; 3. The capital; 4. Homely mess; 5. Chaos; 6. Constant travel challenge; 7. Homes of memories; 8. Heart of the country; 9. Parties with friends; 10. Stench of kebab and "zapiekanki" (not the good ones); 11. Place of honest brutality; 12. Sociological mosaic; 13. Local news; 14. Monuments I've never been to; 15. Places where stuff keeps happening; 16. Constant crowd crush; 17. Colors of daily life; 18. Center and periphery; 19. So many possibilities, so little time; 20. My future)

psychological portrait. Analysis of mental maps is based on analysis of documents created by respondents, who are asked to visualize individual imageries of a given subject. Drawn maps can be accompanied by descriptions that help explain elements of the map and their relationships and hierarchy, which helps with future interpretations of such material. This description can also, at least partially, help resolve the issue of respondents' lack of artistic skills: Even if they cannot handle graphically representing the subject of research, they can always describe it. This saves them from the embarrassment of failing to transfer their ideas to paper, and still provides the researcher with interesting data. Creating mental maps directs the memory and imagination of respondents in different ways than bare verbal narration, which leaves out visual stimuli. In extreme cases, the map is fully aniconic in form and only consists of a narrative. Such cases are not, in my opinion, conducive to supporting the research. First of all, it is a deep interruption of a method aimed at transferring the respondent's mental map to a physical medium (paper, tablet, etc.). Secondly, in such cases the researcher is left without very interesting and important visual data.

Mental maps are usually created by individuals. It is also possible to modify the method, in which case a few people work together on one larger map. This method makes it possible to examine shared imageries.[2] It is prudent to have the maps created in the presence of the researcher, even if sometimes the respondents end up drawing them without such supervision. Each map should be accompanied by a legend created by the person who drew it. Collecting multiple maps (individual and/or shared) and analyzing them lets those involved make general observations about the project as a whole.

If drawing the map is accompanied by a narrative description, and the researcher notices inconsistencies, they can ask for clarifications. If the researcher has only visual data at their disposal, there is a risk that the map might not be fully legible. For this reason, it is a good idea to create a unified system for labelling map elements, and thus, to create a legend that all the respondents should use. Such a solution is also problematic, however. In imposing a legend, the researcher defines the way in which the respondents are going to describe their worlds. This creates a danger that when creating the legend, the researcher will gloss over something important and decide on labelling that is visually important for them, but not necessarily for the respondents. In doing that, the researcher inadvertently narrows down the scope of their research. If they are lucky, the respondents will amend the legend on their own, or note their issues with it. However, if they fail to do this, which is always a possibility, then they will be left with impoverished and one-sided research material.

For the purposes of my Warsaw study, I modified this method. I decided to split the work on maps between two stages, and as a result, I received two maps from

[2] It is important to remember that such imageries will be the result of the negotiations conducted between respondents in the rather artificial conditions of map drawing, which can increase the risk of error in reaching for the "communal obvious." The dynamics of a group process need to be taken into account in such a situation.

each of the respondents. First, they were given a general map of Warsaw (with marked contours and districts; see Fig. 9.2 for an example), and were asked to mark down liked and disliked parts of the city, important points on the map (places of living, work, and education), and the most common routes. Next, they were asked to describe all those elements and emotions that were associated with them: how long does a given route take, what senses are engaged in imagining a given place or a route. It was important for the respondent to decide how they wanted to label

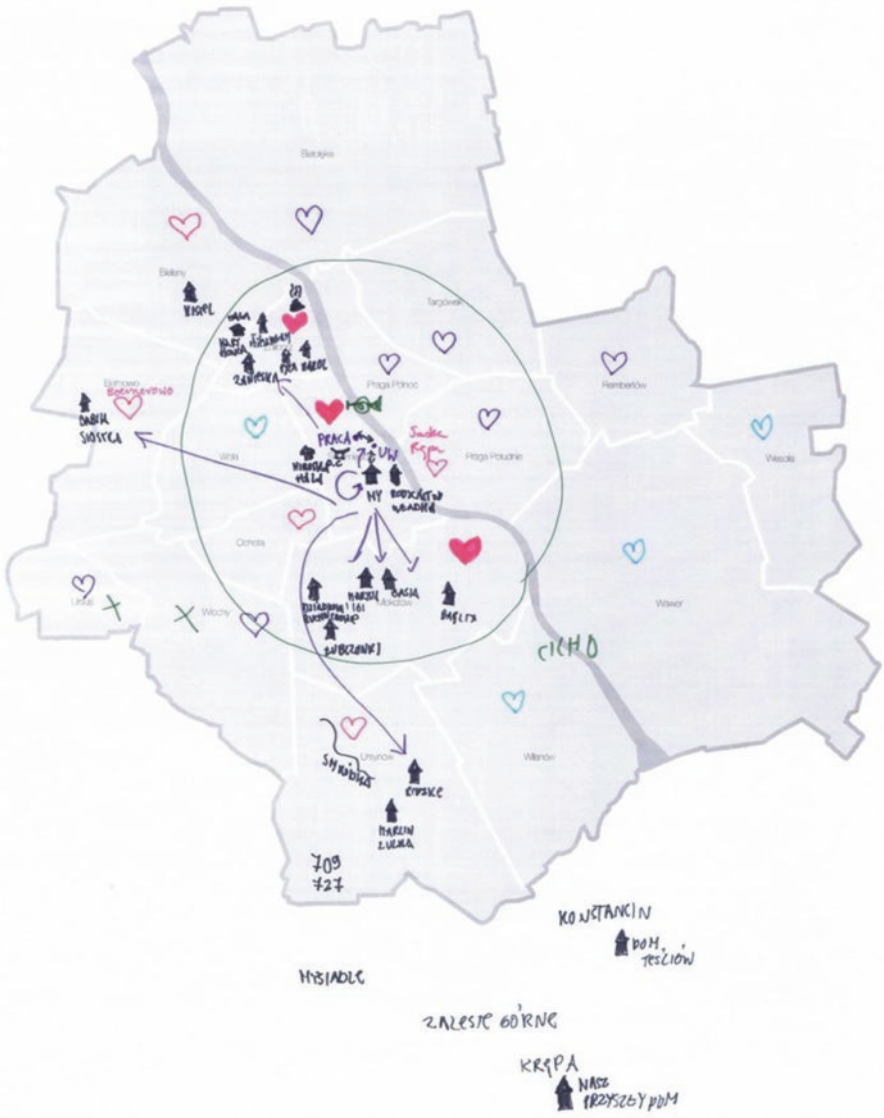


Fig. 9.2 General map of Warsaw, with one participant's notes

various points of interest (with colors, emoticons, etc.), but it was also crucial that they narrate what they were doing, and provide an explanation for their choices. All such statements (made over both maps) were registered by me on tape; therefore, I received both auditory and visual data. Furthermore, I was able to ask the respondent for clarifications when needed.

During the second stage of research, the respondents received a blank sheet of paper and were asked to draw "their" Warsaw (see Fig. 9.3 for an example). What mattered to me was gaining a representation of what each respondent thought was important for "their" city: It was up to them alone to decide what the map should contain. I also asked them to narrate those choices. Recording those narratives was crucial, as without those recordings the collected maps could be completely illegible. This approach also made it possible to free respondents from the imposition of any legends, which, in my opinion, negatively affects the freedom of description. Moreover, even if the respondent struggled with creating a visual representation of the city due to a lack of artistic skills or anxiety about drawing, they still could narrate their ideas and create a verbal representation of Warsaw.

Those two stages were arranged in a deliberate order. The first stage was meant to familiarize respondents with the mental map methods and lead them to reflect on how their own idea of Warsaw might be inscribed into a visual frame. The second stage afforded respondents far more freedom and fully exploited the possibilities offered by this method. Thanks to a lack of visual demands and limitations, respondents could develop their image of Warsaw and highlight what was especially important in it for them.

This part of the research started in February 2012 and concluded in January 2014. Within this time frame, I conducted 37 interviews, resulting in 74 drawings. All respondents had access to identical tools (maps, blank sheets of paper, colored markers and pens) that I supplied. I sampled two inhabitants from each district of Warsaw. I also decided to conduct an interview with a foreigner who was living in Warsaw temporarily but spoke Polish fluently. This particular interview was not a part of the initial schedule, but I decided against letting such an opportunity pass by. My respondent was a person from Buryatia, a federal republic of the Russian Federation in North Asia. As mentioned, the interview was conducted in Polish, which the respondent spoke fluently (although not to the level of his mother tongue). Therefore, language limitations had to be taken into consideration through focusing primarily on the drawing.

Interviews were conducted in locations indicated by the respondents—cafés, private homes, or workplaces. In three cases, where I personally knew the respondents, upon their request, I allowed the interview to be conducted inside my own home. It was my intent to let the respondent feel comfortable during the interview, so the chosen locations had to be quiet and equipped with a table large enough to accommodate working with mental maps. Respondents were also asked to fill in their personal information at the end of the interview.

Fig. 9.3 Warsaw as drawn by a respondent

9.4.3 *Expert Interviews (with "Particular Users" of the City)*

The next stage of the research consisted of qualitative interviews. After mental maps, they served as the second pillar of my research. According to Early Babbie (2006), a "qualitative interview is essentially a conversation in which the interviewer establishes a general direction for the conversation and pursues specific topics raised by the respondent" (p. 327). The interview schedule, instead of having strict requirements, established general frames within which the conversation was supposed to unfold. Prioritization in accordance with the respondent's narrative was also assumed. My interview schedule was divided into the following areas of interest:

- Introductory questions—projective.
- Questions about the subject's relation to Warsaw—emotional barometer.
- Living in Warsaw.
- Points of interest in Warsaw.
- Moving through the city.
- Warsaw—senses.

Each area of interest was associated with an example question, but asking these questions was not required. I let the respondent determine the direction of the interview within each area of interest. According to this approach, the respondent had significant freedom during the interview and decided what to focus on. I attempted to keep to the set areas of interest, but I also allowed the respondents to select their own. Oftentimes, their digressions—which at first seemed to be only loosely connected to the purpose of the interview—turned out to be treasure troves of useful data. Cutting such narratives short would mean turning away from important research material. It should also be added that some of the interviews I conducted contained elements of a biographical interview, in which the respondent described their life cast against the backdrop of Warsaw. Contrary to my expectations, such narratives were not overwhelmingly common. I will return to this issue when talking about data analysis.

This part of the study started in October 2012 and concluded in November 2013. In total, I collected 20 interviews. I was interested in interviewing so-called particular users of the city, people who may be described as "experts" in navigating through Warsaw. By "particular user," I mean

- Persons whose work or interests are irrevocably related to Warsaw.
- Persons whose work or interests are associated with intensive movement and navigation through Warsaw.
- Artists creating works about Warsaw, or persons whose work relates to working on images of Warsaw.
- Persons with disabilities.
- Persons moving through the city with a baby in a stroller.

I am aware that the above types do not encompass all the possibilities. All the same, I was interested in using those types to reconstruct a broad and diverse sensory description of Warsaw. For each of those persons, the look of the city, its sounds, smells, and texture had particular meaning. For example, a photographer and camera operator looks for exciting photo opportunities; a musician or a writer finds sounds or words that—according to their own understanding—best represent the city; a Warsaw city guide has a particular outlook on widely known parts of the cityscape. People with motor disabilities, parents with strollers, and also parkour experts[3] are especially familiar with the texture of the city. Furthermore, mass-transit bus conductors or taxi drivers see the city as a network of streets and points among which they must navigate (which includes knowing the quality of the pavement), while shopping-mall enthusiasts draw the city as a map of such places, and may even map a mall as a city in miniature.

The basic criterion for respondent selection at this stage of research was their particular relationship to the city space. Below is a short description of each respondent (see Table 9.1).

It is worthwhile to note down a few field experiences for consideration. Participants in this research were very diverse. Almost every single one of them belonged to a different social world (Manterys, 1997). The commonality between them was that each had a particular use of Warsaw's space and was an "expert" within their area of knowledge, understood here more broadly than just professionally. Each of those twenty interviews required preparation: learning about the specifics of the interviewee's activities, sometimes with their work (music, photographs), or—in the case of persons with disabilities—learning about the nature of their limitations. It was those interviews with disabled persons that I was most anxious about. I had never before had an opportunity to converse with blind persons, or people with motor disabilities, either in research work or in my personal life. It surprised me to find out just how non-present such people were in my world. I was worried that, in spite of such preparations, I would not rise to the occasion of the research situation, and (for example) use inappropriate language. To avoid such issues, I decided to perform an additional pilot run of the research tool with a blind person whom I had reached through a mutual friend. This person helped me conclude that I should not try to adjust the interview format, but instead, I should ask all the questions contained within it. This turned out to be the correct approach, one that helped me avoid rashly removing questions having to do with sight from the list. My respondent could not refer to this particular sense, but instead he described the appearance of objects being discussed. Without the pilot run, I would not have realized that appearance is a category that extends beyond mere looking, as it also consists of shape and texture. Furthermore, it turned out that the respondent himself would often use idioms referring to sight during the interview, such as *I am going to the cinema to watch a movie* (even if watching there meant only listening), or *I will look into the*

[3] *Parkour expert*—a practitioner of *parkour*, the art of rapid and direct movement through spatial obstacles (e.g., walls, hurdles, stairs, etc.). It is a physical and sport activity originating in France.

Table 9.1 Descriptions of select particular users of the city space

Type of particular city—space user	Respondent	Description
Persons whose work or interests are irrevocably related to Warsaw	Architect	Long-time urban architect. His decisions had real impact on the look of Warsaw and city developments
	Warsaw city guide	Long-time Warsaw city guide and Warsaw studies expert. Engaged in reconstruction of old Warsaw buildings
	Culture studies scholar	Her research interests mainly deal with Warsaw
	Literary scholar	Interested in Warsaw and devoting much time to it in her studies. Claims to be a synesthete
	Warsaw shopping mall enthusiast	Adeptly familiar with all Warsaw shopping malls and spends most of her free time in them. She sees them as Warsaw-in-a-bottle
Persons whose work or interests are associated with intensive movement through Warsaw	Bus driver	Has always wanted to be a bus driver. Even as a child, he would memorize bus lines
	Light rail conductor	Conductor in a Warsaw light rail system, working on a few different lines
	Bus and taxi driver	Knows Warsaw both as a bus and a taxi driver
	Parkour expert	Connected his love of Warsaw and sports through *parkour*, which is the art of free movement. Warsaw's walls, railings, and streets are the area of his sport activity
Artists creating works about Warsaw, or persons whose work relates to working on images of Warsaw	Writer	Writes prose and poetry, much of it dealing with Warsaw
	Camera operator	Often does his work in Warsaw
	Photographer	Created, among other projects, a photo cycle about Warsaw
	Photographer, photo editor, culinary blogger	Documents Warsaw's architecture and gastronomy
	Musician 1, vocalist	Writes lyrics on topics, including Warsaw
	Musician 2, vocalist	Writes lyrics on topics, including Warsaw
Persons with disabilities	Impaired sight and hearing	Impaired sight and hearing since childhood
	Blind man	Lost sight due to illness at age 30. As a blind person, he had to learn the city anew
	Blind woman	Blind since birth. Has absolute hearing, which can be a curse ("it is like not being able to close your eyes")
	Motor disability	Disabled since childhood, uses a wheelchair
Person moving through the city with a baby in a stroller	Mother with a stroller	Young mother of two. Moves through the city using public transport, with a stroller

calendar (enabled by a phone app that let him use an electronic organizer). After the interview, I asked him about those phrases. The interviewee explained that in spite of his disability, he uses common expressions in conversations, even idioms that deal with sight. This has to do with language limitations, but also with a degree of linguistic economy (that is, using shared expressions and avoiding unnecessary descriptions).[4] This matched what I would later hear from a respondent with motor disabilities, who confessed that she would often confuse her conversation partners by using idioms that had to do with walking, such as the simple *walk somewhere* (instead of drive). Material gathered during the pilot run was not utilized in the analysis, but led to conclusions that helped me to be more conscious and considerate in conducting the main interviews.

I adjusted the tool during some interviews: for example, by skipping some questions so as to go more in-depth in others. It happened when the respondent would pick up a given area of interest themselves, which meant that there was no need to ask the question myself, or when they had limited time (I had previously been alerted to this). The latter situation occurred only twice, but nonetheless, I find it important enough to mention. Other interviews happened without time constraints and, with each question, the respondents would engage with the conversation more and more. Likewise, I did not run into difficulties in trying to convince potential interviewees to meet with me: the interviews were met with curiosity and interest.

As with the maps, at the conclusion of an interview, I asked the respondent to fill in their personal information.

9.4.4 Ethnographic Walks Through Warsaw

The next stage of research consisted of ethnographic walks through Warsaw, which helped me verify narratives that the respondents created around mental maps and drawings of Warsaw. Such a method thus had to assume my presence in the field alongside the respondents, so that I could watch their behaviors and reactions. I was interested in whether (and how) prior statements would translate into practice. I decided on a series of walks alongside five persons who had previously participated in mental map research (it was a time-consuming endeavor—one that required a lot of engagement from the respondents). Such a walk happened at least two months after the previous part of the research. I assumed that after the passage of time, respondents would not remember clearly what they had put down on both mental maps, allowing for an interesting comparison of data acquired in those two stages of research. I was interested to find out whether the "memory" of a city really squares up to actual experiences of it. I also assumed that "games of steps shape space" (de Certeau, 2008, p. 98), and likewise, communication practices are a part of the

[4] According to Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1983), this linguistic economy is emblematic of daily life.

process of constructing a city. Like Michel de Certeau (2008, p. 99), I assumed that the act of walking through a city is analogous to expression. As such, the act of walking is

> a process of appropriation of the topographical system on the part of the pedestrian (just as the speaker appropriates and takes on the language); it is a spatial acting-out of the place (just as the speech act is an acoustic acting-out of language); and it implies relations among differentiated positions, that is, among pragmatic 'contracts' in the form of movements (just as verbal enunciation is 'elocution,' 'posits another opposite' the speaker and puts contracts between interlocutors into action). (de Certeau, 2008, p. 99)

To fully read the meaning of such "enunciation," it is necessary to follow the steps of your respondents. Marking down routes on a map is merely a transcription of traces and trajectories (de Certeau, 2008, p. 99) without the power of enactment. A label on a map is similar to a word written down, but not spoken.

The respondent was asked to walk me through their chosen Warsaw route (I chose to understand "a walk" broadly, as it could encompass biking, driving a car, or taking a bus—the method of transportation was chosen by the respondent). The route did not have to match what they had previously put down on a map. In all cases, however, it turned out that the routes I was walked through focused on spaces that had previously been marked down. The walk was not time-limited (it usually took around two hours), and I recorded it using a camera and a voice recorder (the recorder was put in a respondent's pocket and equipped with a small microphone affixed to their face). When I thought it would be helpful, I also took photographs (see Fig. 9.4).

The choice of who should be recording our journeys through Warsaw has far-reaching consequences. In my opinion, asking the respondents to record the walk

Fig. 9.4 Kredytowa street

using a camera and taking photos when necessary could seriously disturb the structure of a free narrative. In such a situation, a camera could become an "unnatural" extension of the narrative, and for that reason, I believe that it should be the researcher who does the recording. However, during one of the walks, my respondent would spontaneously take photos, which was a common practice for her (as evidenced by her Facebook profile). After the walk, I asked her to share those pictures, and she eagerly agreed to do so. It is also key that the narratives by the respondents should focus on their ways of experiencing given places, and not on their commonly known histories. I was interested in a collection of individual experiences, stimuli (including sensory ones), and emotions associated with the route being walked and places along the way. The walk was not organized according to a particular scenario. The starting point was the respondents' explanation of why a particular route had been chosen, followed by their narrating what they see, the places they visited, and how these places engage their senses.

9.4.5 Journals of Sensory Experiences

Participants in this stage of the research had previously been interviewed or helped create mental maps. I made an effort to ensure that—just as with the walks—this stage started at least two months after the previous one. I wanted to make sure that the respondents did not become overly influenced by what they had said and/or drawn in the previous stages of research. In the end, I managed to collect five journals. Journals, even more than walks, required respondents to devote their time and attention to the task. During the analysis, due to a low number of respondents, walks and journals were used as supplementary sources of data.

The method assumed that for a week or two, respondents would be writing down their impressions in a journal dealing with senses such as smell, sight, hearing, touch, and taste. I allowed this process to be extended by a few days if the respondent wished to do so. The point was to describe seven days in a row. Every respondent was given the same journal template (see Table 9.2) along with instructions to write down a description of a place, as well as the date and the hour (e.g., the intensity of sound in a given place could depend on the time). However, it was also

Table 9.2 Journal template

DAY:	Place	Time
SMELL		
SIGHT–SEEING		
HEARING–SOUND		
TOUCH–FEELING–TEXTURE		
TASTE		
COMMENTARY		
REFERENCES TO PHOTO/SOUND FILE NAMES AND IDs		

important that additional information, not predicted within the template, should also be written down. For this reason, the template contained a blank space for additional commentary. Furthermore, I asked the respondents to add photographs and audio recordings to their descriptions.

Journals of sensory experiences—which one of the respondents called *zmysłowniki*[5]—led the people who were filling them out into an attempt to analyze the experiences described, and the emotions associated with them. The respondents themselves were surprised at how much their reactions changed depending on, say, the weather or the time of year. They registered moments of surprise or wonder, and considered how particular stimuli caused a specific reaction.

9.5 How Do People Experience Warsaw? Maps of Senses

Research material gathered through the above-mentioned methods was then analyzed. Due to its size and internal diversity, I decided that a triangulation of analytic methods was necessary. It allowed me to compare and verify conclusions from various stages of research. Diverse analytic methods also allowed for particular methods to be selected in specific cases. I divided my analytic work into two parts:

Part I—basic analysis:

1. "20 sentences about the city"—analyzed through the semantic field method[6]
2. Mental maps of the city—analyzed through the visual method and through content analysis[7]
3. Interviews about the mental maps and expert interviews—analyzed through content analysis and emotional temperatures survey[8]

Part II—complimentary/comparative analyses:

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[5] *Translator's note:* A Polish language wordplay, combining the Polish word for a journal (*dziennik*) with the word for the senses (*zmysły*).

[6] In my research, I utilized the concept of semantic fields, as created by Regine Robin and her team at the Center for Political Lexicology in Saint-Cloud, a suburb of Paris (Robin, 1980). Robin suggested finding, in the analyzed text (or a body of texts), individual words and phrases serving particular functions with regard to the field's subject (in my case it was the word "Warsaw") and using them to establish sets: of descriptors, associations, oppositions, equivalencies, the subject's actions, and actions towards the subject.

[7] I started my analytic work with ordering the received representation on the basis of the imagining method chosen by the respondent. I focused on the visual way the representation was ordered: for the purpose of my work, I termed this "composition." For further analysis of the mental maps, I used QDA Miner 4 and coded all visible elements (visual and textual) present on those maps. At the start of the in vivo coding process, I established a list of specific categories that would be gathered into general ones later on.

[8] This method, as suggested by Barbara Fatyga (2000), relies on appraising the emotional temperature of expressions or phrases taken from the respondent's expressions. The context of the expression being coded, which contains the whole sentence, or even a few sentences, is factored into this appraisal. Fatyga distinguished between positive, negative, neutral, ambivalent, and indifferent

1. Material gathered through walks in Warsaw—analyses of thematic threads found in research, and of relationships between the respondent, the researcher, and city space
2. Journals of sensory experiences—analysis of ethnographic attitudes and respondents' self-reflection

I analyzed the gathered data gradually. With this method, results from previous stages served as starting points for further analyses and interpretations of future batches of research material. I wanted to be sure to create a coherent and exhaustive set of categories within the totality of my research material.

But the sociological tools that were available to me proved insufficient for a thorough visual representation of the data I had gathered, especially if all the variables—including the emotional temperatures and locations of sensory perceptions—were to be used. I decided that the best way to present the results of my work would be to put them onto a topographic map of Warsaw. As such, I began to cooperate with a cartographer from Warsaw Polytechnic, Piotr Obłudka. The maps would help us visualize data gathered during the interviews that constituted the first stage of work with mental maps, as well as during the expert interviews. Both interview schedules were similar, especially regarding questions about the senses. Therefore, I assumed it would be justifiable to analyze them together. I analyzed 57 interviews in total. My goal was to separate and systemize all the component parts referencing the senses from my respondents' narratives about Warsaw. I analyzed the material using QDA Miner 4 software, through in vivo coding. At the start of my work with the text, each of the senses was assigned a number of detailed (specific) thematic categories (e.g., mown grass, exhaust fumes), which were later arranged into general categories (e.g., nature, transit). I also identified the emotional temperature of every coded expression, choosing from neutral, positive, ambivalent, or negative, and established to what sort of space that particular expression referred (e.g., a street, a district, the whole of Warsaw, the architecture, etc.). I wanted to see what emotions were involved in talking about the senses, and where these sensory impressions were "located" in Warsaw. Maps created for each particular sense integrated data gathered from all the research participants. This data was related to specific places in Warsaw, and not the city in general (in other words, it was data that could be geolocalized). At first, when looking at "our" map, just the visual markings of the general categories were visible; only when the area was enlarged could the reader see pictograms assigned to the specific categories. In Fig. 9.5, the olfactory experiences are divided into general thematic categories such as nature, evaluation of smell, transit, food, etc., and specific thematic categories, such as flora, air, moisture, stench, rail tracks, etc.

We did not manage to accomplish the second part of the analysis, as it required the current mappings to be transformed into interactive maps so as to achieve maximum legibility. Also important is the fact that only those sensory impressions that

temperatures. For my analysis, I used four of those temperatures: positive, negative, neutral, and ambivalent.

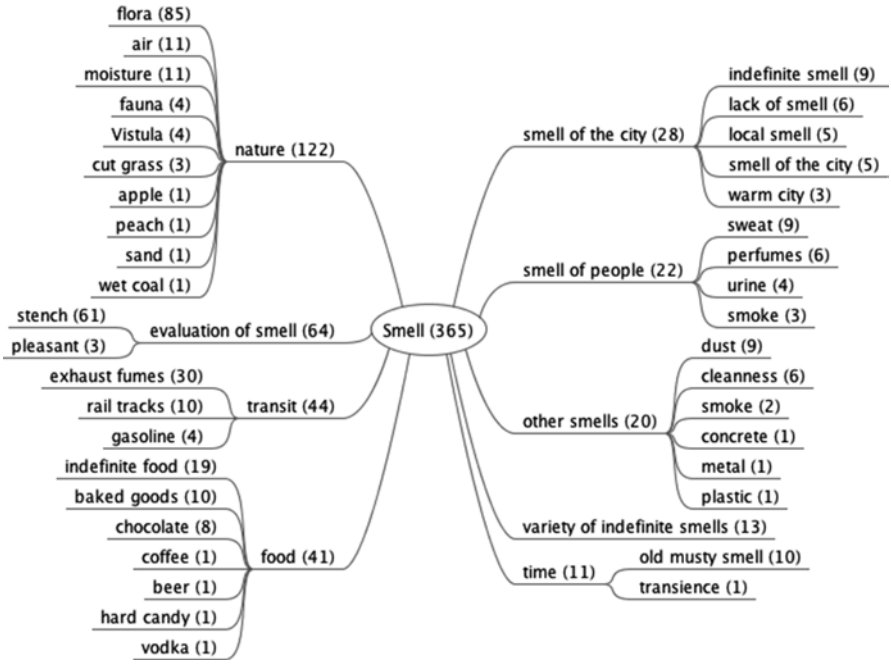

Fig. 9.5 Division of olfactory experiences into general and specific thematic categories

have been specifically located can be presented on the maps. Since geolocation of the points to be marked on the map is a necessary condition of properly preparing cartographic maps, only those experiences with specific locations were put on the map. What also proved problematic was showing experiences that refer to paths such as bus routes, or the entire subway system. Thus, we decided that as many experiences as possible should be presented as spots or sites as long as this did not distort the end results. In other words, green space or squares could be spots or sites, but entire districts could not. Emotional temperatures have been placed on the map for all the sensory perceptions mentioned by the respondents. Therefore, it can be said that data compatibility with the integral research material is very high.

To create 1:25000 scale maps, Obłuda utilized two collections of spatial data:

(a) VMapL2u (second-level vector map, in a user version)
(b) National Border Registry, containing administrative units and address points (this database is regularly updated)

and the following software:

(a) ArcGIS, a geographic information system used to develop maps
(b) MapInfo z MapBasic, a map-development system.

The innovative nature of the cartographic aspect of the project should be noted here. As it turned out, visualizing qualitative data from a sociological perspective required

re-formulating certain assumptions (such as those regarding scale) and creating new solutions. Maps showcased in this article should be understood as prototypes. However, working on them led to new research questions for sociology as well as cartography, and forced us to face the limitations of both those disciplines.

The reconstruction of this type of map based on the narration of the subjects brings to mind the exploring of the multisensory "intrinsic logic of cities" (Löw, 2012, p. 303). Martina Löw, the author of this concept, states that this logic is created out of the specific forms of concentration of the structures and practices that constitute the city. Löw lists spatial, temporal, social, political, and affective structures. Affective structures are often connected with other structures, and it seems that defining the precise delimitations between the other structures is also difficult. Like sensory impressions, these structures are mutually interconnected, which often makes for a layered and polysemous construction. Importantly, the denseness of the structures and the practices associated with them can be studied both quantitatively (with regard to the size of the elements) and qualitatively, which is appropriate given the variety of the structures.

Thematic sense maps combine these two methods of collecting and visualizing data. First of all, the maps represent things that are countable and indicate the frequency with which a particular sensory impression occurs in a given geographic location. Secondly, however, these impressions are not collected through direct experience, but are systematically reconstructed on the basis of the subjects' narrations. The sensory apparatus not only allows the subjects to remain in constant relation with their surroundings but on this basis, it also allows for modeling space in the geographical sense and defining the topographical identity of particular places or areas. Together, the sensory geographies of particular research subjects, reconstructed in the course of the study, create an image of Warsaw which, inevitably, is not complete. Maps related to each of the senses do not exhaust the possible experiences, as they are based on equally incomplete individual maps. Irrespective of whether we assume a quantitative or a qualitative perspective, sensory maps are made up of layers. Moreover, this pertains not only to the analysis of the narrations themselves, but also to the cartographic process, which serves to organize, generalize, and finally, to let us visualize the data collected during the research process.

The participants in my studies primarily discussed their smell- and sight-related perceptions, and were significantly less focused on their taste-related experiences. While images, sounds, and odors are inherent in the urban "sensosphere" over which we hold very little control, tastes are—to a degree—a matter of personal choice. As Juhani Pallasmaa (2012) claims in *The Eyes of the Skin,* "sight isolates, whereas sound incorporates; vision is directional, whereas sound is omni-directional. The sense of sight implies exteriority, but sound creates an experience of interiority. I regard an object, but sound approaches me; the eye reaches, but the ear receives" (p. 60). Smell seems to work in the same way that sound does—it surrounds and swallows us. Where sight implies isolation (we always look at something specific; there is always one thing on which we focus), sounds and hearing surround us in a sensory space. Maurice Merleau-Ponty (2001) provides a similar interpretation: "We should contest that the sound itself requires more of an act of seizing, while the

visual perception—the act of pointing" (p. 133). To confirm this, Merleau-Ponty quotes Adhémar Gelb and Kurt Goldstein, "Über Zeigen und Greifen" ("About Pointing and Grasping," 1931): "The sound always leads us to its content, to its significance for us; with the visual presentation, in contrast, it can be much easier to 'disregard' the content and tend to go rather to the place in space where the item is located" (Merleau-Ponty, 2001, p. 133).

In the case of taste, respondents tried to allocate tastes particular to Warsaw. This was partially influenced by the wording of one of the questions concluding both the interview and the conversations around maps: "What does Warsaw taste like?" Aside from that, taste appeared in narratives only rarely, as if asking about it in the context of a city was abstract and metaphorical. During a conversation, one respondent noted that tastes are easier to talk about in relationship to something specific. According to him, a city is too large, chaotic, and diverse to easily talk about taste, necessitating analogies and metaphors. It is, after all, difficult to taste the city itself, to bite, chew, and drink it. It serves more readily as a background for such experiences (Fig. 9.6).

The map of Warsaw's scents shows the density of negative impressions in the city center. What the respondents remembered most were the negative emotions, not the source of the unpleasant smell.

As Henri Lefebvre (1991) writes, "if there is any sphere where [...] an intimacy occurs between 'subject' and 'object,' it must surely be the world of smells and the places where they reside" (p. 197). Macnaghten and Urry (2005) observe that the sense of smell ensures a less planned contact with the environment, which cannot be turned on or off (p. 172). Similarly to sounds, scents immediately reach the perceiver, which influences the distinctive type of relation between the sentient person and the environment. Sight works in frames: each frame is logically connected to the previous one, so that they exist as a whole. A visual experience is a continuous one, whereas an olfactory experience is sudden, surprising, and—as I have previously mentioned—transient. Scents comprise "smellscapes" (Porteous, 1985, pp. 356–378), which are fittingly connotative of a visual work in which every element is to be in a particular place. Most urban scents can be organized and attributed to locations or areas; however, there are obviously those that "drift" through the city, e.g., smoke. Still, many places have their own scents, such as the fountain in the Saxon Garden with its damp smell, or the platforms of the Warszawa Centralna railway station with their peculiar smell of tracks.

According to the respondents, the most notable smell in Warsaw is the smell of nature, especially of trees and flowers (there are a lot of fragrant fruit trees, linden trees, and shrubs growing in the city). Only half as common are all kinds of nonspecific unpleasant odors. Interestingly, although Warsaw's city center is very congested, the transport-related pollution was not among the most common answers. It seems that the extensive green space acts as an olfactory buffer.

The specialized scents of Warsaw are characterized by their particularity. They were very often associated with specific places or spaces of the city, and characterized by "the smell of wet coal," "metal," "cut grass," or "hard candy." According to Paul Rodaway (1994), people only experience olfactory episodes, so the

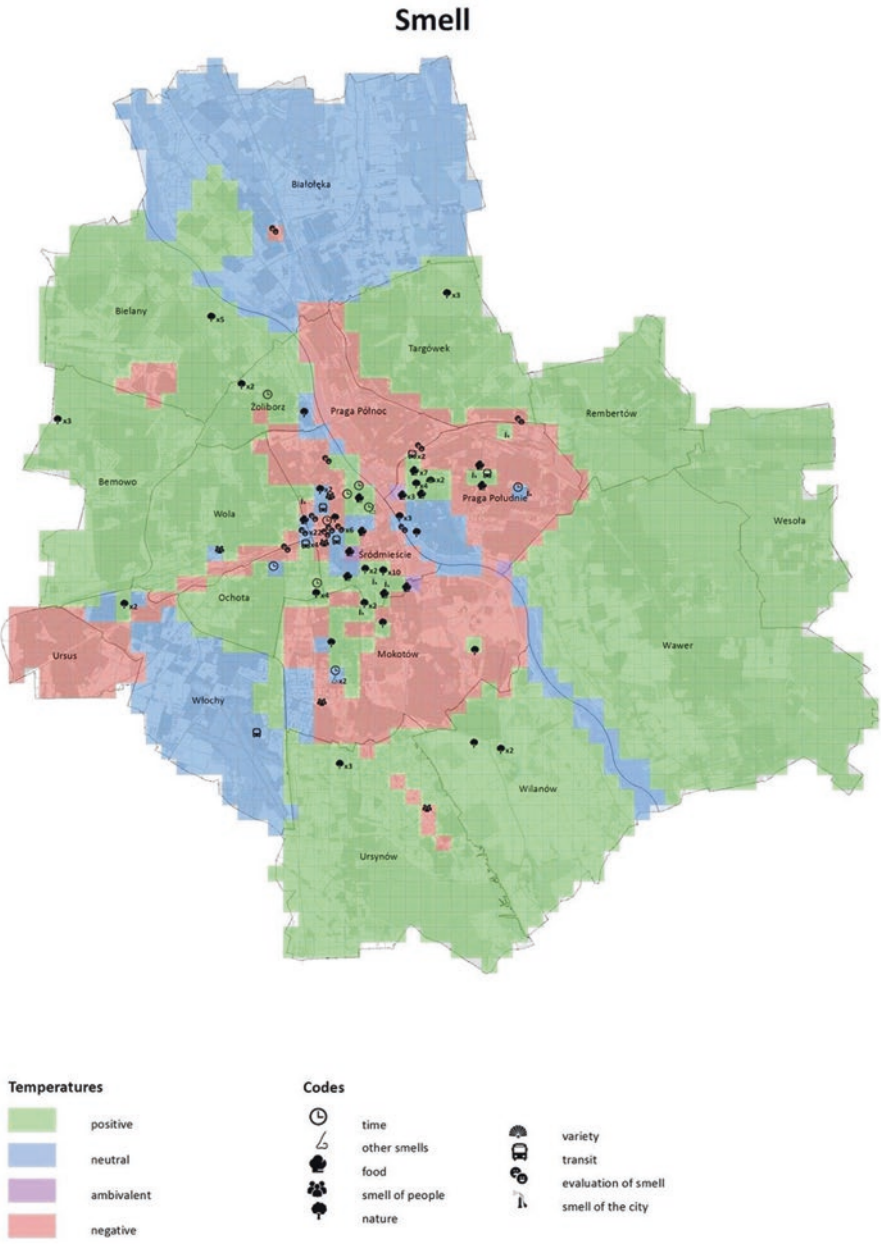

Fig. 9.6 Map of smell

geographical nature of smells (current, recalled, or potential) is fragmentary. In some cases, the respondents would mention time-specific smells, namely, the smell of old objects and places (e.g., books and churches), but also, in the metaphorical context, the elusive "smell of the moment" that people often talked about in the context of Warsaw. As an example, I would like to present the aforementioned Warszawa Centralna railway station, which most respondents indicated as the smelliest place in Warsaw. Even though the station was renovated for the football Euro Championship in 2012, its specific smell is still very vivid in the memories of residents. It seems that, despite the fact that the station does not smell anymore, for Varsovians it will smell forever (Fig. 9.7).

The thematic map of sight mostly shows positive experiences, which can be attributed to the fact that sight is the most controlled sense, after taste. As with respect to scents, the flora dominated the visual impressions recalled by the respondents, who also reminisced about architecture that organizes the city visually and sets fixed points on its map. Among the most commonly mentioned landmarks in the city were the Palace of Culture and Science, the Warszawa Centralna railway station, and the Old Town. All those places evoked mixed emotions. For instance, the Old Town was described as "a black hole" or a place that only exists until you reach the age of fifteen, and then vanishes from the individual's map of Warsaw. This suggests that the Old Town is mostly visited during school years; for example alongside the Royal Castle. Furthermore, for many Varsovians, it is considered a kind of a mock-up. The Old Town was completely destroyed during World War II, and its current shape is a result of subsequent reconstruction, such that it is old in name only.

Interestingly, a lot of attention was directed at those with whom the urban space is shared. Varsovians look at each other, often very openly, or even—to use a colloquial expression—they "eyeball" each other. They observe actions, they judge outfits, and they check what others are reading on public transport. This quiet observation replaces interactions or else it even becomes an interaction in itself, one that enables the users to safely get closer to fellow users of the urban space while remaining anonymous. Because of the intensity and the intersection of glances, the users of spaces conducive to such visual communion move within a dense network of mutual, strongly situational ties. This is reminiscent of what typically happens in little towns and villages all over Poland, where the locals like to sit on benches in front of their houses or stare out of their windows, so that they always know what is going on (Fig. 9.8).

The acoustic map is dominated by neutral experiences. Interestingly, contrary to what is usually said about urban noise, there were few precisely located negative auditory impressions. Warsaw's sound-sphere mostly comprises the sounds of cars, buses, and rail transport (trams, the Warsaw Metro, or the suburban rail lines). The city's sound levels, especially the noise characteristic of the central areas of Warsaw, were just as frequently mentioned by respondents. In agreement with Tuan (1974), it should be said that before people settled towns, noise had been a product of nature. Thunder, the sound of trees, the roaring of animals, the sound of a waterfall, an avalanche flowing down the slopes of the mountain were noises that would easily

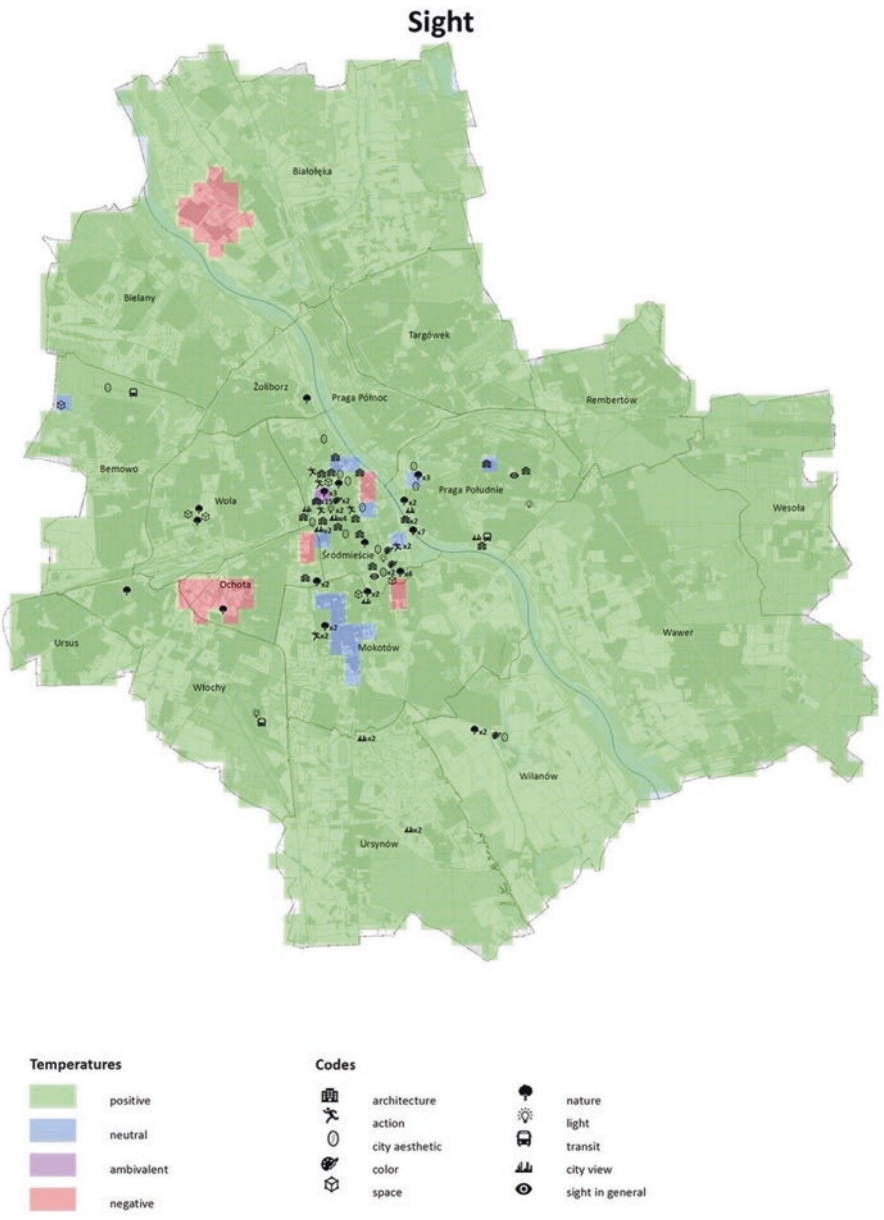

Fig. 9.7 Map of sight

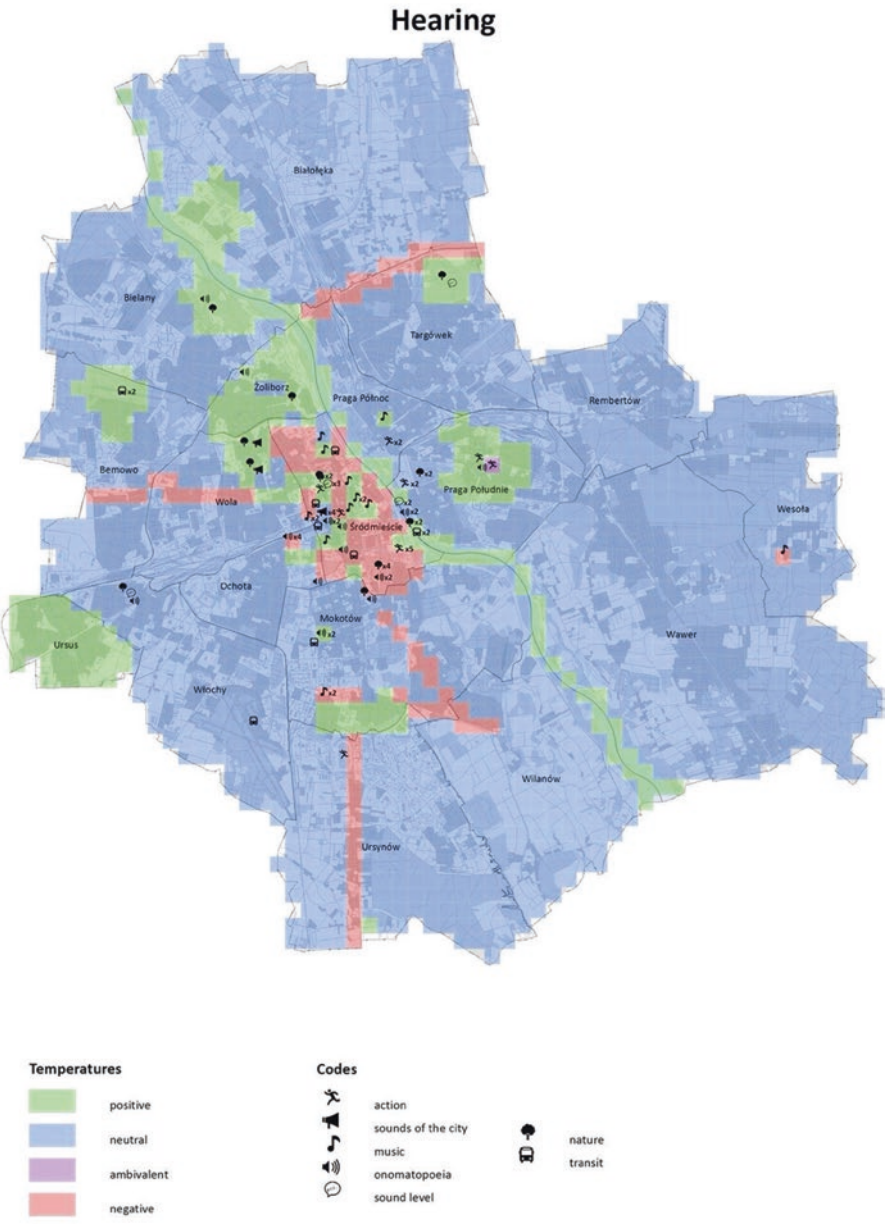

Fig. 9.8 Map of hearing

surpass any human-made sounds. The opposite is true in contemporary cities. The inhabitants and their products generate noise; nature is associated with soothing sounds and serenity. Nonetheless, the noise of Warsaw was not always considered negative: Some respondents considered it a neutral, inherent element of urban life, while it was a positive, helpful source of spatial orientation for others.

Varsovians not only watch other people, but also listen in on other people's conversations, which is hardly difficult as it is not really customary to keep your voice down on the street or on public transport in Warsaw. As for the sounds of nature, they are usually muffled by the city noise. However, according to the respondents, birdsong can be heard early in the morning even on the busiest walking routes in the city. The participants also pay attention to the issue of spatial awareness. In this context, sounds can either give you a better sense of direction or confuse you completely, which is especially experienced by the blind or people with visual impairments (Fig. 9.9).

Greater intensity of negative impressions than those on the sound map can be found on the touch map. This may be caused by the nature of this sense. First of all, touch often follows looking at something. Something is first noticed, then deliberately touched or avoided. In the research subjects' accounts concerning the sense of touch, there were also referrals to dirt, which literally led to the soiling of the body, resulting in the lowering of personal comfort and self-esteem. This problem especially concerned people in wheelchairs.

Secondly, the sense of touch and feeling requires direct contact with the given object. Touching something unpleasant, apart from an emotional reaction, such as disgust, often also elicits a physical reaction, such as flinching or moving away quickly. Unpleasant tactile experiences evoke aversion to the touched object, which, because of the strongly physical character of the experience, stands out in our memory. This may also explain the distinctively larger proportion of negative tactile memories in the accounts of the subjects.

Tactile experiences can be organized according to the typology proposed by Rodaway (1994, p. 53). The first type are those of a peripheral character—various objects and surfaces touched by our arms and legs. The second are complete tactile sensations that involve the entire body, or a part of it, excluding arms and legs. This type of touch includes the way we feel the temperature of our surroundings, but also, for example, coming into contact with other people on public transport. The third type of touch is prolonged. This is, for example, when we feel the surface of the ground under the wheels of a bicycle. The fourth type is imagined touch. The subjects did not describe an actual situation of touching but compared their experience of Warsaw to the touch of a particular thing, such as a coarse root, or a rough stone.

Tactile sensations were characterized by the greatest detail and precision of description. Subjects used many specific words, such as roughness or sponginess. They named types of materials (e.g., metal, plastic, glass, velour, silk). The inventory of words used in relation to touch was decidedly the most extensive and precise. It is also interesting that tactile experiences were most often used to describe the entire city (e.g., Warsaw is stony).

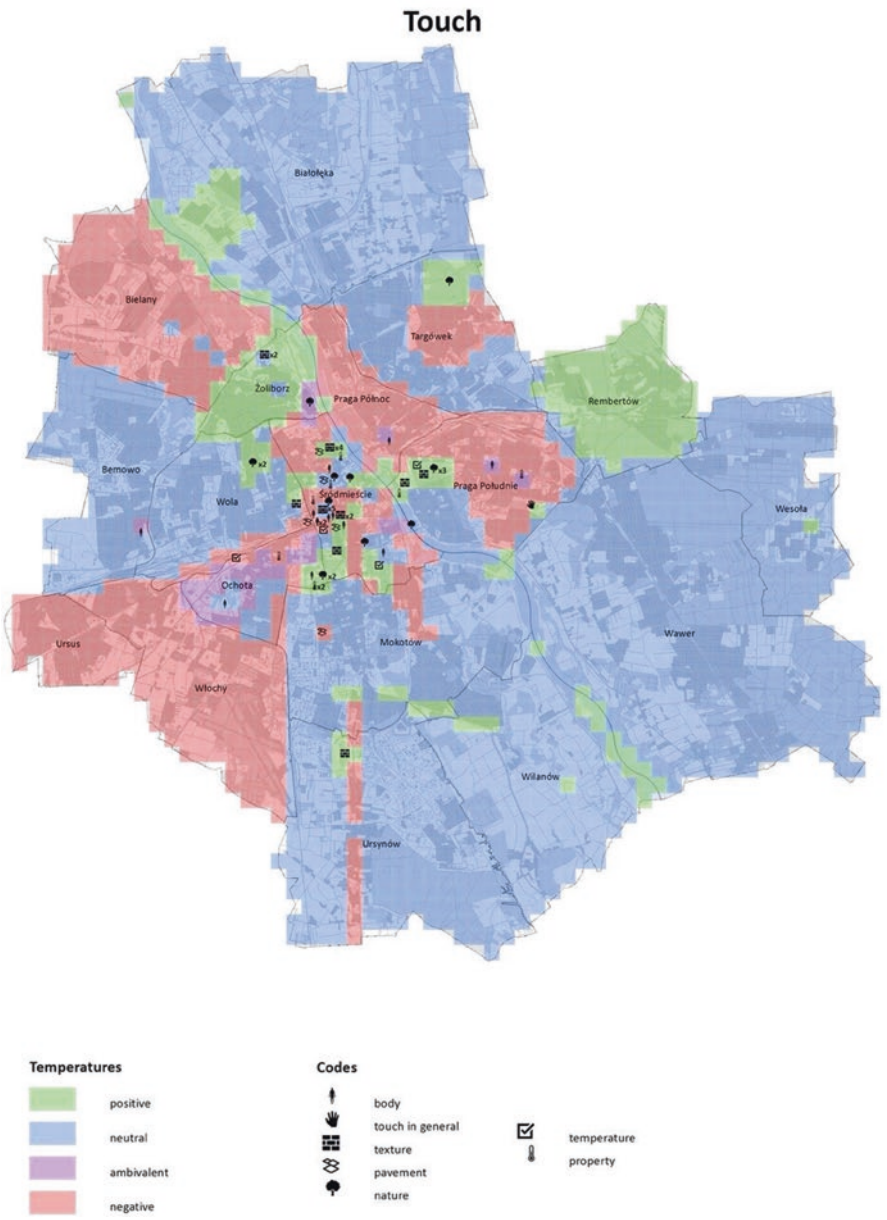

Fig. 9.9 Map of touch

This allows me to assume that it is in tactile sensations that the potential for creating meaning is greatest, and it can become a key to understanding the studied spaces, places, and relations in the realm of multisensory ethnology and sensual geography (Fig. 9.10).

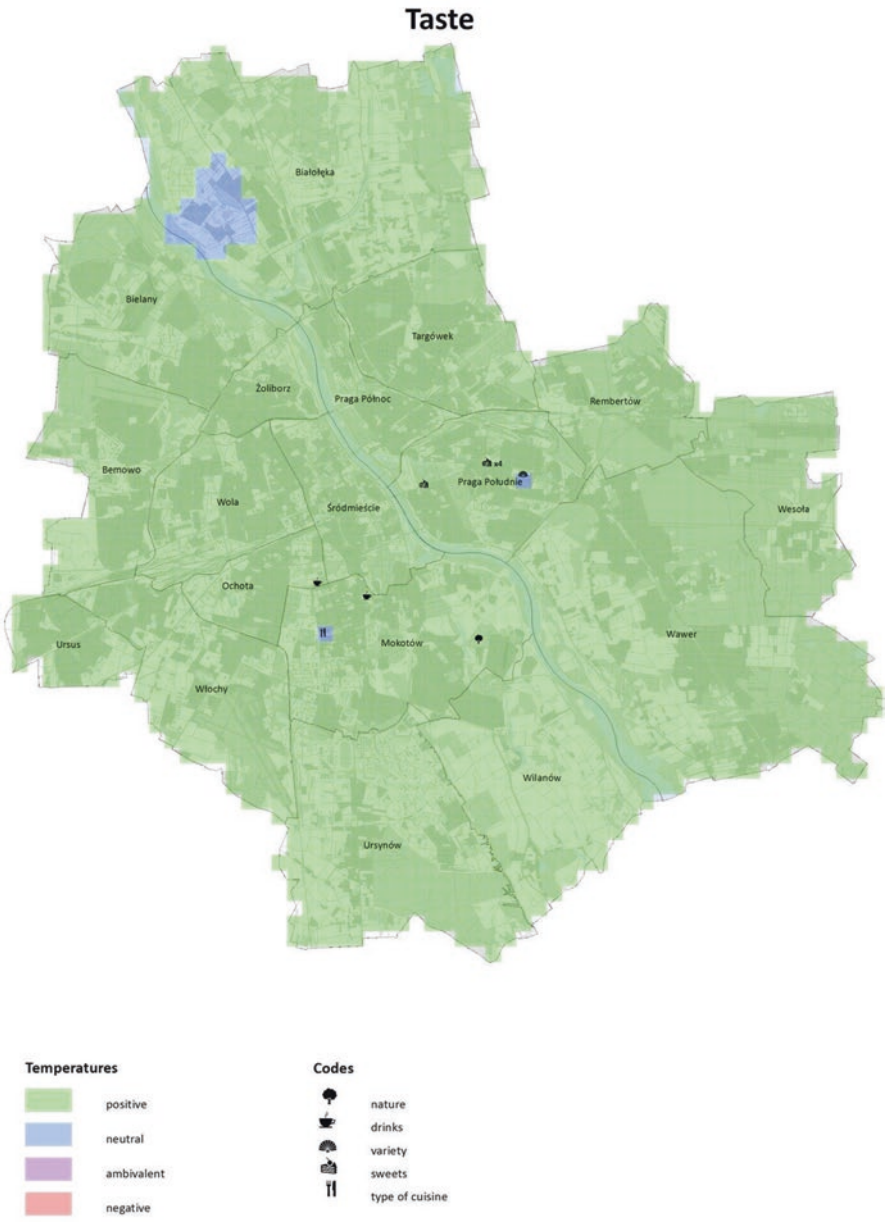

Fig. 9.10 Map of taste

The taste map is, with few exceptions, dominated by positive experiences. Locations were described with references to the type of cuisine, particular dishes, or products. Considerable attention was paid to the variety of available tastes, characteristic for large and medium-sized cities. The subjects, concentrating on the culinary offerings of the capital, rarely spoke of products typical of Warsaw. Among those mentioned were the famous cream rolls from Rondo Wiatraczna, *pańska skórka* (pulling candy) bought at the gates of cemeteries, and *pascha*, a white-cheese dessert that is a traditional Easter dish for some Poles. We can also find tastes with sentimental value for my generation—a "bun with mushrooms" and a "toasted bun from the stand between the Central Station and the Palace of Culture and Science," long since nonexistent. Interestingly, traditional Warsaw dishes such as pickled herring, *zimne nóżki* (pork jelly), or *flaki* (tripe soup) were not mentioned.

9.6 Conclusions

In my research, I tried to show that sensory experiences allow us to not only understand the geographic location of an individual, but also draw attention to the role of the body in this process. As such, investigating the sensory dimension of human experiences seems indispensable to understanding mechanisms through which experiences, places, and spaces are imbued with meaning, as well as those responsible for the creation of the topographic memory. To do so successfully, the correct tools need to be employed, hence the methodological focus in my work. By way of conclusions, a few things should be noted, starting with the relationship between the choice of the research area and the difficulties in the research process.

First of all, I have not chosen Warsaw at random. The research I had planned was going to be time-consuming, and so, easy access to the field was key. Furthermore, I was using some of my selected methods in their specific configurations for the first time. Because of this, it was important to ensure the ability to quickly "enter" the field, pilot the research tools, and correct potential mistakes. Warsaw is the city of my birth, my growing up, and it is where I live. One could think that it is therefore a city I know well. But due to the specific distance caused by the attitude of a researcher, I ended up treating the Warsaw I inhabit and the Warsaw I research as two distinct fields. The first one is a site of my constant presence. The other, however, I visit according to the rhythm of fieldwork. This lets me see it from a particular perspective, through the senses and experiences of other people.

Secondly, the social and cultural aspect of researching the senses is closely related to the issue of language, as it is what determines how the senses are discussed. It is through language that sensory experiences gain a verbal character, and as a sociologist, I primarily have access to narratives of experiences, and only rarely to the experiences themselves (which is why I chose walks as one of my methods, to be able to contrast the narrative with the practice). During my fieldwork, I found out that visual and aural experiences are most readily described out of sensory experiences. Other senses are more difficult to translate into words. The diversity of

sensory experience is rarely reflected in language, or in the ability to narrate the senses (similar difficulties face describing emotions). Metaphorical expressions are often useful here: According to George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's theory (2003), these phrases can analogize sensory experiences to something familiar and common, and thus make them more understandable for a greater number of people. Because of this, each unique sensory experience must be described through generalized, intersubjective terms. Complexity of a sensory experience is always reduced due to the need to frame it through familiar or novel terms.

Thirdly, a sociologist who decides to study the senses must face a number of difficulties, both theoretical and methodological. Senses, like emotions, belong to the sphere of human experiences located between that which is perceptible and that which is not conscious. Before starting my research, I had to face the fact that as a sociologist I do not have access to people's psychic processes and mental states, not in a way that can be conclusively described. This is why it is important to remain mindful that as a researcher I only have access to subjective, but culturally constructed ways and rules of expressing sensory experiences. Therefore, I couldn't be sure to what degree the methods I proposed really reach the source reality (the way the city is received through the senses), and to what extent they stop on the level of my respondents' consciousness. I worked with the risk that my research would only allow me to find the respondents' declarations about that reality, because in their daily life they do not have to thematize various aspects of how it is lived, and in a research situation they can only construct experiences, not recollect them. A respondent, after all, narrates their sensory experiences through a retrospection of actions and experiences, which means that these events can fade from memory, or maybe even become an object of manipulation in order to establish a proper meaning. A respondent may not even be aware of such manipulation.

In order to minimize the above dangers, I triangulated my methods of collecting and analyzing data. I used particular sources of data in two ways: Material from journals and ethnographic walks provided arguments and examples for theses and interpretative ideas built on the analysis of the remaining material (20 sentences about the city, mental maps and narratives, expert interviews). In hindsight, I must admit that the monofocus on proper methodologies might have caused some interpretive potentials in my material to go untapped. Today, I would probably put more emphasis on the methods I have described as complementary: ethnographic walks and research journals. Such methods provide an ability to limit the threat that given experiences will become warped through the passage of time. Comments and observations were immediately noted down during the walks, which did not preclude narrating sensory experiences of the past as well. A walk, then, connected the present with the past temporal dimension. This allowed me to describe the current sensory and bodily experiences of a given space, while also referencing similar past experiences. The journal of sensory experiences was located between those two dimensions. Particular experiences could be noted at the moment of their occurrence, but it would usually take until the end of the day to write them down. In such cases, however, memories contained events from a very recent past, which means that we can assume they represented the experiences themselves with reasonable accuracy.

Despite the challenges outlined above, I hope that the methodology and the theoretical approach I offer make it possible to grasp different layers of experiencing and reminiscing on sensory experiences. I also believe that this way of doing multisensory ethnography will contribute to explaining the social nature of sensory experiences, and their role in creating spaces and meanings. Sensory experiences other than sight are an understudied area, mostly due to methodological difficulties. I am, however, convinced that even if such study is challenging and risky, it is needed, along with a special focus on methodological transparency. Otherwise, important elements of social life woven around the senses could well slip from our attention.

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Chapter 10
How Research Can Support a More Embodied Pedagogy in Psychology

Kate Sheese

Several years ago, I taught *Psychology of Women* to a class of 50 undergraduate students at a public university in the United States. The class was composed largely of students who identified as women and was highly diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, age, immigration history, professional experience, and educational background. About halfway through the semester, in preparation for a lecture and discussion on the sociocultural representations of the vulva/vagina, I gave the students a no-credit assignment: *Draw (or otherwise visually depict) a vulva and write one to two paragraphs about how it felt to do this*. I asked them to bring these visual representations and paragraphs to our next class. Two days later, students arrived with an amazing assortment of artistic products in tow, collages, an oil painting on canvas, vulvas adorned with colorful pom-poms and other arts and craft materials, vulvas dripping blood, depicting violence, a half-eaten apple, and a giant-sized papier-mâché vulva piñata, one side hairless, the other with wildly styled pubic hair and a large clitoris piercing, filled with red candy. The energy in the room was palpable – a mixture of excitement, uncertain anticipation, and a kind of mischievous delight. We hung the artistic and the written work around the classroom and as students walked around taking in each other's work, the room became silent, with occasional eruptions of laughter and tears.

The products – artistic, intellectual, emotional, social, and political – of this assignment were astonishing and generated discussion that was complex and highly reflective. Many students expressed feeling simultaneously surprised, comforted, but also disturbed by a common sense of discomfort and/or disgust with and lack of familiarity with their own vulvas. So, compelled by each other's work and the ensuing discussion, the students in the class asked whether we might reproduce the experience for others by holding a vulva art fair at the college. Over the next several weeks, they self-organized a vulva art fair in which they interactively displayed

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their artwork and held a vulva flash mob in the lobby of the college (see Figs. 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4 and 10.5).[1]

I had not, in my wildest radical pedagogical dreams, expected this kind of response. I had expected that the assignment would provoke a certain amount of discomfort in most students and hoped that this experience of discomfort might enable them to not only intellectually understand the sociocultural representations of the vagina but to possibly also *feel* their embodied implications. I had assigned a text by Braun and Wilkinson (2001), "Sociocultural representations of the vagina," in which they illustrate contemporary and historical (primarily Western) representations of the vagina and explore some of their potential implications for women's health and well-being. Braun and Wilkinson outline seven key representations: "the vagina as inferior to the penis; the vagina as absence; the vagina as (passive) receptacle for the penis; the vagina as sexually inadequate; the vagina as disgusting; the vagina as vulnerable and abused; and the vagina as dangerous" (p. 18). The authors acknowledge the connection between cultural representation and material experiences, discussing representations not simply as ideas but as having "material impacts on people's lives" and, more specifically, representations of the vagina as "cultural resources that women (and men) can use for making sense of the vagina and their experiences of it" (p. 18).

I believed that the students would recognize many of these cultural representations, but I wondered whether or to what extent students could allow themselves to

Fig. 10.1 The vulva art fair at the college

[1] The artwork features in the photos were produced in the context of a Psychology of Women class at the City University of New York in 2012.

Fig. 10.2 Example art piece from the art fair

know their material, embodied consequences even if they carried these knowledges in their own bodies. I hoped that the task of drawing a vulva, in all its simplicity, had the potential to awaken, animate, or embolden these embodied forms of knowledge. I had not understood how radically unsettling and generative it could be to invite these experiences and forms of knowledge into a university classroom. Interested in understanding more clearly what had taken place in this interaction and how we all got there, so to speak, I interviewed nine students about their experiences with the assignment and where/when/how they had encountered and learned about vulvas/vaginas throughout their lives. I conducted the interviews in the following semester after the class had been completed.

Nine cis-women participated in interviews. They ranged in age from 20 to 48 years old, though most were in their twenties. Eight women identified as heterosexual, one of whom described having had sexual experiences with women. One participant identified as asexual and, in her interview, described having sexual experiences with men and women. The group was diverse in terms of race and ethnic background. Four women identified as White, one as West Indian, one as Black, one as Afro-Caribbean, one as Guyanese, and one as Latina. Two women had immigrated to the United States at/after the age of 18. I analyzed their interviews using the Listening Guide (Brown et al., 1989), an approach to narrative analysis that

Fig. 10.3 Example art piece from the art fair

involves multiple interpretive readings and listening for two or more contrapuntal voices. The process of multiple readings and listening for contrapuntal voices "enables the listener to develop multiple perspectives on a single narrative, producing a complex, multilayered interpretation" (Tolman, 2002, p. 209). In my analysis, I listened for relational voices of engagement and estrangement, that is, narrations of engaging or estranging encounters with one's body/self and/or others. Relational voices of engagement were characterized by instances of witnessing, being shown, being told, named, being seen/recognized, telling, showing, and/or asking. Relational voices of estrangement were characterized by instances of concealment, withholding, silencing, and/or shaming. Listening for instances of these contrapuntal voices occurring together allowed me to see more clearly the dialectical relationship of engagement and estrangement, revealing an entangled production of embodied knowledges of engagement (that is, knowledges that name and speak the body and/or promote connection to, curiosity about, exploration of body and self, or the experience one's body as site of familiarity, safety, expertise, desire, and pleasure) and knowledges of estrangement (that is, knowledges that promote alienation, distancing, or lack of connection to/fear/silencing of the self and/or the body). This approach to analysis allowed me to understand these women's embodied histories

Fig. 10.4 Example art piece from the art fair

and relationships with (their) vulvas in a way that did not flatten or erase the embedded tensions, dilemmas, and contradictions.

In what follows, I explore the core question of what kind of methods can support a more embodied pedagogy. Specifically, I draw on these students' interviews to understand how the vulva assignment, as a visual and experience-based method, elicited an embodied, affective, and relational engagement and surfaced diverse forms of knowledge not traditionally legitimated in the classroom, provoking a depth and complexity of collective critical analysis and initiating processes related to sociopolitical development, including the possibility for ontological healing (Sánchez Carmen et al., 2015). I begin by situating silence and shame: first by reviewing the literature on women's embodiment and then by exploring how the vulva assignment initiated the co-production of an 'epistemology of ignorance', beginning to recognize and understand the practices that account for not knowing or that prompted the unlearning of what was once known (Tuana, 2004). I then trace the socio-relational circuits of embodied knowledges that appeared in the narratives of the women I interviewed, as they completed the assignment, in their relational histories of learning about vulvas, and in the ways women spoke about discovering new relational selves. I examine the ways in which the assignment opened up possibilities for sociopolitical development and supported a more embodied pedagogy. Finally, I consider the power of embodied pedagogies, not only for teaching critical

Fig. 10.5 Example art piece from the art fair

psychologies, but also for taking seriously the potential of the university classroom as a contact zone (Torre & Fine, 2010) for co-constructing a more poetic, populated, aesthetic (Billig, 1994; Freeman, 2011; Quigua & Clegg, 2015), and less disembodied/disembodying psychological science.

10.1 Situating Silence and Shame: Developing Epistemologies of Ignorance

The feminist psychological literature exploring women's embodiment and sexual subjectivities works to disrupt the broader cultural and scholarly construction of women's bodies as disorderly, dangerous, and in need of regulation/discipline. This work shifts the focus from women's individual bodies, behaviors, and attitudes to the material and discursive *production* of women's bodies as problematic/pathological (e.g., Braun & Wilkinson, 2001; Chrisler & Caplan, 2002; Lloyd, 2005; Siebers, 2008; Ussher, 2006), and women's sexual subjectivities as dysfunctional and/or lacking (e.g., Espin, 1995; Fine & McClelland, 2006; Rose, 2003; Tiefer, 2001; Tolman, 2002; Zavella, 1997). In focusing on the material and discursive production of women's embodiment, this work challenges the notion of women's dissatisfaction, silence/shame, and disengagement/estrangement as natural or inevitable and emphasizes the social and political inequalities that shape their embodiment and

sexual subjectivities. This work has opened space for examining possibilities for and instances of creative resistance to dominant discourses, practices, and expectations. It has, at the same time, emphasized the powerfully constrained development of resistant sexual subjectivities in the context of persistently negative sociocultural representations of women's bodies and the vulva and vagina, in particular; compulsory heterosexuality and heterosexism; violence and coercion; and (where it exists at all) inadequate sex education that divorces "facts" about sex and sexuality from their social and political context and rely heavily on discourses of danger/vulnerability.

10.1.1 Negative Sociocultural Representations

Literature on the discursive production of women's bodies emphasizes cultural and historical constructions of the female body as abject, deficient, and diseased, of menstruation as pollution and source of delinquency, of pregnancy as the epitome of feminine excess (Ussher, 2006), as well as the persistent negative representations of the vulva and vagina as inferior to the penis, as absence, as a passive receptacle for the penis, as sexually inadequate, as disgusting, as vulnerable, and as dangerous (Braun & Wilkinson, 2001). In the few qualitative studies that have been carried out, these negative sociocultural representations have been consistently (though not exclusively) reflected in women's talk about their genitals. Women have been found to refer to their vaginas as liabilities, as making them vulnerable psychologically, physiologically, and to abuse, and as unpleasant in appearance, taste, and smell (Braun, 2000).

Women have also been found to consistently regard menarche and menstruation as unwelcome events, which they view as messy, unhygienic, disgusting, and requiring sanitization, hiding, or even suppression (Burrows & Johnson, 2005; Fahs, 2011a). Some of this literature shows how these kinds of negative feelings as well as actual social-relational consequences of not engaging in normative practices to manage their 'unruly' bodies (such as shaving or waxing) are not evenly distributed across women and that they have raced, classed, and heteronormative dimensions. In Fahs' (2011b) study on body hair, the social-relational consequences of not removing any body hair over the course of a semester were more pronouncedly negative and severe for women of color and women with low socioeconomic status. Negative feelings were less common among lesbian-identified women and the socio-relational consequences of not removing body hair were less pronounced for women in romantic and sexual relationships with other women than for women in heterosexual relationships.

10.1.2 Compulsory Heterosexuality and Gendered Violence

A great deal of feminist work has explored the role of compulsory heterosexuality in regulating and constraining women's relationships with their bodies and the development of their sexual subjectivities, with a particular concern with its role in engendering physical and sexual violence (e.g., Bartky, 1990; Farvid & Braun, 2013; Holland et al., 2004; Kitzinger, 1992; Rich, 1980, Tolman et al., 2003). The theory of compulsory heterosexuality, originally formulated by Adrienne Rich (1980), emphasizes the ways in which heterosexuality operates as a "system that regulates women's sexuality by making visible and viable only one specific form of romantic and sexual relationship, thereby rendering it natural, normal, moral, and desirable" (Tolman, 2006, p. 75). While Rich's theory aimed to illuminate the mechanisms by which women are compelled into heterosexuality and the resulting erasure of lesbian desire, relationships, and communities, more recent engagements with the theory have identified and explored ways in which hegemonic femininity and masculinity work together to reproduce heterosexuality as an institution and set of practices (Tolman, 2006). According to much of the work in this area, hegemonic femininity constitutes an unsafe sexual identity and normative feminine behavior puts young women at risk by requiring them to appear sexually unknowing, to engage (primarily or exclusively) in discourses of romance and intimacy, to suppress their own needs and desires and prioritize those of her (presumably male) partner, to be the gatekeeper for male desire, and to internalize an observer's perspective vis-à-vis their own bodies, monitoring and disciplining them into conformity with male desire (Fine, 1988; Holland et al., 2004; Tolman et al., 2014). This work suggests that these requirements and practices estrange women from their own bodies, their sexual desires, their ability to receive pleasure, and as a result, constrain their ability to negotiate pleasurable, safe, and consensual sexual encounters (Tolman et al., 2014).

An extensive body of literature describes pervasive physical and sexual violence perpetuated against women's bodies and the detrimental effects both the experience of as well as the implicit threat of violence have on women's developing embodiment and sexual subjectivity (e.g., Brown, 2007; Burstow, 2003; Crenshaw, 1991; Tolman, 2002). This work seeks to understand (and potentially intervene in) the ways in which violence against women is produced, maintained, and normalized. Here, compulsory heterosexuality has been taken as not just a lens for understanding the production of violence against women, but also for the ways in which heteronormative scripts are appropriated by young women to make sense of (and normalize) everyday harassment, violence, and coercion (e.g., Hlavka, 2014). Work in this area seeks to account for the ways in which historical and structural violence, injustice, and inequality that unevenly put at risk and differentially shape the experiences of violence of women who are marginalized by race, class, immigration status, ability, and/or gender conformity (e.g., Bethune-Davies et al., 2006; Collins, 2004; Crenshaw, 1991; Tolman, 2006; Zavella, 2003).

10.1.3 Sexual Education

Although more than three decades have passed since the publication of Fine's (1988) account of how – entangled within and reproducing discourses of sexuality as violence, victimization, individual morality – school-based sex education in the United States was accomplishing little in the way of enhancing sexual subjectivity and was effectively teaching young women to be silent about their sexual desire, it appears that distressingly little has changed. Despite calls to incorporate a discourse of pleasure (e.g., Allen, 2007; Bay-Cheng, 2003; Lamb, 1997), the conceptualization of "thick desire" (Fine & McClelland, 2006; McClelland & Fine, 2014), and the notion of sexual and reproductive citizenship (Macleod & Vincent, 2014; Weeks, 1998) into theory, policy, and practice in and around sexual health education for young people, curricula appear to continue to be largely fear-based and aimed at providing non-controversial "facts" about bodies and sex. Fields (2008) observes that formal sex education (where it exists) in the United States depicts the body as natural, normalized, and, of particular relevance to my analysis, asocial. She describes the use of pedagogical materials that uniformly present images of white bodies "truncated, normalized, and absent of any apparent social relationships" (Fields, 2008, p. 110).

Taken together, this literature helps to understand some of the ways in which silence, shame, and estrangement might have characterized the students' experiences and understandings of women's bodies when they embarked on the task of drawing a vulva.

10.2 The Vulva Assignment as Confrontation

Many students were not familiar with the term "vulva" and "had to Google it" to figure out what a vulva was. Even among students who knew what the term referred to many were uncertain about what a vulva could look like and turned to Google to find out. When students described this experience in class, one student asked why nobody used a mirror. The question was received with a stunned silence, followed by a general recognition of the power and meaning of this question, provoking a great deal of discussion about cultural/social silence, feelings of shame and disgust, and the vulva as absence and as "naturally" hidden or hard to see. Many students talked about not even being able to *say* the words "vulva" or "vagina." Icy reflected on this in her interview:

> First there was that weird shameful thing where it was like, oh my god, I have to sit here and draw this thing or look at them. And… I still couldn't say the word, right? And then… like, it wasn't a joke… there was just so much joking around up to actually doing it… that when I sat down, I was just like, I don't really have anything. […] Like, what was I supposed to draw? I have one; I should know what it looks like, you know?

Icy, like many students in the class, was surprised to discover her own level of discomfort and lack of knowledge. She had regarded herself as a very open person who would "talk about anything" with anyone. Other students described confronting previously unnoticed silence and feelings of shame, disgust, and alienation connected to vulvas as well as to labia, pubic hair, or menstruation. The images, personal reflections, and discussions in the classroom opened a space for critical reflection on the production of silence, shame, disgust, and alienation. Icy reflected on coming to see her feelings of shame, not as a personal deficiency, but as being shaped by her experiences in the world.

> I guess I do have shame that I don't even know about because I consider myself to be pretty, but apparently there's a lot of, you know, I had that, shame, right? But I also understood that these feelings came out of somewhere. It wasn't like I woke up one morning and was like, "I'm really ashamed of my vagina." It wasn't like that. Like… these things all had happened that on some level made me feel that way. Um… and I understood that at that point. That also, like, how can something so desired be, like, so gross at the same time, right?

Other students were more acutely aware of their own discomfort or alienation. Some students eagerly welcomed the chance to explore these feelings and others described feelings of trepidation or uncertainty. Brooke, for example, said that despite being a bit "weirded out," she felt a strong need to explore her relationship with her body and her sexuality and to understand what it meant to her and was "ready for it."

On the other hand, Nichole described feeling reluctant and conflicted:

> Honestly, I was like, "I don't want to do this. Um... I really, I respected you, but I just felt like, I am self-conscious, especially with artwork. I was an artist in high school, but I was like, "how am I going to do this in a way that I feel is going to be interesting and, like, impressive, but still represents me and, like, the truth. Because I don't want to... um... I don't want to try too hard. Like, I know you wanted it to be real and not... I think sometimes I'm ingenuine in my efforts, if you know what I mean? Like, you try to impress people, so you do it a different way. So, I didn't want to do that.

Nichole saw her desire to produce something "good" as being in conflict with her desire (and my desire for the students) to produce something honest.

> I don't talk about it. I don't know anything about it. I am an infant. Like, I don't have this kind of knowledge. I don't feel proud. I feel, like, very not at a very healthy place in my relationship with my vulva and... I wanted to express that artistically.

For Nichole, producing something honest meant wading into a realm of uncertainty and not knowing, confronting her own alienation from her vulva and a set of uncertain artistic and academic standards.

Other students also confronted paradoxical and binary representations of the vulva/vagina, as Icy alluded to in her question, how can the vagina be so desired and so gross at the same time? Brooke described her amazement when her Google search produced only images of either pathology or pornography:

> Like, you type 'vulva' and it's like, "Uuugghh! Whooo! Lord! Mmm! [shaking head] Mm-mm!" You know, like, "whooo!" You know, you got like the bumpy ones… and the scabby ones… so… that's why I was, like, shocked. Like, see? This is why I have the issues

> I have, people, you know? Because it's "Y'all! Y'all, y'all, y'all over here just indoctrinatin' me." Like, "this is naaasty," you know? So, I actually had to go on some, like almost porn websites to get, like, normal, good-looking stuff.

During the class discussion, Brooke had critically reflected on what "normal" and "good-looking" meant after describing her experience online. Almost all the vulvas she came across, both in the pornographic images as well as the images on a website that featured "a whole bunch of really tastefully done pictures of different vulvas" were hairless and of white women. She questioned whether, as a black woman, white normativity had something to do with her feelings of shame and disgust. In her interview, another student, Tanya, described how white normativity had caused a friend of hers, a woman of color, to come up with various explanations to account for why her own vulva was not white.

> I'd been updating her about the class all semester and while we were talking, she was like, "You know, I don't feel comfortable with it, with my vagina. I think it's dark. I don't like the color of it. And she didn't realize – I think in her head, she was the only one who had a darker vagina. She was basically saying, "oh, maybe it's because when you're walking, it rubs."

For some students, seeing the diverse representations and experiences of the vulva in their peers' artwork served as a powerful interruption of the limited cultural representations and ways of understanding vulvas. Nichole expressed how important this disruption was and what it had meant for her:

> It felt so amazing to walk around that classroom and see all that. It really felt like... an art gallery.
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> KS: What felt amazing?
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> Nichole: That I could see this visual without feeling like it's an expression of vulgar, grotesque, like... discomfort. I felt like I could look at this and feel... like this one expresses beauty and this one expresses violence... like, it means all of these things and, and it's not just... this one image that I've had in my head forever. Like, it, it felt really freeing. It felt like I could look at it without feeling like I have to look away.

For Nichole, her peers' work disrupted her singular dominating image of vulgarity and the act of posting the art on the wall of the classroom in a way that made it feel like an art gallery, gave her permission to really look.

It is important to consider the ways in which this assignment likely reinforced and reproduced cis-normative understandings and representations of the vulva. I know I used language that equated vulvas with the bodies of cis-women and that implied that all, and only, women have vulvas. I expect that the way I spoke made it extremely unlikely that embodied knowledges of trans men or non-binary people with vulvas, women without vulvas or with neovulvas, or people with intersexual genitalia would surface and inform our collective inquiry.

10.3 Tracing Socio-relational Circuits of Embodied Knowledges

I was struck by how many students made their vulva projects with someone else (e.g., friends, a brother, a neighbor, a son, a mother) and by how many ongoing conversations had been initiated outside of the classroom. For many students, it was these interactions that really made apparent the silences, gaps, and discomfort related to vulvas and vaginas in their immediate social surroundings. Many of them not only experienced the assignment as a confrontation, but took it as an opportunity to confront others, in a variety of ways, provoking a range of different responses.

Icy described the assignment as "a great silly opportunity" and her description of talking to others suggests how she used humor as a way of confronting/inviting others, but also as a way of managing her own discomfort.

> Icy: laughing, lots of laughing, right? "Listen to what my teacher made me do," or, "I'm going to go sit on the computer and google some vulvas right now," or... just like kinda funny stuff. I'm totally always a comedian all of the time and just like, random shit, so this was a great way to be like, "hey! Guess what!"
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> KS: And how did people react when you said that?
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> Icy: Most of them first said, "what the hell class are you taking?" [laughs] And then when I told them, they asked why... you would ask us to do something like that.

Icy went on to describe her experience drawing the vulva while on a break at work.

> So, I came in and it was like – he's an artist. He draws really good. So, I was like, "hey, want to do my homework for me?" And he was like, "what?" And I was like [laughs]... and then I couldn't even say it. I was like, "Uh, you want to draw lady parts for me?" [laughs] And then he was cracking up and then, like, it just became a running joke during the day. Like, "do your homework! Do your homework!"
>
> And then it was funny because, like, I sit in a window [and] I always just sit there and do my schoolwork, but yet, I went to my little secret cove [where I go] when I don't want to be bothered by anyone. And that's where I went to do my vulva project, right? And then... it turned out I had to end up googling it. So then it turned into a joke with my co-worker, like, "guess what I'm googling!" Or, "want to come take a peep?" like, that sort of thing! So... yeah... but then I was like, "oh my god, they're probably monitoring my internet. I'm going to get into so much trouble!" I work at Fox News, so...

Icy's narrative shows a bold, provocative engagement with this "silly opportunity" and signals a wish to others, the vulnerability of which is partially masked in humor. Her humor provokes and invites connection, traces the contours of her own discomfort (e.g., using the humorous turn of phrase "lady parts") and offers everyone an easy way out of what risks becoming an overly exposing, vulnerable interaction. Icy's humor plays with the notion of vulvas and vaginas as obscene and inappropriate for the workplace at the same time that she worries about surveillance, taking cover in her "little secret cove" and worried about the potential ramifications of searching for vulvas on the internet.

Jill, who was working in a Jewish nursery school, also described completing the assignment at work, using the children's paints, and some of the reactions and ongoing conversations it provoked.

> And like, I did it at my job, after the kids left, with watercolour. [One colleague] was really like, "that's really cool," but then the other girl... is... more like, very judgmental. I told her about the project... like, she definitely was not comfortable with it. Like, no fucking way. And I told them about the piñata… I said, "there was a piñata and inside... red candy came out!" And she goes, "uggh." She was like, "oh god." Like, disgusted. What she said, she goes, "I feel like a Jewish girl would never do that." That's what she said. And then the other girl, who's [also] Jewish goes, "I would do that!" And I was like, "I know a lot of people who would do that."

Jill explained that as time went on, the tone of their conversations changed.

> [Now] she has talked about her experiences with a boyfriend she had had and how during having sex with her boyfriend, her period started and he got totally grossed out and ran in the shower. And she had talked about it and I think she felt really self-conscious about it and wanted some, like, "is this ok?" without actually saying that 'cause she kind of also has to keep up this thing about her. And I was like, "He's really immature." And I was like, "and it's way better off that you're not with him." And she's like, "yeah, right?!" And I was like, "yeah." I was like, "because... like, nobody should be disgusted and if they are, you shouldn't be with them." She was like, "yeah!" And I think it made her feel... and it was cool because we were able to have that conversation.

Jill observed that amidst so much silence, shame, and disgust, people seemed to be aching to talk and eagerly took her opening the subject of the vulva as an opportunity to share their own experiences, confusions, feelings, and judgments with her. Brooke was similarly struck after giving a presentation in her experimental psychology class which took our class project as its starting point.

> Brooke: I had girls in Psych 250, expe-ri-men-tal psy-cho-lo-gy – come up and share stories with <u>me</u> about their experience. That was just amazing. You know? It was just amaazing. Girls <u>want</u> to talk about it! They want to share these experiences with somebody, but where… and how… is the problem, you know? And I guess with who, you know? With who? Like, who wants to hear these stories, you know?

Brooke's surprise is threefold: "girls want to talk about it"; they want to talk about it with *her*; and they are moved to talk about it even in the context of an experimental psychology class. Vulvas might be considered acceptable material for a course in the psychology of women, but their obscenity is made plain in the context of experimental psychology, a sacred place for serious science!

Brooke also described how making her vulva collage at the kitchen table in her mother's apartment served as an interruption into an ever-present silence about their bodies. Brooke emphasized how little she had known about her own body growing up, illustrating the point with a memory of how she had been too ashamed to throw her used menstrual pads in the bathroom garbage at home. She had been hiding used pads in a drawer in her bedroom and described how her mother's admonishing reaction to finding the pads made her feel more confused and alone:

> I was so ashamed, I didn't want to put it in the garbage can because I didn't want my brother to see it. I didn't want anybody to see it. But I guess it was worse… I was just confused! Like, [her reaction] didn't really clarify anything. It just made me more confused.

> Like… I have an older mom… so, my mom is like 60-something, so like, when I was a kid, like, she had already, I think had already went through menopause, so nobody else was doing that, but me! I didn't want to be the only one!

Brooke made use of her collage to interrupt these experiences of intense isolation, confusion, and shame and to disrupt the silence between herself and her mother. When she presented her collage to the class, she described the conversation she had with her mother while she was making it. Brooke's mother became an enthusiastic supporter of the students' vulva art fair – she and Brooke baked a vulva cake together; she brought and worked the sound equipment for the flash mob; and she volunteered to represent the class at the art exhibit throughout the day as the students came back and forth between classes.

These narratives show the ways in which the vulva assignment as a kind of relational prompt and, on the one hand, how eagerly these students seized the opportunity to start speaking and sharing with others, but also how these are delicate and dialectical engagements, managed with humor, shifting between engaging and concealing, between assuredness and doubt.

10.4 Relational Histories: Listening for Dialectical Voices of Engagement and Estrangement

Listening for voices of engagement and estrangement in the relational histories of women allowed me to see an entangled production of embodied knowledges of engagement (that is, knowledges that name and speak the body and/or promote connection to, curiosity about, exploration of body and self, or the experience one's body as a site of familiarity, safety, expertise, desire, and pleasure) and knowledges of estrangement (that is, knowledges that promote alienation, distancing, or lack of connection to/fear/silencing of the self and/or the body). I explore this dialectical and relational production of embodied knowledges here in two women's narratives relating to masturbation.

10.4.1 Tanya

While Tanya had heard *of* masturbation from her cousins, she described being "introduced" to masturbation by her first boyfriend around the age of 15 when they used to have frequent phone sex.

> I knew what masturbation was, but I, I... basically, he kind of introduced me to it. Like, "oh yeah, just, you know, just, you know... play with your clit, whatever. Just rub it," you know? And
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> KS: And had you ever tried before?
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> T: No, I hadn't tried before. I mean...
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> KS: Had you thought about it?
>
> Tanya: I thought about it and... like, then again, I didn't know exactly what the hell to do. [laughs] I didn't know what to do, you know? And then... like, I knew what... how to do it, but I didn't know if you did it... I didn't know if you had to rub your clit or you had to have penetration... what... how you have an orgasm through masturbation. So... basically, yeah... he basically was just telling me – I mean, before that... I didn't... I don't know. I didn't have the urge to do it. It just... just kind of him being him made me open up a lot more... to... um, masturbating. And it started off on the phone and then I started doing it after that, on my own.

Tanya depicted a simultaneous knowing and not knowing (engagement and estrangement) – intertwined in such a way that Tanya struggled to articulate and tease apart the knowing from not knowing. She attributes not having tried masturbating to her not knowing, but describes knowing enough to wonder and imagine in concrete terms – do you rub your clitoris or do you need penetration? Tanya narrated a connection between not knowing, not having the urge, and not being open enough. Her boyfriend and perhaps being on the telephone offered a relational context in which exploration became possible and "the urge" could arise.

This is a particularly interesting encounter to examine in the ways that it both conforms to and provides a basis for moving away from heteronormative scripts about male/female sexuality. Tanya assumed and her boyfriend asserted a casual male sexual expertise. Tanya's assumption of men's sexual expertise is especially clear when she described the joy of learning she could give herself an orgasm, unassisted.

> I liked it! I liked it 'cause I knew I could do it for myself, so I was, like, "ok!" ...I can have an orgasm myself. I don't need to... because before that, you know, guys went down on me and I thought, you know, they just knew what they were doing. It was during sex. And... once I kind of did it on my own... I don't think... I think more or less I got comfortable with just doing it on my own and I was like, "Ok, I can do this." And that's what I continued doing it.

In this case, the expertise becomes her own.

10.4.2 Valeria

Valeria described teaching her friend Amy to masturbate when they were in the eleventh grade.

> And then my other best friend, Amy, who I mentioned before, um... she... we must've been in junior year, or so, and I was hanging out with her and... her best friend at the time, Carey, um... and we... at, at Carey's house. And, I don't know how, but we got onto the topic of masturbation and Amy, um... Amy said something along the lines of, "I've never done it. I don't know how." And so Carey and I were like, "what do you mean you don't know how? What are you talking about?" And so I, this wise old sage, um... just explained it to her.
>
> KS: What did you say?
>
> Valeria: You know, I explained to her where the clitoris is and... that it, you just touch it and figure out what works for you and imagine some super-hot guy – and it would've been a super-hot guy because it was a pretty heteronormative town... um... and... you know, just think about something and touch it until it feels good! Uh... and to this day, she thanks me for teaching her how to masturbate.

Valeria was one of the few students I interviewed who described a consistent level of engagement (telling, being shown, showing) in her early life. Her mother, influenced by her engagement in the women's liberation movement, had been deliberate in her attempts to raise a daughter who was "very comfortable in her own body and comfortable being a girl," though Valeria notes that her mother did not have this for herself. Wanting this for her daughter, Valeria's mother talked openly about bodies, bought her books about anatomy, and encouraged her to observe and explore her own genitals using a mirror after she bathed.

Valeria's narrative about teaching Amy to masturbate reinforces the ways in which Valeria narrated herself throughout the interview: as a knowing and aware self, connected to and familiar with her own body. Unlike many of the women I interviewed, talking about masturbation appeared as relatively normal among Valeria's close friends. Her words, "I don't know how, but we got onto the topic of masturbation," presented masturbation as a subject innocuous enough to not remember how it came up and to have entered the conversation without causing disruption or disintegration. Valeria did not use the passive voice (as in, the topic came up), but spoke in the active voice, "*we* got onto the topic," demonstrating a certain level of ownership of the topic.

While this narrative reinforces Valeria's self as knowing and entitled to sexual pleasure, her reference to herself as a "wise old sage" suggests certain tensions in the ways that she understood and experienced her body. At the same time that these words depict a self in possession of valued knowledge, they also evoke Valeria's sense of exclusion from the realm of heteronormative sexual desirability as a fat teenager. Valeria described getting "the fat kid treatment," becoming painfully aware of how others (de)valued her body and how she experienced an increasing sense of separation between her mind and body:

> Like, while so many people, so many girls around me were becoming more and more womanly, and the idea that they became more graceful. And just... there's a sort of flow to their movement. I did not have that… because there was that sort of separation between myself and my body. It was always, it was a matter of trying to... trying to coerce my body into cooperating.

When I asked Valeria when and how she learned to masturbate, she spoke briefly and somewhat vaguely:

> [Sighs] I don't know... I know at one point, I had a TV in my room and there was, like, just a fuzzy connection to some soft core porn and I remember seeing that and I think it just kind of happened.

I read Valeria's reference to herself as "this wise old sage" as a simultaneous signaling of a disembodied or dispossessed way of knowing in the fat-shaming cultural context of her high school (and beyond) and as a hesitant reaffirmation of her own embodied knowledge, invoking a treasured lineage of women sharing wisdom about bodies and pleasures outside heteronormative regimes of sexual desire/desirability.

10.4.3 Discovering New Relational Selves

Many students connected the experience of collective critical reflection, action, and new ways of seeing and understanding oneself. Icy talked about not having thought of herself as someone who would participate in any kind of political action:

> I was proud of what we did. I was, like, totally proud of it and I really love speaking about what we did because, a) I'm probably not... you know, even though everybody thinks I am, I am not the kind of person who'd normally do that. Um... in an active way, you know? I think it was... it was the support. Like, everybody... it was, like, a group... seeing everybody in that class, like... men, women, people of all thought processes on the subject really come together and be of the same mind frame and all of us were kind of proud of this. But it was also that we all had some kind of realizations I think... these things are ok. And I think... how everybody just felt proud towards the project made me feel proud to be a part of it.

Brooke and Maria both described a mixture of surprise and pleasure in noticing themselves as someone others wanted to share their experience with (as in Brooke's experimental psychology class) or, as Maria put it:

> Here I am being that sort of person and here we're talking about things like that and so there's kind of like this like, "alright, this is what's happening. This is cool."

Carmelita talked about how the experience provoked a shift in how she understood herself and her experiences, as an older student who had emigrated as an adult from Colombia, in relation to her (mostly) American-born classmates.

> I didn't go to high school here. What a lot of things they go through. I didn't know. I was kind of older than my classmates. The shame… I never felt that way and I don't feel that way now. I've experienced changes… menopause… They are young. They are pretty. Why they are saying that? Why they are doing those things for example? I didn't have a point to compare how I felt about my body… vulva, vagina, sexuality. I didn't know that I feel so proud! I didn't know that I didn't feel shame about my body.

For Carmelita, the classroom discussion provoked a powerful reassessment of own experiences. Having grown up in a rural area, with strong Catholic influences, and having had only one sexual partner (her husband), Carmelita had unconsciously internalized a sense of herself as more conservative, naïve, and possibly prudish

than how she perceived her young American-born classmates. She not only recognized that she was not ashamed of her body, but also began to understand her own experiences, receiving clear positive messages from her parents, and developing an explorative relationship with her husband from whom she learned to masturbate, in a new way.

10.5 Moving Away from Pedagogical Disembodiment

Tracing these students' socio-relational circuits of embodied knowledges pushed me to consider the ways in which the vulva assignment constituted a site of sociopolitical development. Sanchez Carmen et al. (2015) theorize sociopolitical development not only as a sociopolitical process but also as a collective, ontological process that necessarily implicates "the complicated, messy work of making sense of one's existence and identity in the face of widespread, systemic, institutional racial, ethnic, linguistic, epistemic, and spiritual 'Other-ing' that can constrain subjectivity and agency (p. 828)." These scholars define two critical dimensions of sociopolitical development: (1) sociopolitical wisdom, that is, under-recognized forms of knowledge, analysis, and insight gained through embodied experience and, (2) ontological healing, processes of healing related to injuries of ongoing oppression which may constrain a person's existence as an agential subject in the world. Sanchez Carmen et al. emphasize that the objective is not to "erase these injuries, but rather to allow the youth-agent to engage in a process of critical analysis around the conditions that cause the injury; transforming how agency, subjectivity, and identity are understood in the face of a history in which positive subjectivity has often been denied" (p. 829).

Viewed within this framework, it's possible to understand the vulva assignment as a site of sociopolitical development particularly in the ways it (1) allowed and legitimated the surfacing of diverse, embodied knowledges of the vulva; (2) initiated a process of critical analysis of the conditions producing ignorance and estrangement; and (3) opened a space to make sense of one's self, body, and identity in the face of systematic shame and silencing. The experiences students shared in the classroom and in interviews support the importance of unsettling hegemonic assumptions of "healthy" or "positive" development which tend to be individualized, linear, and mastery-oriented, relying on white, heteronormative cultural norms (Sanchez Carmen et al., 2015). Sanchez Carmen et al. emphasize how frameworks of sociopolitical development (e.g., Watts et al., 1999) recognize the significance of youth's daily civic experiences and their agency in recognizing, confronting, and working to transform multiple forms of oppression, rather than placing 'development' on a linear trajectory towards mastery.

The students' narratives do not portray a linear progression away from shame and estrangement toward a coherent, individualized state of self-realization, feminist or otherwise. Instead they underscore the dialectical, recursive, and inherently social nature of identity and development as they contend with multiple forms of

oppression and social and political forces that construct their bodies as asocial, deficient, and as sites of risk. Their narratives also highlight how seductive linear models of development and how insidious neoliberal notions of feminist empowerment are. Many of them expressed either a sense of disappointment and/or guilt that despite their own recognition of the conditions that provoke shame and estrangement, they had not yet managed to achieve a state of total self-acceptance and empowerment, as though this were a simple matter of individual awareness and attitude adjustment.

The vulva assignment did not initiate processes of sociopolitical development in a vacuum. Surfacing sociopolitical wisdom (though I would have called it lived experience/expertise at the time) and developing critical consciousness were a key commitment in my pedagogy and ran as a thread through the required reading as the students read feminist critiques of science, black feminist critiques of second wave feminism, liberation psychology, and participatory action research studies. Nonetheless, I believe the physical, non-verbal, visual, but also potentially playful, nature of the assignment permitted a quality of embodied and affective engagement with the subject in a way that textual or verbal methods would not have.

Although visual methods have only recently begun to be engaged in psychological research, visual cultural practices are increasingly acknowledged as playing a central role in how people experience and make sense of the world in which they live (Reavey, 2021). Reavey (2021) describes a concurrent, growing interest in experience-based methods, that is, methods that explore "our actual encounter with or exposure to something – how it is felt, is seen, the space in which it occurs as opposed to how it is described" (p. 2). Experience-based methods are recognized as having the potential to more powerfully animate preverbal, affective, metaphoric, and relational dimensions (Katsiaficas et al., 2011) and less likely to activate normative representations of human experience (Gillies et al., 2005). The visual and the act of looking is "always subject to our sensorial engagement in the world, our physical entanglements, affective and embodied engagement with others or the igniting of other senses and forms of knowledge (Serres in Reavey, 2021, p. 1).

Viewing the vulva assignment as an experience-based visual method helps to understand how it not only worked to ignite sociopolitical wisdom, but also to surface the fundamentally embodied and affective dimensions of students' experiences, which are so often banished from the classroom. hooks (1994) calls attention to the body and to the notion of pleasure in the classroom, and to the power of the erotic to generate learning and transformation. Trethewey (2004) takes up hooks' provocation "What is one to do with the body in the classroom?" and discusses teaching itself as an embodied practice, one that would be enriched by "enabling erotic positions in the classroom as embodied, engaged, passionate agents of social transformation" (2004, p. 37). She contrasts this to the ways in which "the fiction of the disembodied scholar" (Trethewey, 2004, p. 37) is perpetuated in normative pedagogical enactments. It is possible that this perpetuation is especially accentuated in psychology classrooms, whose very subject (in its Western iterations) has been described as exclusionary in its consideration of culture, history, and embodiment as fundamental to understanding human experience (Sampson, 1996).

Nichole described the collective experience in the classroom, saying "it wasn't an academic reaction. It was *emotional.*" She went on to describe her struggle to convey to other people in her life the *feeling* of this experience in an academic setting:

> And when I try to explain it, that it was an academic setting. Like, it's just so outside the realm of what people think is normal, even though it should be so fucking normal. I still think people don't get it. And I wish I could explain it.

I conclude with Nichole's expression of longing, partly because desire is something young women continue to be denied, partly because desire is inherently a hopeful stance, and also because her wish for others to understand what it *felt* like to be acknowledged in her body and emotion in the classroom speaks to the power and the possibilities of embodied pedagogy in the classroom for sociopolitical development, collective inquiry, and the co-production of knowledge that is situated, social, embodied, affective/affected, and which strives for more equitable human relations.

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Chapter 11
Art as a Domain of Psychological Reality: Morphological Art Research and Art Coaching

Herbert Fitzek

Courageous methods in psychological research are based on courageous ideas of how the subject of psychology is to be modelled. Before psychologists start their work, they may therefore first consider their concepts of reality and reflect on them, if they have designed their subject courageously enough to withstand the plausibility of common sense. In art psychology, the paradigms of aesthetical communication are scarcely discussed. Nevertheless, several presuppositions are to be found, each of which underlines research on art experience in a most distinctive way. By presuming that artists express their intentions by aesthetical means, to an unknown audience who adopt and decipher these intentions in a preferably appropriate way, a whole scope of questionable hypotheses is proposed.

The common-sense view of aesthetical communication goes back to engineering points of view and was stated scientifically in a formal model of message communication. When Shannon and Weaver (1949) published their ideas on information transfer, technical aspects of communication laid the groundwork. A strong tradition of communication models referred to information transfer; for decades, this tradition strongly influenced social and cultural psychology, including the psychology of aesthetical experience. From a cultural–psychological point of view, the basic assumptions of this physical concept are at least discussable: Does a piece of art really express what an artist puts into it? Can works of art be adequately described as containers of meaning that are intentionally coded by the artist, and correspondingly decoded by an attentive community of recipients? Do aesthetical means serve as packaging systems for the transfer of message contents?

In my contribution to this book, I will introduce a point of view that does not separate the meaning structures of artists and recipients. Artists, recipients, and

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artworks rather join in a complex impact structure. According to this point of view, the psychological nature of art cannot be located in an artist's intention, in the content of a message, or in the effect of reception. Conversely, it emerges in the interrelations of the founding legacies of the work, its apparent content, and the statements that scientific and non-scientific audiences make about the creation.

11.1 Psychological Art Research

No other sphere of reality seems to be more addicted to symbolic meaning than art. The psychological research of art, however, scarcely acts on the imaginative aspects of meaning (Arnheim, 2004). Although psychological approaches to art have a long tradition, they are underpinned by completely different ideas of their subject, and most of these ideas correspond with the field of natural sciences (the psychology of perception/emotional impacts of forms and colors/theories of neuronal stimulation). From a cultural-psychology point of view, the arts refer to the realm of imagery, and aesthetical structures do not only constitute the psychology of art, they represent key concepts in understanding human experience in everyday life. There are several approaches to psychological reality that exhibit the importance of aesthetical experience in human culture, such as the depth-hermeneutical (Lorenzer, 1986) or perception-oriented methods (Bockemühl, 2016). According to Gestalt psychology, human behavior is grounded (and founded) in an imaginative logic (Arnheim, 2004). This logic is arranged by holistically structured Gestalten, and the logic of Gestalten follows aesthetical laws, including similarity, closure, straight continuation, coming out even, and so on.

Influenced by depth psychology, as well as Gestalt psychology, Wilhelm Salber stressed the importance of aesthetical experience in everyday life (1977). His concept of a cultural psychology was dedicated to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, whose morphological attitude opens up access to an appropriate methodical approach to art experience. According to what Goethe had called *tender empiricism* ("*zarte Empirie*"; cp. Wahl, 2005, p. 58), Salber defined a psychological morphology of everyday life that addresses aesthetical experience as the cornerstone of psychological insight. Nevertheless, the impact of art needs special preconditions to unfold the multiplicity within psychological experience. An unhindered access to works of art needs (1) sound conditions for undisturbed exposure to the objects, (2) careful methods of developing the interplay of subject and object, and (3) the means of thick description, to get into the complexity of aesthetical structures (Salber, 2001; Fitzek, 2020).

The psychological morphology of art always starts with the concrete evidence of a work of art (*Kunst-Werk*; Engl. artwork). As Sigmund Freud has shown, the psychological framework of art production and art reception correspond to each other (Freud, 1914/1955). A psychoanalyst of the second generation, Ernst Kris, accordingly called them processes of "creation and re-creation" (1962, p. 56), and it is possible to enter the field from the perspective of art production or art experience.

Here I will refer to a unique masterpiece of art, which has become famous because of the extraordinary conditions of creation, and, at the same time, has exercised a fascinating impact on recipients in its more than 500 years of public exposition. As a matter of fact, it turned out to be the first example of depth-psychological art analysis (as well as the first such example I encountered for my own occupation in art analysis; cp. Fitzek, 2013).

The work presented here is the impressive sculpture of Moses designed and realized by Michelangelo in Rome at the beginning of the sixteenth century. It is not only one of the most important manifestations of the art of the Renaissance, but also a central topic of psychological art interpretation. It was none other than Sigmund Freud who started the psychological discourse about *Moses*, and he did so with a particular interest in what this *Moses* represents in a psychological sense. The essay on "The Moses of Michelangelo" (Freud, [1914] 1955) presents an extremely delicate and differentiated description of the statue, showing a multitude of meaning within one marble object.

In his analysis, Freud does not appear as the (psycho-)analytic observer who withdraws himself from personal impressions into a well-balanced scientific objectivity. Instead, he represents a typical spectator who comes across the statue by coincidence and manifests all the characteristics of a sudden and overwhelming encounter with this intimidating masterpiece of art. Significantly, Freud first published his article under a mysterious pseudonym ("von XXX"; cp. Grubrich-Simitis, 2004, p. 22) and did not start using his own name until the publication of his collected works in 1924.

11.2 Report of a Nameless Spectator

> How often have I mounted the steep steps from the unlovely Corso Cavour to the lonely piazza where the deserted church stands, and have essayed to support the angry scorn of the hero's glance! Sometimes I have crept cautiously out of the half-gloom of the interior as though I myself belonged to the mob upon whom his eye is turned—the mob which can hold fast no conviction, which has neither faith nor patience, and which rejoices when it has regained its illusory idols. (Freud, 1955, p. 213)

An unknown visitor refers to the miraculous impact of his repeated visits to San Pietro in Vincoli in Rome (Fig. 11.1). Unmistakably, he stood in front of the *Moses* of Michelangelo, which had been built in the first decades of the sixteenth century on behalf of Pope Julius II. This important warlord of the Church had planned to immortalize himself with a monumental tomb, which originally was to have been erected in St. Peter's Basilica. In the anonymous report, the strong impact of the sculpture cannot be overlooked—again and again, the visitor is attracted by the sculpture and at the same time feels shattered by the severe and compelling glance of Moses. For the visitor, there can be no doubt about what scenery is modelled by Michelangelo: "It is the descent from Mount Sinai, where Moses has received the Tables from God, and it is the moment when he perceives that the people have

Fig. 11.1 *Moses* of Michelangelo (Face)

meanwhile made themselves a Golden Calf and are dancing around it and rejoicing" (Freud, 1955, p. 216).

It is of vital psychological importance that the spectator does not only recognize what is going on, but is immediately captured as a part of the scene: The same glance that damned the unfaithful Jewish people seems to have hit the artist about 2500 years later, and can startle the spectator another 400 years later—as if the fury of the betrayed leader bridges centuries and reappears in the intimidated spectator of nowadays. Far away from his original approach as a connoisseur of art, the visitor is swallowed by the nameless mass which is beaten by Moses' glance. Freud expresses this perceptible depersonalization in his study of the *Moses* of Michelangelo. The originally anonymous publication reflects this impact of diving into the scene, losing self-awareness, and temporarily giving up the balanced attitude of scientific (psycho-)analysis. With Freud, we can identify art as a signpost to the sphere of meaning. In art, everyday life gives up or reduces the narrow boundaries of rationality, of dividing subject and object, reality and illusion, and—by means of this—art enters the realm of imagery. Is the remarkable realism of *Moses* proof of Michelangelo's craftsmanship or of Freud's imaginative competence? Or can the lively impact be described in more general terms of aesthetical experience?

11.3 The Man Freud and the *Moses* of Michelangelo

What moves Freud here can, at first glance, be related to the scene that is reflected in Michelangelo's composition. For Freud, Moses had always been more than an important figure in the history of mankind. The young Freud could find Moses on the first pages of his school Bible; from then onwards, again and again Freud was confronted with the founder of Jewish culture and religion, and more and more occupied with his life and work, up to his last and extended monograph on "Moses and Monotheism" (Freud, 1939). His continual occupation with Moses had, however, culminated in a sudden and unexpected face-to-face encounter with the *Moses* sculpture in Rome during the summer of 1901, an event that initiated a chain of visits during Freud's summer holidays for more than 20 years. On his visits, he used to sit in front of the *Moses* holding inner conversations with it, and spending time observing and drawing. Yet it took a crucial experience in his biography to exceed silent reflection and create an open discourse in which Freud, though remaining anonymous, communicated his experience to a psychoanalytic audience (Grubrich-Simitis, 2004).

The point when Freud fell out of his nameless and timeless observation and into a plan to affirm his findings may be dated exactly. To his friend and disciple Sandor Ferenczi, he reports: "Every day for three lonely weeks of September 1913 [sic], I stood in the church in front of the statue, studying it, measuring it and drawing it until there dawned on me that understanding which I expressed in my essay" (Freud, 1960, p. 416). In his visit of 1912, Freud had taken the time to go into detail and, on returning one year later, he wrote down his findings. The two years in which Freud's focus was concentrated on the sculpture (and apparently fused to one experience, thus the wrong year cited in the quotation) marked a most critical period in the history of psychoanalysis, when Freud's biography had fully gone under the auspices of Moses. Like Moses, he had been on his way to leading psychoanalysis out of the (Egyptian) ban on traditional natural science, having handed it over to one he perceived as an honorable heir. Between 1912 and 1913, Freud had to have realized that his chosen successor—his "Joshua […] C. G. Jung" (Freud & Jung, 1974, p. 218) was going to betray him, along with the psychoanalytic movement.

In his inner correspondence during those two summers, Freud lived through a crucial crisis, not yet knowing whether he should draw the consequences in breaking with his hopeful successor, or if he should sagely master his rage and look for a painful compromise. In this uncomfortable situation, the multivalent constellation of the Moses motif is condensed to a definite message:

> What we see before us is not the inception of a violent action but the remains of a movement that has already taken place. In his first transport of fury, Moses desired to act, to spring up and take vengeance and forget the Tables; but he has overcome the temptation, and he will now remain seated and still, in his frozen wrath and in his pain mingled with contempt. Nor will he throw away the Tables so that they will break on the stones, for it is on their especial account that he has controlled his anger; it was to preserve them that he kept his passion in check. (Freud, 1955, p. 229f)

For Freud, this Moses is an icon of self-restraint in a highly troubled situation, thus giving an answer for his own mood of doubt and anger. The ambiguous state of mind in descending from God in perfect serenity and at the same time coming across humiliation and treason is densified in a distinct challenge: not to lose face, while maintaining his self-control. Freud draws the conclusion that art manages to adequately reproduce the sculptor's intentions in the spectators' minds. The artistic impact can be understood as an immediate correspondence of intention and impact: "What he aims at is to awaken in us the same emotional attitude, the same mental constellation, as that which in him produced the impetus to create" (Freud, 1955, p. 212).

11.4 Message or Meaning—Freud's Psychology of Art

Freud's biography shows that the founder of psychoanalysis used his *Moses* experience in a highly private sense: His interpretation transported an unambivalent message into his own biography. As an anonymous visitor, Freud follows the common sense idea of communication: The sender (Michelangelo) packs a code into his work (*Moses*) which, by aesthetical means, becomes a symbol of heroic self-restraint—the recipient (the anonymous Freud) commits himself to the scene ("how often have I mounted the steep steps"; p. 213) and manages to unpack the message in a way he hopes is adequate: Even in the case of betrayal, stay calm and protect your work!

As a representative of art psychology, however, Freud is to be measured on a different level. Although leading to a suitable solution, his private model of message transfer cannot serve as a comprehensive psychological explanation for the aesthetical effect of *Moses* in total. Although the connoisseurs of the sculpture have not come to a final judgement, it can be stated, at least, that there is no unequivocal meaning to be found in the *Moses* of Michelangelo. By finding a thoroughly coherent formula for private use, Freud overlooked some conspicuous details of scientific interest: the sitting position, the eye-catching horns, the anxious or even depressed mode of the subject's expression point to the highly ambiguous and partly contradictory character of the sculpture. Consulting the Bible text that underpins the Moses story, the sculpture presents a highly over-determined scenery: In the book "Exodus", it is the same Moses who now shows divine brightness (Ex 32: 1–16) and then satanic fury (Ex 32: 19–28), who now cools down his affect and then acts out his anger, who carefully negotiates with God to pardon his people, and, some verses later, executes every tenth Israelite regardless of their being guilty or not guilty. Obviously, in this Moses, there is more to be found than a distinct message. And even in Freud's private life, the seemingly clear evidence of successful self-restraint was to collapse soon after Freud had tried to arrange things with his deviant colleague. Far removed from finding a final solution for his succession problem, Freud saw his balanced summer mood of 1913 vanish shortly after his self-consultation in Rome. Soon the quarrel with Jung and his disciples returned, and Freud could no

longer hold back his rage. One summer later, in 1914, he lost his self-control, broke up with C.G. Jung, and cut his formerly promising connections to the non-Jewish scientific establishment (cp. Grubrich-Simitis, 2004, 16ff).

From a psychological point of view, symbols are not distinct sense-containers, to be passed from a knowing sender to a curious audience. Both parts of communication—what is packed into a work and what is unpacked by spectators—lead to complex and multivalent symbolic evidence. Cultural psychology offers a term that reflects this idea with respect to *Gestalt* psychology and depth psychology (Fitzek, 2000). The term *figuration* was originally used by Norbert Elias (2000) to refer to complex, but clearly visible, structures of a non-personal profile. In this, I follow the idea of *Gestalt* as a basis of visual thinking (Arnheim, 2004), and of Wilhelm Salber, who finds aesthetical order as the psychological fundament of everyday experiences (Salber, 2001).

11.5 Formations of Meaning: The *Moses* Figuration

In the concept of a morphological psychology of art, figurations consist of different interdependent aspects of meaning that emerge in the production of artworks, as well as in art reception (Fitzek, 2000). As a general character, these field structures are not generated in personal minds—as in the artist or the recipient—but rather non-personally spread over all participants. Methodically, this process can be elaborated by means of a careful thick description. To work out the dominant figurations, it is, accordingly, not sufficient to document the artists' intentions. As in the case of the audience (e.g., the nameless Freud), the underlying complex is not limited to direct and rational structures. Doubtlessly, figuration structures transcend the sphere of individual consciousness. According to the figuration concept, artworks do not consist of carving a formative will into stone or marble, but can be more adequately described as a material discourse emerging from finding and varying sense and meaning. Freud himself (1955) gives a hint in this direction when commenting on the shifting identities of the purchaser, the creator, and the actor of the scene (Fig. 11.2):

> We have now completed our interpretation of Michelangelo's statue, though it still can be asked what motives prompted the sculptor to select the figure of Moses, and a so greatly altered Moses, as an adornment to the tomb of Julius II. In the opinion of many these motives are to be found in the character of the pope and in Michelangelo's relations with him. Julius II was akin to Michelangelo in this, that he attempted great and mighty ends and especially designs on a grand scale. He was a man of action and he had a definite purpose, which was to unite Italy under the Papal supremacy. He desired to bring about single-handed what was not to happen for several centuries, and then only through the conjunction of many alien forces; and he worked alone, with impatience, in the short span of sovereignty allowed him, and he used violent means. He could appreciate Michelangelo as a man of his kind, but he often made him smart under his sudden anger and his utter lack of consideration for others. The artist felt the same violent force of will in himself and, as the more introspective thinker, may have had a premonition of the failure to which they were both

Fig. 11.2 *Moses* of Michelangelo (Full View)

> doomed. And so he carved his Moses on the pope's tomb, not without a reproach to the dead pontiff, as a warning to himself, thus, in self-criticism, rising superior to his own nature. (Freud, 1955, p. 233f)

In his collage of characters, Freud shows that all three of them—Moses, Julius II, Michelangelo—permeate a network of mutual representations. In an aesthetical sense, Moses and the pope and Michelangelo participate in one figuration. The sculpture unites the three of them into a common stratification of sense. Far from being reducible to an iconic meaning (such as "self-restraint"), this figuration can be garnered across the lives and works of the three men.

The first conspicuous feature is the persistence of all three characters, starting with Moses, who is on his way to setting up a new Israel for his people after wandering for 40 years through the desert. The same 40 years characterize the era in which Pope Julius II played a leading role in the Roman Church of the Renaissance. Appointed at the age of 28 by his uncle Sixtus IV, the young Giuliano della Rovere served as cardinal for another 32 years before his election to the papacy (where he

served from 1503 to 1513). Even before his death, the four decades spent erecting an adequate tomb for him had begun, and this kept Michelangelo occupied for a long and exhausting period of his artistic life (1505–1545).

A second figurative aspect of the characters is their fierce appearance and vigorous activity. A contemporary of both pope and artist, the notorious Nicolò Machiavelli made analogies between the biblical leader and the militant prince of the Church (2013). Pope Julius II was known as "Il Terrible"—the very same title given to Michelangelo—not only expressing fear of a strong and violent personality, but also the acknowledgement of their powerful work.

Thirdly, their (common) break-up in new and almost superhuman dimensions can be noticed. In the biblical "Exodus" this break-up is described literally. The papacy of Julius II was occupied with nearly continuous military campaigns against the Italian citizenry, while the grandiose pope simultaneously dreamt of crusades to Jerusalem and Constantinople. And Michelangelo had to lead a lifelong battle with his physical material, which sometimes seemed to overcome his enormous competences. No other artist in history is marked so adequately by the German word *Bildhauer* (Engl. sculptor, literally: picture carver).

Adjacent to their going to the limit, and even exceeding the limit, we find in all three characters a general attitude that resists endings. Once again, Moses gives the first and most literal evidence. Moses was told that he would die before reaching the Promised Land (Deut 32: 48–52). Such was the fate of Pope Julius, who died before making Rome great again in Italy (Verspohl, 2004, pp. 76, 82). He neither saw the completion of his political work nor of his tomb—nor did Michelangelo, who had to be satisfied with a diminished version of his original plan. In this plan, the figure of Moses had been only one of several sculptures, and not the central focus. It is characteristic of Michelangelo's work that his sculptures often do not realize a final form; his style is therefore called *nonfinito* (Schiff, 1959).

11.6 Morphological Studies in Art Research

From the viewpoint of psychological morphology, this Moses shows a figuration of persistence, dominance, limit-breaking, and resistance to endings, under a bipolar tension of violence and vulnerability. What engendered *Moses* (i.e., Julius II and Michelangelo) and what attracts Freud (and the anonymous spectators) is, accordingly, no distinct message, but a field of symbolization. The tension of power and vulnerability, which is manifested in the work of art, is reflected by the biographies of this Moses and his "stakeholders" (pope, artist, scientist) and in the evidence of the spectators who may take the one or the other position with respect to the statue (i.e., its meaning). Should he identify with one aspect of this figuration or the other, admiring the strong and unshakeable power of *Moses* or discovering the sorrowful or even depressed expression in his eyes? Or should he accept some advice, in an ambiguous state of mind comparable to Freud's: Forget your anger, and control yourself!

In morphological research, figurations define non-personal impact structures of the production and reception of art. Starting with Freud's experience as a man and as a psychoanalyst, and widening the scope for complex figurations, morphological psychology has generated a long and intensive discourse in the research on art reception. Since Salber's comprehensive work on art, psychology, and psychological treatment (Salber, 1977), numerous impact studies have been made and published (e.g., Heiling's and Zwingmann's doctoral theses of 2012 and 2017, respectively). Similar to Freud's individual approach in analyzing the Moses statue, studies on art reception require favorable reception conditions. To achieve optimal conditions, the recipients must have unhindered access to the artwork, and a full range of reflection processes. Most suitable for morphological research is initiating the explorations directly, in museums or galleries. Information about the artist, the subject, or the technique is avoided, if possible. Observers have between 10 and 20 min to calmly trust their personal experience and let the painting have its effect. Any effect that corresponds to actual observations either in art or in the mind is welcome: perceptions, reflections, associations, moods, and feelings. Afterwards, these first impressions are repeated and widened during in-depth interviews of 60 to 120 min (depending on what is suitable for the recipient or group of recipients). The interview is conducted in an open and flexible manner, avoiding the verdict of good or bad answers. The entire interview is digitally recorded and analyzed in terms of morphological description (Fitzek, 2020).

Morphological descriptions based on Gestalt analogies emerge from a process of thick description. From the pool of selected statements, basic qualities lead to the complexes of aesthetical experiences as in the *Moses* example, concentrated in a general figuration structure. To uncover the figurations, at least eight to ten interview descriptions are necessary (cp. Fitzek, 2020). Together they build an empirical model for the interplay of different aspects of a core problem that is to be found in every piece of art more or less easily.

Morphological work on art perception originally started in Cologne, with its important art museums, such as the Wallraf-Richartz Museum and Museum Ludwig (Fitzek, 2013; Ulrich et al., 2016). One of the first paintings to be explored was Vincent van Gogh's *The Langlois Bridge at Arles*, dated 1888. The following text gives an abbreviated version of the morphological description in the way of a typical "quotation carpet" (in which quotes from different interviews are woven to form a generalized description) (Fig. 11.3):

> The rural area is "peaceful", it is "familial, everybody knows everybody", it "smells of summer", "of wheat and heat" and "not exhaust gases", you can hear sounds of water (…) and slip into a "melancholic" or "pensive" mood (…) "The bridge is made of wooden planks and stones in different colors and materials". "Such bridges do not exist anymore, nowadays". It is "old and fascinating", (…) a pull-up bridge, which "rather has to be operated with a crank". It appears to be a link between "one embankment and another", a "transition from one place to another, without true problems" (…) A lady is discovered who wears a "black skirt", a "little hat and a jacket" (…) She could "be on her way to the city" to "visit someone", or she is simply "strolling", perhaps to clear her mind (…) Why is this lady dressed in black and what is she doing on the bridge? She must be caught in a "weaker phase". Maybe her "husband has died or is ill" or he is "involved in a war" (…) There is a

Fig. 11.3 The Langlois Bridge at Arles

> mood of longing in this painting, "this loneliness makes me afraid, I ask myself, what is next? Is there someone whom I can speak to, or not?" (…) "The artist was probably sad and pensive, he probably thought a lot too and was lonely" and "perhaps the woman wasn't even there (while the artist was painting) and the artist simply painted her there, to express what he was feeling, to express his sadness." (Ulrich et al., 2016, p. 326f)

Working on the figuration structure, Ulrich et al. start with the quiet, in-a-way puzzling access to the scene. Landscape and weather are calm, but ambiguous. The bridge could be promising, but will it bear people? The lady seems to be in a weak mood. Will she go on, cross the bridge, get to the other side of the river? In the *Bridge of Arles*, the figuration emerges from a multivalent in-between situation. The figurative moments bind together the notions of coming from anywhere, starting a change, getting into a weak position, holding off or going on, heading for new security. The scenery converges in a core problem of transition where it is not yet clear what will follow:

> The special thing about this bridge is that "it can't only open the way, but also close it, so that you never have to go back." […] "You can gaze upon the water, when you're on the bridge, you reflect and you reflect [on] yourself, you can think about yourself once more. Perhaps you recognize what you really are in your mirror image. If you are over the gap in the bridge and the bridge pulls up, then you have managed [it]. If the woman remains where she is and the bridge opens, then she falls back and she isn't sure anymore." (Ulrich et al., 2016, p. 328)

Again, art is proved to be an access to core problems of human experience. Empirical research shows that art experiences go far beyond personal evidence. They open widely spread fields of general meaning and make it possible to reflect a variety of attitudes towards the focus of the scene. As in Freud's *Moses* experience, *The Langlois Bridge at Arles* points to important questions of general interest. What in the case of *Moses* had been the problem of force and vulnerability in leadership here proves to be the promise and fragility of transition processes. In any case, aesthetical ambiguity widens the straightforwardness of everyday life for the complexity of experience and action potentials.

11.7 From Art Research to Art Coaching

Group processes in art experience not only present a multiplicity of points of view, in addition they indicate the personal access of individuals. As part of a group, Freud would have noticed his focus on self-restraint in facing *Moses* and would probably have been aware of more anxious or furious interpretations by other spectators. Those who gaze upon van Gogh's painting are astonished at how neatly the scene is experienced, but they are also surprised at how fraught their fellow observers are in describing the fearful mood triggered by the same work of art. Sometimes the different approaches seem to follow the curiosity of the aesthetical moment, but sometimes they appear as solid personal patterns of perception. In any case, group processes help one to recognize one's own point of view within a range of possible other opinions, which gives us a reason to extend our work in the area of aesthetical experience. Getting insights into the figuration structures encouraged us to apply art experience in working with clients so as to help them explore their ways of perception and self-reflection (Fitzek, 2013).

When art experience favors the discovery of more-or-less stable patterns of perception, it should be possible to help people find out about their individual access to the specific figurations of artworks: How do I perceive the problem? What is my coping strategy? Am I contented with what I see, or shall I try to make up my mind and define the scene in another way? Extending art research to self-reflection paved the way to new and exciting settings for working with aesthetical experience. By diving more and more into the perception modes of our clients, we gradually developed ways of using art reception as a means of psychological intervention. In the last few years, we have developed different settings for art coaching, which always starts with an extended process of art reception, but in turn focuses on individual strategies of perception. Thus, the complexity and ambiguity of art experience can be a valid stimulus that reflects personal answers to general problems of human concern (e.g., leadership questions, transition processes).

Going back to the last example, we used the ambiguous figuration of a promising but fragile transition in *The Langlois Bridge of Arles* to help clients gain awareness and discuss meaningful changes in their lives. For a project of the Institute of Sexual

Medicine at the Charité[1] in Berlin, we therefore decided to show the painting to clients who were preparing themselves for gender reassignment. The clients enter the institute when they have not finally decided to change their mental and bodily constitution and undergo medical or psychotherapeutical treatment. Some of them suffer from "gender dysphoria", which occurs in gradations from a slight dissatisfaction to a thorough and lasting urge to belong to a different gender, accompanied by suffering under the current gender (Beier et al., 2005). Besides assessing what kind of (physical/mental) treatment is best, it is necessary to explore one's own gender identity and find an adequate way to reduce uncertainty and discomfort (Bockting, 2008).

Working with art perception is, of course, embedded in different settings of reporting and self-reflection. Art coaching is applied in this way as one means of access to addressing the idea of transition with a psychologically educated coach. The perception conditions are not adapted to the gender focus, and the reception process does not have to express the core problem of transition. But as in the more general setting of the museum, most of the clients more or less directly point to the transition issue. The following quotes show that all five clients of a first series of exposition reported on individual aspects of personal change (interview numbers in brackets):

> [The first client] sees the lady falling into water, because the bridge "is slightly higher on the left side, because it is opened a little," which causes the woman to fall. "Because of this insecurity, I wouldn't cross the bridge" (1).
>
> "I can find myself very well in that, well I am in the situation that the woman is, I am also in a not-so-great situation, but around me everything is beautiful, and I have to get through it, and then everything is good" (2).
>
> The painting shows "the way of adjustment of transsexuality," "from spoiled time to beautiful times," the bridge is the "point of the consideration: will I take the step, or not" (3).
>
> "On the bridge, life is in balance" […] "The bridge symbolizes, when it is down, that the world is in order, when it is up, the world breaks" (4).
>
> "You set yourself goals in life and when you've reached those goals, you have reached the other side of the embankment." "I am in a situation in which I am crossing a bridge, my life's dream is to become a real man, with everything it includes" (5) (Ulrich et al., 2016, 328f.).

Reports on art experience show that the clients of art coaching have been comfortable with the reception sessions. They do not feel forced or deviated from their project to learn about their gender orientation. On a base of aesthetical complexity and ambiguity, they find a way to verbalize their personal transition experience—without the restricting decisiveness of common life. In the clinic, therefore, art reception processes have proved to be integrated as part of a "real life

[1] Charité is one of the largest university hospitals in Europe. See https://www.charite.de/en/ for more information.

test" in the complex processes of reflection and decision-making (Ulrich et al. 2016, p. 331).

11.8 Art Coaching with the *Moses* of Michelangelo

In recent years, we have extended our work on different paintings and sculptures and developed a variety of settings for art coaching. For single paintings like C. D. Friedrich's *Monk at the Sea*, Paul Klee's *Main Ways and Beside Ways* (Fitzek, 2013), or groups of works such as Francisco Goya's "Black Paintings" (Zwingmann, 2017), we started to explore the impact of figurations and, afterwards, to work with clients, students, and working people for one afternoon, one and a half days, or longer. Yet we still must return to the origin of the method and visit our "best worker" in Rome, the *Moses* of Michelangelo. In this first and prototypical setting of art coaching, we visit the statue in San Pietro in Vincoli at least twice a year to initiate a reflection process over three days in groups of five or six persons (Fig. 11.4).

Our instructions for viewing art are remarkably simple: Enter the church and watch the sculpture for a while (20–30 min) and notice what goes on with you and the artifact! Avoid distraction from any knowledge, follow the shifts that happen in your approach, and write down some impressions, because later you will describe and reconstruct your experience in a group of spectators! After the individual correspondence with the *Moses*, the group members share their personal experiences in a sheltered atmosphere guided by psychologically educated coaches. We try to provide enough time to get through the first individual reflection with careful remarks and questions by the coach (30–40 min): What has been your personal access

Fig. 11.4 *Moses* of Michelangelo (Art Coaching Group)

through the church to the sculpture? What have been the first impressions, what can be said of the sequence of watching, what has organized your individual approach?

During the interplay of coach and client, the other group members realize the congruence and variation of personal narrations, and some of them take part in the conversation. On the next day, in a second session, the mode of interview continues, but the topic shifts from the impact of art to a more person-focused perspective. When the recipients have discovered something in the artifact, and this becomes clear to the group, the coach feels encouraged to explore what the artifact has discovered in the spectator, or rather, what specific way of perception has been generated. It is self-evident (and helpful) to acknowledge that at this stage, the coach, the client, and the group members form a common research team pondering on the chances and limits of perception strategies. Most of the clients deliberately connect their *Moses* experience to personal themes, such as family members or family traditions, behaving in private or public rooms, and getting along with the authorities. Without formal discussion, the group process often alludes to more general aspects of experience, while the coach remains responsible for recollecting the discussion within the framework of art reception. On the third day, in a second confrontation with the work of art (according to the original instructions of the first approach), new and mostly surprising impressions are to be realized facing the (same) work of art. Seldom enough, nothing has changed—and why not? And is this obvious, satisfactory, or annoying? In nearly every case, shifts are to be seen in the artifact as well as in one's point of view—what shifts? And are these shifts puzzling, helpful, or promising? In a closing session, the group members appreciate the individual ways of reception, and discuss learning effects and personal potentials.

11.9 Courageous Research Leads to Courageous Interventions

Courageous research, like art research, seems to inspire courageous interventions such as art coaching. Although the setting has been proven for 20 years, and the individual comments are positive in nearly every case, the specific risks and limitations of art coaching are to be taken into account. As an interventive setting, art coaching is situated in a wide (and hardly to be overlooked) field between coaching and counselling. Although its duration is limited to one, two, or three days, art coaching can be estimated as an intensive set of self-experiences. The whole session, therefore, must be prepared and performed by well-experienced experts, and, regarding the participants, carefully integrated into private life, with an introductory instruction, a gradual growth of intensity, a slow shift from art experience to self-experience, and a way back to everyday life on a base of valuable insights. The profound elaboration of the psychological figuration does, from this point of view, not only apply as a guideline for better understanding individual problems but also as an access to the dynamics of specific perception processes. On the other hand, it

must be certain that the groups are willing and prepared to deal with aesthetic experiences and that the common group atmosphere is trustworthy for sharing personal anxiousness, inhibition, and uncertainty, and for speaking openly about difficult and stressful memories.

For years, we have conducted three-day workshops with young engineers of a German automobile enterprise who were going to take on responsibility in leadership positions. In observing Michelangelo's *Moses*, they discovered the tense posture of the sculpture, the furious glimpse of the eyes, the grip in the beard, the hand resting on the stomach. The powerful and at the same time weak or even timid Moses represents the challenge and burden of leadership, presenting an example for what will be possible and what could happen in one's career. Supported by the coach's questions and their colleagues' remarks, the coaching sessions gave the engineers a reason to discuss their personal situations on the job, and the real and potential challenges of taking on a leading position. During the three days of art coaching, each of the participants gradually came to know their own point of view towards power and sensitivity, and to detect and accept different (or congruent) experiences and attitudes. They came across the attitudes of strict empowerment, affective excitement, cautious adjustment, and/or anxious retreat. By exhibiting the assets and drawbacks of all of the positions, the participants learned how to find out their own preferences and aversions in a circle of possibilities, and how to develop a perspective that fits one's own set of values.

All roads lead to Rome—in art coaching as well as in daily life. That *Moses* is not limited to leadership workshops should therefore be clear; just as we enjoy working with our clients, we like to work with students on the psychology of imagination. In this setting, the focus shifts from leadership topics to the areas of leaving school and the family experience and looking for a position in education, as well as recognition and a satisfying profile in society and in private life. Students learn about their lives and, at the same time, discover an interesting technique of psychological intervention: Some of them apply art coaching in their professional careers and work with art reception within different fields, such as business psychology, human resources development, coaching, and counselling. Hopefully "our" *Moses* will guide further generations of students and art coaches through their professional and private lives.

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Chapter 12
Collaborative Realities

Tyyne Claudia Pollmann

12.1 Run-up

I would like to thank the editors for including me in this compilation of courageous methods designed to promote getting off the beaten track and seeing things from new perspectives. The "walking off in the wild" we performed with our project, visions4people, led us to discover the backwoods amidst our common daily reality, as we entered spaces of entanglements around, among, and inside ourselves.

The presented project, visions4people, started out as a collaboration between an art school and a psychiatric clinic. Originally designed as an artistic educational endeavor, its role soon broadened so as to challenge basic assumptions and routines of thinking in the field of knowledge production.

I am a professor of anatomy and morphology at the art academy (kunsthochschule berlin, khb), with experience in the field of clinical research and decades of practice in the conception and implementation of artistic transdisciplinary projects. Based on these backgrounds, as the author of this essay, I speak from the perspectives of an artist, a project leader, and a citizen. To emphasize my subjective viewpoints, I will at times take the first-person narrator position rather than using generalized forms of wording.

This essay investigates some important aspects of courageous methods and is therefore titled "Collaborative Realities." It started with a rocky run-up that modified the topics and text, and I will use it to initiate my contribution.

After having read the open call, I submitted an abstract for visions4people, describing one of the most courageous methods as "the waiving of questionnaires." With my invitation to publish, I received an introductory text with eleven questions.

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I studied them for quite some time. My concerns related to my experience that asking a question focuses attention on finding a certain answer.

Now I was sitting in front of the outlined book proposal with eleven focal points, pinning down my not-yet-written text. Writing about events means reenacting them in the shape of a story that develops its own flow. You will emphasize those aspects that you want to convey, and "the way in which events are *emplotted*—the precise manner in which the story is told—affects the meaning of the information the case contains. […] Moreover, emplotment requires making numerous decisions, each of which is theory-laden" (Bolinska & Martin, 2020, p. 38). However, I decided to test this preset and delivered the essay. When I received my revised text version, I discovered that my subtitles had been replaced and found a quantity of follow-up questions, including dozens of requests as to the project's goal. I had obviously failed to meet certain rules or expectations.

The situation posed an essential question: Who decides on the form and content of a contribution? An implicit but tangible question of power was at stake. This in turn made the conflict interesting. What was the origin of misunderstandings, and what was to be done now?

After conversations with Meike Watzlawik and Ska Salden, we agreed that I would include the initial production problems, retain the questions, and elaborate on incongruent terms as required.

This is how we had stumbled our way into "collaborative realities." Of course, neither of us had intended or planned this rocky run-up, and I thank the editors for our profound thought exchange, which had a strong impact on reworking the essay.

12.2 The Researcher and the Magnifying Glass

As I reread the invitation text, the following passage engaged me: "In research, we always need to somehow break down complex realities to be able to grasp certain phenomena, as if one approaches a certain aspect with a magnifying glass. By doing so, the aspects outside the focus become blurred."

Firstly, I was attracted by the image of the blurred rims, and from there I trailed backwards into the sentence. I imagined using a magnifying glass, lingered with the image, and focused on the surrounding words.

I would assume that the use of magnification of objects makes new details visible, leading to a multiplication of complex realities. Breaking down realities is, in my understanding, a cognitive act that is interspersed with affective parts and that either precedes or follows the investigation. In the first case, you "look for" something, you focus on what you are supposed to find, and ignore the rest; in the second case, you record everything that becomes visible, and afterwards, you try to decipher certain aspects. This also means that you will end up with quite an extensive and messy data set. With visons4people, we eventually opted for the second case.

The image of the researcher using a magnifying glass to focus on a particular spot appears arguably static to me. The glass has a determined focal length,

restricting the researching person to a defined and unchangeable distance from the object. It fixates the agent in a "gaze," the tool being a spacer, held by the onlooker from an external "locus operandi."

Here I want to ask: How to re-move the stasis? Imagine being the agent: Moving your head and/or the magnifying glass will change your focus. By moving, you can successively observe the phenomena that were previously blurred, as being out of focus. Now you are not gazing anymore, you explore your field of interest in two dimensions (width and length), but you cannot change your distance: You are still a "voyeur," a disconnected bodiless agent out there in the distance.

To change this, you now let go of the glass and rely on your human vision. You will gain an additional quality: Your lenses are flexible and have variable focal points. This allows you to either focus on a detail in close-up, or zoom out to a distance for a wide view of higher-level structures. So now you can modulate your approach in three dimensions, and approach or retreat from the object of interest. And you even gain a third advantage: Your two eyes create two incongruent images of our object from two different perspectives. Cerebral performances fuse the two images, a step that remains conscious to you.[1] Your perception of your visible surroundings thus contains information from two perspectives, and improves your ability to spatially fathom your points of interest.

Intellectual activity, however, requires a conscious effort to take different perspectives. And by making them conscious, we become aware that they are made. We learn to see phenomena from different perspectives and can only now perceive their complexity and multidimensionality.

So, in awareness of our mental and perceptive potentials, we are now fit to roam around outside mainstream approaches and off the beaten track.

However, we may have to accept that we will slow down in unknown territory.

And we may need to acquire new tools or change behaviors.

We will also see and experience different things.

And we will arrive somewhere else (Fig. 12.1).

12.3 visions4people

vision4people was a collaboration between the art academy (kunsthochschule berlin, khb) and the Clinic for Psychiatry and Psychotherapy Charité Berlin Mitte between 2016 and 2018. This cross-disciplinary endeavor included higher-degree students from eight art and design disciplines, who gathered empirical knowledge on-site in direct exchanges with the psychiatric patients. The input was recorded, and formed the basis for artistic and participatory designs, works, or interventions,

[1] Under certain circumstances (e.g., alcohol intoxication), the brain can no longer perform image processing, and you will see two images of a single object.

Fig. 12.1 "Harmonic distortion," photo from an architectural model of the Psychiatry Charité Berlin Mitte.

leading to transformations that improved the patients' quality of living or contributed positively to their recovery process.

I conceived visions4people in 2015 and led it with a small transdisciplinary team for 2 years. The project is placed at the intersection of cultural production, education, and research, and was funded by the Berlin Senate for the Sciences Quality and Innovation Initiative (Berliner Qualitäts- und Innovationsoffensive, QIO).

Our activities consisted of different forms of communication and interaction, on-site visits, interventions, workshops, film evenings, lectures, scientific discussions, a survey, a reading, performances, individual as well as group work, collaborations with patients, artistic outcomes, exhibitions, and the generation and collection of comments, notations, narratives, ideas, drafts, analyses, and new cross-connections to professionals from other disciplines.

With visions4people, a self-reflexive structure was created in which previously unknown situations or arrangements could be designed and tested. We created open fields of activity and entered into direct contact with the patients and staff before and during our theoretical and/or aesthetic discussions. We articulated the experiential values gained here in "scape research narratives." The *people*, namely, the patients and the staff, with their sensitivities, ideas, and desires, were the central starting point for our activities, which were transformed into the *visions* as multiple artistic and scientific productions.

In this chapter, I will introduce you to the project according to the impulse questions, and emphasize aspects that might be of overarching interest.

12.3.1 How Did You Decide on a Particular Aspect of and Perspective on Your Object of Interest?

The basic concept, which I might understand as "the very aspect of and perspective on your object of interest," was the idea to involve and work with the groups, for which the respective cooperating institutions were initially created, addressing students and patients. With this constellation, we would try to improve the situation on-site.

I am aware that my focus does not meet the possibly implicit request of focusing on a single parameter. The "very" aspect that is requested tells me that one aspect would be desired.

I return to the image with the magnifying glass: "[…] as if one approaches a certain aspect with a magnifying glass." Here we see three expressions in singular mode: one, a certain aspect, a magnifying glass. The metaphor depicts someone investigating one thing with one method. To my understanding, research is highly connected, aspects are interrelated, and different tools are being applied, all this leading to often contradictory results. Looking at scientific activities, I see vast fields of attempts and results, constantly questioning what appeared to be safe and overwriting knowledge that so far seemed set in stone. I see a rather liquid process of splitting and recombining, which leads to advanced or disruptive outcomes. This perception might lead to different project types, conducts, and outcomes.

12.3.2 Goal

The term "goal" might be a potent marker in which we can visualize this word's varied uses and meanings. To give you an impression of the project's starting point, I will quote from the original QIO application:

> A joint field research captures the specific needs and desires of the building users and leads to artistic transformations that result in specific spatial designs, exhibits, models, and drafts. These results can flow as an integrative component into the scientific therapeutic action, supporting and extending it. The artistic and creative view can question the working conditions, quality of stay, and therapy methods in a consultative and experimental way, and develop innovative solutions. Possible spatial, aesthetic, artistic, and participatory approaches are defined as fields of work.

The application was signed by Prof. Andreas Heinz, Head of Psychiatry, Leonie Baumann, rector of khb, and myself. None of us would have been able to forecast the direction or the outcomes of the project.

The goal remained open and broad for several reasons: After two initial visits, I had sparse input about the actual situation, needed to rely on my past experiences, and was forced to create a concept "from scratch." To aim at a goal means to direct one's actions towards achieving an intention. However, the strict pursuit of a goal

might cause side effects and collateral damage, especially if people are involved. I was aware that I was dealing with a complex situation.

12.3.3 Complexity

Not only was the project bi-disciplinary to start with, but each cooperating group consisted of multiple disciplines, contexts, and personalities.

As an example, I will show you the heterogeneous composition using two parameters: profession and cultural background.

The visions4people team included a psychiatrist, an architect, an interior designer, a sociologist, an assistant educated as a media scientist, and myself, as an artist with a medical background. The team members' cultural backgrounds included Germany, the United States, Columbia, South Korea, and Finland. The student participants were from the disciplines of painting, sculpture, stage/costume design, visual communication, fashion design, product design, textile and surface design, and art therapy. Furthermore, guest students from Technische Universität Berlin (architecture), Humboldt Universität Berlin (media sciences), and Freie Universität Berlin (anthropology) joined the group. The students had international cultural backgrounds from the countries of Germany (10), France (3), Japan (2), the United States (2), Greece (2), Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, and Vietnam. Each of our two courses included 12 students and ran for one semester, so 24 students attended the project visions4people. Clearly, we enjoyed heterogenous group constellations in terms of study professions and cultural backgrounds.

The participants from the psychiatry cooperation group were no less diverse; some of the professions that were revealed to us during our conversations included administrator, biologist, chemist, drug dealer, occupational therapist, domestic worker, information scientist, engineering scientist, journalist, lawyer, food-chemistry specialist, mathematician, musician, politician, government employee, nurse, occupational therapist, professor of architecture, psychiatrist, researcher, and therapist. Cultural backgrounds among this group included origins in Austria, Germany, Palestine, Spain, and Syria.

The project visions4people meets the characteristics for complexity according to Funke's list, as it shows

(a) A multitude of variables involved.
(b) Cross-connections within the involved variables.
(c) Dynamics as an indicator for the temporal changes, which led in a more-or-less short time to a change of the original problem situation.
(d) Non-transparency as an indicator for the fact that not all the information that a problem solver would ideally be required to know is available.
(e) Polytely as an indicator for the need to optimize more than one criterion (in contrast to problems where exactly one criterion has to be considered).

> A characteristic of complex decision-making situations that has stood out from the beginning is that of polytely […]. This means that no one-dimensional evaluation of a proposed solution is possible, but rather that multiple, and, under certain circumstances, even conflicting evaluation criteria must be combined to form an integral judgment (Funke, 2004, p. 29).

If you are working with participants who can decide about their contributions, you will encounter a polyphony that almost inevitably engenders a polytely. In artistic fields, this is not a problem. The challenges are located in the performance of the project.

12.3.4 How Did You Choose What You Wanted to Investigate?

In late 2014, Prof. Heinz, head of the Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy at Charité Campus Mitte, and his colleague Bernhard Haslinger visited our art school and suggested a cooperative endeavor. After the presentation, a short thought-exchange led to an invitation to the psychiatric clinic. On site, the need to improve the patients' living situation was so palpable and impressive that the challenge did not leave my mind. I drafted a concept that was well received by the heads of the respective institutions. There were attempts to modify the basic structure—to involve and work with the groups for which the respective cooperating institutions were initially created—but, in the end, I was able to keep the essential parts untouched. Over the following year, a series of negotiations and substantial cuts were performed, including halving the staff and reducing the project time from 3 to 2 years. Finally, the trunk version was approved by the quality initiative QIO of the Berlin Senate for Science.

12.3.5 Special Conditions

As a psychiatric clinic is a particularly protected environment, it was not possible to use standard participatory practices, such as handing out cameras or accompanying the patients during therapy sessions. So, we had to develop appropriate methods and means of exploration for artistic investigation in the field of psychiatry.

Some initial practical tasks had to be performed in advance. The formation of a small transdisciplinary team would bring different specialists' perspectives, in the form of discussions and workshops, into the study group.

I acquired six project spaces within walking distance of the psychiatric clinic; the lengthy negotiations lasted almost a year. While waiting for approval, we worked in my private studio spaces.

Other time-consuming aspects were the bureaucratic and institutional preparations. These included permission to visit the psychiatric clinic and contact the patients, and adherence to discipline-specific formalities while drafting a teaching

program for students from higher levels of the eight departments. We started researching, reading, and selecting scientific studies concerning our project so as to generate a basic information pool for the students and created an anonymous survey.

We applied for and received permission to use the patient's café or the clinic foyer for our live sessions, letting the patients make decisions about contact with us, and avoiding an intrusion in their private space on the wards.

As patients and staff could voluntarily opt for talking to us, our descriptions and estimates refer to the people we met and cannot be generalized for all patients or staff members of the clinic.

Also, our experiences were limited to the Clinic for Psychiatry and Psychotherapy Charité Berlin Mitte. To our relief, we learned from the patients that the clinic is popular with them, as methods such as forced fixation (i.e., physical restraints), medication intake control, and coercion to eat are not carried out, and more patient-friendly guidelines are applied.

12.3.6 Language and Context

There is an essential challenge to our developing visions and the investigation of existing sets of rules, or the creation of a new approach for tackling unknown situations. This consists of recognizing and identifying the determined, defined, expected, and implicit meanings that permeate one's own language and way of thinking in countless modifications. Such recognition is vital because these thought- and affect-routines obstruct or distort our view of novel connections and phenomena.

Here are my reflections on our own use of words and language, and our attempts to change and correct wording during the visions4people project, and also for the production of collaborative realities:

Vision The term "vision" is derived etymologically from the Latin word *visio*, which means the act of seeing. In our context, the emphasis is on the seer rather than the object of interest. The seer might envision a future, but this vision also uncovers information about the seer and the cultural or social conditions in which the vision is developed. A vision is therefore a valuable vehicle for drawing conclusions about the present. For every person participating in the course, this means grounding one's own projections, perceptions, and visions in a self-reflexive step. Visions therefore do not drift around in vague futures but indicate important things about the person, the present, the action, the source, and the context.

Visions for People to visions4people I had drafted the working title "visions for people" in an extremely short time frame of conceptualization. It was meant to emphasize the intention to create visions for *people*, not for *products*. But after a while, the preposition "for" stuck unluckily in our minds, as it held the unhealthy implication that the visions would serve "for" people and not be initialized by their needs and desires. Finally, we decided to replace the word "for" with the digit "4,"

irritating the semiotics and at least producing some distance from the preposition while introducing ambiguity for reading the title.

Patient As members of an art academy, we were not part of the healthcare system, and therefore our visits to the clinic did not have a predefined purpose of conforming to existing roles. When interacting with the people in the clinic as externals, for us, the use of the term "patient" did not seem appropriate, considering the informal and personal contact we had with our conversation partners. A solution would have been to refer to the patients and the staff generically as "visitors" to our sessions. However, this would have blurred the different roles within the psychiatric system and would have created a rhetorical surface behind which the known structures persisted, without our being able to study the roles and relationships of these structures. So, the term "patient" will remain in this text, with the consciousness that it merely describes the role people were placed in when we met them. During our discussions and in our narratives, we used the individuals' first names, and when staff members introduced themselves with surnames, we used those.

I want to stress, once again, that the term "patient" refers to a transient role. The people we met as patients had assumed different roles, as already mentioned, and they will take on still other roles again after treatment. Also, some student participants had firsthand experience with psychiatry. A segregation based on the role of "patient" was thus always seen as a temporary transient condition. Also, we sometimes only found out after our talks whether our conversation partner had been a patient or a staff member.

12.4 Practices

Methods vs. Practices The term "method" is derived from the Greek *methodos*, which means "pursuit of knowledge," derived from *meta-* (expressing development) and *hodos* (way). It is further understood as "a particular procedure for accomplishing or approaching something, especially a systematic or established one (lexico.com/definition/method)." In pondering what to call our ways of developing a certain approach and procedure, it might fit. Still, I will refer to our methods as "practice," accentuating the empirical aspect and "the defining in the making." Our approach was influenced by Breuer's grounded theory methods, which include cultural praxeological theories.

12.4.1 Data

We have followed the perception that all is data, meaning "[…] that something can potentially be learned everywhere, that things that can validate, falsify, enrich or extend one's own theory, can in principle appear everywhere and in all forms in the world" (Boger, 2019, p. 65).

Data derives from the Latin *data*, the plural of *datum*, "(thing) given," the neuter past participle of *dare,* "to give." I will use this term and honor the original meaning, including the fact that data have been given to us, or that we have been extracting them from somewhere, or someone.

12.4.2 Retooling: From Using to Creating

During the preparation period for this project, my son and I downloaded a prefabricated survey form to generate an anonymous survey comprising experiences and assessments by people who had been in touch with the psychiatric system, as we did not find such information in studies or articles. The format had been produced for data collection and quantitative verification of a previously defined working hypothesis. Instead, we transformed and thus retooled the survey into a platform for people who could contribute their knowledge and experience with psychiatry by creating open text fields, which would enable individual, anonymous articulations within a bilingual (German/English) version suited to international participation.

The survey link was distributed through the mailing lists of the institutions of Charité and khb, and was passed on by the team members. Based on the personal details they provided, those who responded to the questions included persons affected by psychiatric disorders, as well as their relatives and friends, physicians, nursing staff, teachers and students from health care and the artistic disciplines.

In a really simple way, we had had re-tooled the survey form and created an assemblage that allowed individual diverse voices to be heard. We made the statements available to the team, to our students, and later to the visitors at the two exhibitions. For the last exhibition, we printed the statements on large sheets of paper, hung them in the hallway of the project space, and supplied pens that allowed visitors to add further comments (see Fig. 12.2).

12.4.3 Initial Task

The initial task for each visions4people student was to visit the psychiatric clinic—not in a group, but as a single person. Before their individual visits, they were asked to note their expectations on a piece of paper, and do the same while actually in the building, and finally, after their on-site experience. On the second day, we discussed

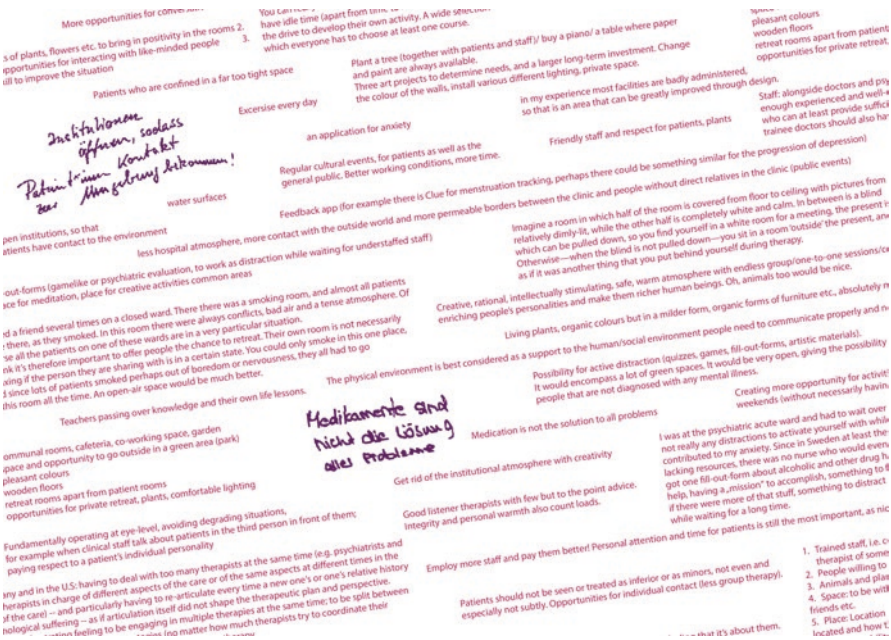

Fig. 12.2 Detail of comments from the visions4people survey

the outcomes of this task. The students received access to our information pool: a collection of papers, studies, and essays from the fields of psychiatry, philosophy, and architecture, including the results of the above-mentioned survey. The info pool was continuously extended by new texts and students' contributions.

During the course of the project, it also extended into a narrative pool, as all visions4people participants would upload their individual "scape research narratives." The receptive mode changed into a productive one, and the pool remained a vital source for further discussions, documenting our firsthand experiences.

12.4.4 Waiving Questionnaires: From Applying to Creating

In preparation for our joint visits, some students had drafted specific questionnaires for the patients to fill in. The results were intended as starting points for the creation of visions meant to improve the conditions at the clinic.

We distributed invitations in the clinic and some patients appeared in the café. To our surprise, they unanimously waived the prefabricated questionnaires or filled them in with absurd comments. They made it quite clear that they would very much like to spend time with us but were not willing to fill in forms or answer predefined questions. Also, they rejected taped interviews and live notations with a computer. They explained that they had been the objects of analysis and data retrieving in

countless ways, and they were tired of it. And despite intense efforts to distribute their knowledge, so far this had not had the effect of improving any aspect of their living situation. They were also very curious about us, and asked us lots of questions. When they found out that we were from an art school and not involved in the healthcare system, there was a palpable sense of relief. Intense and open-hearted discussions commenced, with topics determined by the patients. We talked about politics, professions, philosophy, treatment, medication, roles, stigmatization, boredom, the future, art, food, activities, hierarchies, family, money, and the meaning of life, to name a few.

This experience encouraged us to drop prefabricated formats, and thereafter, we had individual exchanges and open communication with the patients and the staff. These events and exchanges were our sources for the artistic outcomes.

12.4.5 Field to_Scape

During our field research, we felt uneasy with the term "field," as it implies a research environment as a cultivated area with ordered conditions—which, of course, applies to the area of psychiatry. However, if external persons—like artistic researchers—enter a field yet unknown to them, the realities unfold to them as new landscapes. Customs or rules that are "normal" for patients and personnel are not obvious.

For externals, "field" research is "scape" research: the exploration of an unknown "land_scape" in which unforeseeable events appear in an unmediated manner and will be perceived as new phenomena. Herein lies an enormous potential. The perception does not follow any habitual routines and remains sensitive to any situation, constellation, or event.

Our artistic field research—now "scape research"—took on the shape of an ad libitum sampling of events. The openness toward the observations led to further research questions and artistic ideas, as the noted events were not filtered through the premises of a specific intention.

12.4.6 From Reporting to Narrating

Having omitted the questionnaires, we had no documentation of our sessions. With this in mind, I encouraged the students to create narratives after each session, describing our experiences. As some participants felt insecure about this form of writing, I drafted a template with very open questions, such as: How did you feel during your visit? What was most important to you?

Two students and I tested the template and discovered that it was still channeling the memories, and therefore, possibly excluding notations that would not fit in.

Also, it pinned down the memory in particles or answer segments, dislocating the flow of events, affects, and thoughts.

Finally, all the students acted out their unique narratives. In our scape research narratives, the researcher was integrated as a first-person narrator, instead of using "objective" and passive wordings so as to eliminate a subjective speaker. This allowed individual perspectives to appear and to be compared and analyzed in a multilayered manner. As we did not attempt to perform field research reports, we decided to call the writings "scape research narratives."

We created 56 narratives by 24 authors that amounted to more than 100 DIN A4 pages of raw material. The anonymized versions were compiled as nine clusters of quotes, identifying the most immediate and crucial issues. These were:

1. Communication.
2. About the Charité.
3. Self-reflection.
4. Stigmatization.
5. Difficult situations.
   (a) Exhibition.
   (b) Boundaries.
   (c) Overstraining.
6. Patient ideas.
7. Cooperation.
8. Interventions.
9. Spatial analysis.

The method of clustering was generated by working through the texts and coloring the passages according to their content. In this way, the topics could be determined and organized into the legend of nine clusters with three subsections; admittedly, a very simple method. A comparative analysis using professional software is planned for this year and will include the release of the DIN A4 pages, which are to be used for further transdisciplinary research on the correlation between the application of different analytical methods and their respective outcomes.

12.4.7 From Expected Data to Unpredicted Experience

The decision to let go of several framings made us more vulnerable, as we were no longer able to channel our perceptions or hide behind a role or a prefabricated task or paper. But the benefit was that we met people, and we were regarded as people. The intensity of the discussions led to little joint events: The patients and staff showed us around, and we had walk-alongs inside the clinic and gardens. The patients wanted to "do something" together with us, so we prepared interventions and surprised them with shared activities. We created helium balloons with wishes

Fig. 12.3 "Balloon" intervention at Charité Psychiatry Berlin Mitte. (For privacy protection, the faces were covered with purple circles)

to release (see Fig. 12.2), writing with light (Fig. 12.3), and joint Santa Claus and Christmas events.

We created helium balloons with wishes 12 Collaborative Realities to release (see Fig. 12.3), writing with light (Fig. 12.4), and joint Santa Claus and Christmas events. In response to the communication topics that were introduced by the patients, we also started discussing artistic ideas with them, and they happily shared their opinions. The interventions and shared time developed into a collaboration between students and patients, and some patients also visited the project rooms. The planned interrogation had been transformed into a shared experience and artistic collaborations.

12.4.8 Feedback to Source: From Data to Artistic and Scientific Outcomes

For their artistic or scientific productions, the students had a free choice of topic, genre, or medium. Discussions, notes and suggestions, plans and methods, topographies and translations, and problems and solutions were exchanged among the students and our transdisciplinary team members in a way that also changed the project and its development.

The outcome was a spectrum of interactions that led to 19 concrete yet extremely different results, which were presented to the public in two exhibitions.

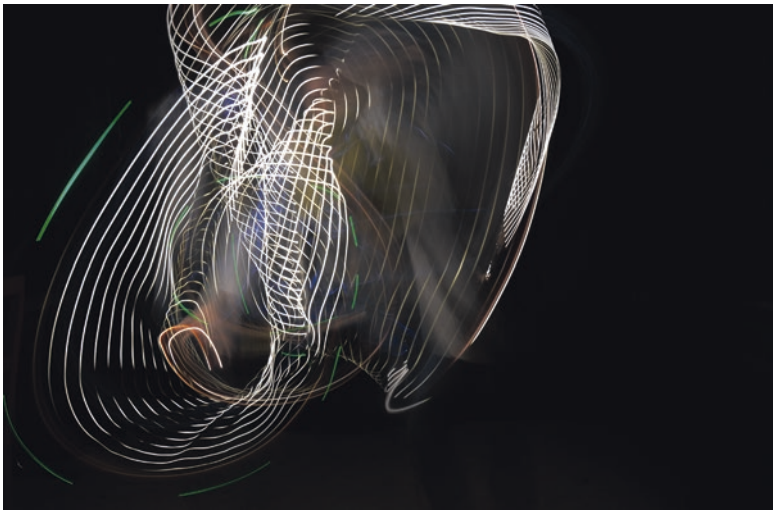

Fig. 12.4 "Painting with light," intervention at Charité Psychiatry Berlin Mitte

In the summer of 2019, Jovis Verlag published my exhaustive color publication based on our project. Entitled *visions4people,* it includes prerequisites, schedules, practices, narrative excerpts, challenges, and multiple images, reenacting our project and presenting all the student outcomes (Pollmann, 2019).

12.5 Analysis

12.5.1 From Thread to Threat

After the first visions4people course, I analyzed its positive and negative aspects. Positive aspects included the students' lively interest in patients' states of mind and clinical symptoms, the intensity of the patient–student exchanges, the commitment of the team members, the intensity and seriousness of the involvement, the personal questionings, the social and philosophical aspects of the project, and the students' dedication in producing the outcomes.

Negative aspects concerned the project as a whole: too much input, too many demands, and time pressure. The workload could not be realized within the standard teaching framework and consumed an enormous amount of extra time. This led to constant tension, and an extra effort to meet expectations.

Being taught that changing the concept during an investigation is an almost impossible interference, my analytical efforts first went into checking the details of problems, but the crucial challenge was to see and admit that the path I had initially drafted was altogether overexerted. The project-guiding "thread" turned out to be a threat.

I could neither shake off the feeling that I had been trying to fulfill expectations from two institutions, nor could I define precisely what these expectations were. More dangerously, I noticed that I had been under constant pressure to fulfill these vague demands, and I had transferred this burden onto the team members and students as well. Here, it caused friction. I realized that I had been caught in what Deleuze (2001) might call "the other's dream": "Beware of the other's dream, because if you are caught in the other's dream you are screwed" (p. 103).

I reviewed the rushed concept-phase and found indicators for my apprehensions. A closer look at my colleague-advisors who had proposed—if not imposed—goals and methods for the project made me discover that they had never been active in psychiatry, nor had they performed artistic research, or carried out a comparable project.

I urgently needed to revise the concept and its implementation. No more steaming through the course with content that excluded the consolidation of experiences gathered during the contact with patients and staff: We needed more time for discussing and becoming aware of what was happening to us.

I relaxed the tense schedule, and to create space/time for openness and dedication for unexpected events and fragile developments, I did the following:

(a) Secured more time for thought and awareness at the initiation phase.
(b) Devoted more time to the writing of narratives.
(c) Changed the obligatory workshops to facultative ones and
(d) As we were told by the patients that they would love to "do something with us," I secured time for planning and preparing for interventions at the Charité.

We started the second course in the winter semester of 2017/18, again with 12 new students, and experienced a much more relaxed flow of energy. The workshops were still well visited, we had more open discussions in smaller groups, the writing was unproblematic from the start, and we got heavily into communicating, as well as realizing artistic concepts together with the patients.

These positive developments made me take things one step further and imagine a project extension that included the patients in the design and decision-making processes—which, unfortunately, remained a utopia, as a project extension was not granted.

But daring to change the project mode and experiencing the positive effect literally mobilized my perspectives. I turned my head around, posing this disruptive question: Since we were investigating the clinic's needs and desires, rules, restrictions, flaws, hierarchies, and underlying structures, why not look at our own institutional background, with its needs and desires, rules, restrictions, flaws, hierarchies, and underlying structures?

12.5.2 Neglect

Although we were becoming more aware of its importance, we could not further investigate the topics surrounding time. I elaborated on this factor in relation to my own project, but we also identified specific issues about managing time in psychiatry.

Too Little and Too Much Time The patients are mostly treated with medication and can book occupational therapy by the hour in the psychiatric ward. However, there are long periods of waiting—in the patient's perception, "time does not pass," and "nothing happens."

This is in stark contrast to the time commitment of the staff. Our visiting nurses and doctors could only spare a few minutes, as they had to cope with an enormous daily workload. This is the effect of understaffing, which again is caused by the underlying concept that sets hospitals as economic, profit-oriented enterprises. In fact, we met people who also worked under truncated project versions and suffered from constant work overload.

In addition, staff at the clinic face the problem that clinical pictures differ individually, and one person might show symptoms of several diseases, so that a diagnosis is not easily achieved. As a result, therapies cannot be transferred in the form of an instruction manual and must be constantly reviewed and readjusted. All of this requires a subtle examination of the patient's symptoms, as well as fine-tuning and repeated adjustment of therapeutic measures. This, in turn, requires time for dedication, which is not available in the actual schedule.

Anxiety (*Entängstigung*) The other form of neglect was not being able to investigate the special atmosphere at the clinic. We had some mind-opening transdisciplinary discussions about the atmosphere of "*Angst*" (anxiety) and the need for "*Entängstigung*" (dissolving anxiety) with some Charité staff members. This phenomenon would require a more detailed dedication, as it is certainly one of the most outstanding challenges for working in psychiatry, and affects both patients and staff in different ways within a psychiatric ward.

Patients are in a psychiatric clinic because they have experienced a state of mental emergency or great psychological distress, and are afraid that this state of distress might continue, or that it might not improve under psychiatric treatment. They are anxious about what will happen in the ward, the effects of medication, and how their diagnoses will affect their lives. As improvements might be slow, they fear that the current episode might "last forever."

The nurses, doctors, and therapists share their days with people who are in states of exception, often exhibiting behavior that does not correspond to the usual patterns of interaction. Moods can change abruptly, and behavior can occur unexpectedly so as to demand instant action. The patients also might not be able to assess the behavior of some of their fellow patients. There is a strange atmosphere of constant tension—an atmosphere that has also, of course, affected us.

Because of the unpredictability and intensity of the experienced events, our situational awareness often circled around the discussions of inter- and intrapersonal topics. We could only partly examine situations on social, political, structural, hierarchical, and environmental levels, but the project made me aware of unretrieved potential to transform teaching and learning interactions that I would only be able to implement in novel projects.

12.5.3 Obstacles

An enormous amount of time and energy went into bureaucratic stipulations concerning the cooperation contract, module definitions, data restrictions, negotiations for a project space, renting contract, and embedding the teaching and research activities in both the art school and the clinic. I was taken aback by hardships such as delays, deferred answers, weird requirements, and ignorance. I learned to work my way around refusals, but the energy wear was enormous, and should not be underestimated.

Working with a truncated project version resulted in a massive workload for each participant. This seems to be typical: projects are only granted in slashed modes, triggering work overload and friction during conduct. Discussing these mishaps with other project leaders disclosed that these methods are part of the common neoliberal bureaucratic toolkit for thwarting activities.

Changes take time, and the shortage of time means that nothing changes.

12.6 Outcomes

A result means the consequence of an action intended to produce an expected output. I would therefore rather choose the term "outcomes," as it allows a wider range of influences of unforeseen factors and unpredicted developments in modifying the product.

The interventions performed on site during our project were an important outcome, changing ad hoc the patients' situations in the course of our work. We created an open space for communication, interaction, and surprise, which was overwhelmingly visited and appreciated.

The students produced outcomes, partly among themselves in groups, and partly with the patients. The exhibitions made it possible to feedback the outcomes to the initiating and collaborating participants in the clinic (patients and staff). This is an important loop, as the participants saw and explored the outcomes and could respond to them.

As I cannot present all the contributions, the titles and brief descriptions might give you an idea of what was realized (see list of contributions after the next paragraph).

The list starts with artistic contributions for external environments of the clinic, proceeding to situations inside the building, and leading to system-immanent questions and internal processes.

12.6.1 Contributions

As artists, we did not have the goal of achieving a consensus or a general claim. On the contrary, it was obvious, expected, and desired to end up with a variety of outcomes, in spite of having been to the same place, and sometimes even experiencing the same situations.

I am happy to share descriptions of the different outcomes, which might give you a glimpse of their diverse focuses.

List of contributions:

(a) **Pavilion toolkit:** Wooden posts, textile elements, by Juri-Apollo Drews, Abigail F. Wheeler, Amélie Cayré, and Maria Jacquin.
(b) **We are the universe:** 1:50-scale model of a garden installation at the Campus Charité Mitte, by Pao Kitsch.
(c) **Synesthesia**: Cellulose reflector for light situation in the long floor of the psychiatric clinic, painted, model 120 × 55 × 10 cm, by Felix Rasehorn.
(d) **The colors of waiting**: Two hard-cover coloring books for distributing in the therapy waiting rooms at the wards, each 31 × 33 × 2 cm; 25 hand-colored pages, rearranged on the wall, each 30 × 30 cm, second edition of the book with 25 pages assembled to form a picture, by Maria Evridiki Poulopoulou.
(e) **Light modulator**: Light installation (lamp, microcontroller, motors, plexiglass, glass) for the waiting rooms, by Eunseo Kim.
(f) **Shel[l]ter:** Light and privacy screen (felt and light) for the shared bedrooms in the clinic, by Johanna Taubenreuther.
(g) **Growing greenhouse**: A mini planting kit for the patients' rooms, by Eleni Mouzourou and Aki Makita.
(h) **At home:** Handmade lampshade (clay, wool) for the common rooms at the clinic, by Luisa Lauber and Almar de Ruiter.
(i) **Bead**: Padded scarves made from various fabrics for the patients to wear, each 27 × 140 cm, sewn-in wooden beads, by Elena Eulitz.
(j) **Voyage sonore**: Sound installation in dual stereo, mattress, and light for the recreation room, by Auriane Robert.
(k) **Picture of thought**: Dark brown synthetic hair and glue, diameter approx. 50 cm, artwork for exhibition, by Magda Domeracka.
(l) **Acoustic materialization**: Sound installation (dual-stereo, drawing on paper), artwork for exhibition, by Raphael Jacobs.
(m) **On/Off 1&2:** Wood, tanned black goat leather, rope, industrial pencils, each drawing 97 × 128 cm, artwork for exhibition, by Lukas Maibier.
(n) **A little history of thinking automatons**: Essay, poster, by Daniel Neumann.

(o) **The hand of the prophet**: Essay about coping strategies by means of the senses, poster, by Florin Cristea.
(p) **Dilemma**: Multimedia installation (photographs and projection), artwork for exhibition, by Quang Duc Nguyen.
(q) **Psyki-1 F20–29: UNIVERSUM GRAS:** Wooden box, 120 × 120 × 200 cm, paper, paint, glitter. Music: Τέχνη και Θάνατος, voice, algorithm, loop, as artwork for exhibition, by Chloe Pare-Anastasiadou and Daniel Miehe.
(r) **A true story**: Video installation, cabin made of steel, sheet metal, and Plexiglas (192 × 160 × 106 cm), video (40 min), artwork for exhibition, by Marlies Pahlenberg.
(s) **You are my window:** Mixed-media installation (paintings on silk, glassware, ladder, booklets), artwork for exhibition and a performance, by Eri Qubo.

To give you a stronger impression of the multitude and individuality of our results, I chose five images with the artist's summaries.

"We are the universe" by Pao Kitsch (Fig. 12.5)

To emphasize the importance of fresh air and nature, not only for visitors but also especially for patients of the Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, Campus Berlin Mitte, I decided to create installations in the two campus gardens. I was additionally motivated by the fact that when developing a spatial intervention, many people overlook outside spaces such as gardens. While talking to patients, I was often told that they would love to go out into the gardens; however, since the gardens appear neglected and nothing happens there, the patients usually decide to stay inside.

Since my artistic practice in recent years has focused on installations in open spaces, I thought about how I can restore to a place the magic that it needs. The first thing that struck me was the lack of color in the gardens. So, I decided to make a subtle intervention by introducing movable full and half spheres painted in mother-of-pearl color. Light plays an important role in this installation, since the sunrays

Fig. 12.5 Garden installation at the Campus Charité Mitte, 1:50-scale model

will animate the spheres by making them shimmer in a range of different tones and colors.

However, the idea behind my installation is not only to make the place more beautiful but also to allow the people using the garden to engage with their environment, and thus actively participate in creating a dynamic landscape. For this reason, both the full and half spheres will be movable. By moving the spheres around and arranging them according to personal preferences, patients will be able to create their own universe within the Charité gardens. In addition to the larger spheres, which could be used by patients to sit or lie down on, I will also attach smaller spheres to the trees. The half spheres incorporated into the trees will remain static and simulate organic outgrowths. To attract attention to the gardens from within the clinic, I will cover the windows with an iris film. This iridescent material shimmers in different colors, depending on the light and the perspective of the spectator, thus allowing the patients to experience the garden in novel ways.

"Synesthesia" by Felix Rasehorn (Fig. 12.6)

The floor plan of the psychiatric clinic building already reveals what appear to be endless corridors. The effect of this becomes clear on site, as a lack of daylight along with the monotonous doors lining continuous stretches of up to 35 m inevitably evoke feelings of disorientation, abandonment, and anonymity. Nevertheless, the clinic's corridors are truly indispensable as a communicative space, comparable to a public street where different residents come together to talk and possibly form a community. What can help a space—primarily defined only in functional terms—to support its social and communicative qualities? This project focuses on changing the experience of space through the use of light. Light strips and indirect lighting, reflected by colored surfaces on the wall and ceiling, will be installed to replace the

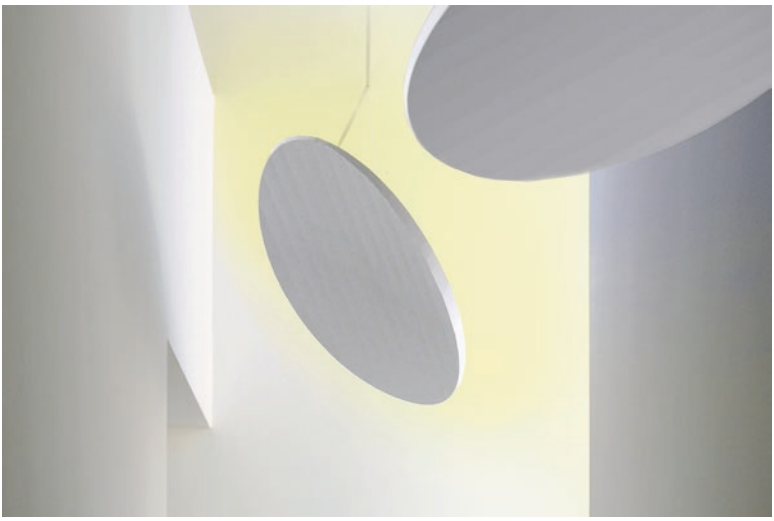

Fig. 12.6 Cellulose reflector for the light situation in the long floor of the clinic, painted, model 120 × 55 × 10 cm

constant, direct lighting that currently dominates the entire corridor. This will create a rhythmically changing intensity of light, making the corridor itself a kind of luminary. The differentiation of color will help to create distinct ambiances in the corridor and a common synesthetic space.

"The colors of waiting" by Maria Evridiki Poulopoulou (Fig. 12.7)

As a painter, I asked myself: What are the colors of waiting? My aim was to develop a collaborative project that would actively engage both patients and visitors of the Charité—those waiting a short time for an office door to open as well as those waiting for weeks and months for their therapies to end so that they can leave the clinic.

I came up with the idea of developing a coloring book. As a starting point, I used my own painting that depicted a woman looking out of a window. I transformed this painting into an abstract image consisting merely of outlines. Then I divided the image into nine sections, each of which became a separate page with an abstract pattern of black lines. Since I repeated each of the nine motives three times, the coloring book contains 27 pages. Finally, I made two copies of the book and attached nine coloring pencils to each of them.

I left one of the books at the Charité Outpatient Clinic for 2 weeks, whereas I took the other one with me during the weekly visits to the Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, Campus Charité Berlin Mitte. I asked those who were interested to fill the pages with colors of their choice using the black outlines as mere suggestions—they could decide to paint within the lines or disrespect them. Each page in the book was perforated so that it could easily be torn out. Those who contributed to the books were offered the possibility of either tearing out their page and keeping it

Fig. 12.7 An assemblage of 25 hand-colored pages, rearranged on the wall, each measuring 30 × 30 cm, second copy of the sketchbook

for themselves or leaving it in the book. By combining 25 pages from different parts of the two books, I reassembled the sections of the abstract image based on my painting. The result is a new image created through a collaborative exchange. The coloring book thus allows me to engage in an open dialogue with those who wish to paint or draw in it.

"Shel[l]ter" by Johanna Taubenreuther (Fig. 12.8)

The extended stays and extraordinary living situation of patients often result in a field of tension, especially in the psychiatric ward's shared bedrooms. Perception is strongly affected by one's own state of mind and by fellow patients in a place where there is a lack of privacy, and personal needs can hardly be met. Shel[l]ter is designed to reduce this internal and external tension. The organic membrane combines luminous, sound-absorbing, and sight-protecting elements.

Intuitively, it can be placed in different positions to allow the patient to create the desired degree of shielding. Like an extended physical gesture, it can express the need to delineate one's own territory or open one's space to others. With its concave, shell-like shape, inspired by a clamshell, it conveys the feeling of an interior space that offers security and protection.

"You are my window" by Eri Qubo (Fig. 12.9)

The central components of my ongoing project, "You are my window," are painted portraits based on a series of extensive interviews I conducted with individuals who are neither afraid of facing nor of showing their vulnerability.

In this project, I explored the self-image of the individuals as well as the possibility of sharing the experience that arises from self-reflection. The point of departure for each interview was the question: What would your ideal self-portrait look like? I continued interviewing each person until I had the feeling that I could visually grasp their self-image. I then created their painted portrait by using my own visual

Fig. 12.8 Light and privacy screen (felt and light) for the shared bedrooms at the clinic

Fig. 12.9 "You are my window," mixed-media installation (paintings on silk, glassware, ladder, booklets), artwork for exhibition and a performance

style to faithfully express their self-image as I understood it. The image that arises from this process is necessarily a collaborative portrait, a result of the interaction between the personal information willingly disclosed to me by the interviewed person and my own personal and cultural heritage. Thus, the interviewee's self-image is filtered through my reflections on myself and the world around me.

Furthermore, I decided to examine how my own self-image is transformed through interactions with other people. Out of this examination, I developed a storytelling performance as a form of self-portrait. In the performance, my personal experiences and stories are intertwined with words told by others and accompanied by various sounds and song fragments.

In visions4people, the individual results emerged through our experiences and reflections during our performances. The individual contributions of the participants accentuate problematic situations, offer critical reflections on fundamental questions, and suggest prospects for change. For the overall concept, the development of a conclusion itself became a performative practice, especially during the publication's conceptualization and elaboration.

The Publication *visions4people* (Fig. 12.10)

In this publication, the narration of the project shifts from its chrono-topological localization and listing of methodological aspects to an articulation of challenges and complex situations. Readers can actually revisit the psychiatric clinic and immerse themselves in the experiences via quotes from the _scape research narratives, images, and descriptions. The publication opens the space for the contributions of all participants and ends with an outlook that concludes with four essays on varied futures. It is thus, at the same time, a beginning.

The authorship extends from a single speaker to a polyphony of narrations, and the project outcomes are the result of the transdisciplinary and collaborative encounters.

At other psychiatric establishments in the future, visions4people can provide contexts, possibilities, and experience values for similar activities, situations, and arrangements.

These results and all our activities were realized by people. Here is an alphabetical list of the contributor's first names. (Due to privacy protection, the patients' names are pseudonyms.) I presented the names regardless of individual roles, and deliberately did not aggregate these roles. Thus, I emphasize that the credit goes to individuals whom I here make visible:

> Aaron Pollmann, Abigail F. Wheeler, Agata Kycia, Ahmed, Aki Makita, Almar de Ruiter, Amélie Cayré, Andreas Heinz, Andreas Jäck, Andreas Kallfelz, Andreas Ströhle, Anke Grünow, Arthur, Auriane Robert, Beatrice Günter, Bernhard Haslinger, Britta, Bruno, Charlotte Mende, Chloe Pare-Anastasiadou, Christiane Pries, Christine Tkotsch, Christin-Luisa Amann, Daniel Neumann, David, Dimitrij, Dirk, Donald, Doris Kleilein, Elena Eulitz, Eleni Mouzourou, Elionor Sintes, Eri Qubo, Eunseo Kim, Felix Rasehorn, Ferdinand

Fig. 12.10 Cover image of the publication: harmonic distortion, photo from an architectural model of the Psychiatric Clinic, Charité Berlin Mitte

Köhler, Florin Cristea, Frank, Frederike Rehfeldt, Frida Grubba, Hanna, Heide, Heike Reuter, Henri, Jan Liebscher, Jannis Kempkens, Jason Danziger, Jinan Abi Jumaa, Johanna Ewert, Johanna Taubenreuther, Johannes Jansen, Johannes Regente, Joost van Kessel, Julia Bahn, Julia Emmler, Juri-Apollo Drews, Karina, Karla, Kathrin Mähling, Katrin Bergner, Kim, Klara, Klaus, Lars, Leonie Baumann, Lisa, Lloyd, Luisa Haase-Kiewning, Luisa Lauber, Luise, Lukas Maibier, Lynne Kolar-Thompson, Magda Domeracka, Maria Bierbaums, Maria Evrdiki Poulopoulou, Maria Jacquin, Mark, Marlies Pahlenberg, Martin, Matthias, Max, Maximilian Hinterecker, Michael Thomas Taylor, Michael, Miriam, Mirko Rachor, Mr. Hellwig, Mr. Schröter, Nassim Mehran, Nick, Niels Walter, Nina Fürstenberg, Olaf, Osmel Brooks Morejon, Pao Kitsch, Paul, Pedro Moraes Landucci, Peter Wiezorrek, Philip, Phillip Krüning, Pierre, Quang Duc Nguyen, Raphael Hofmann, Raphael Jacobs, Roland, Sabine Biedermann, Sam, Sarah Bäcker, Shelley Tootell, Sophie Schmidt, Stefanie, Susanne Rösler, Sven, Theresa Hartherz, Thomas Stodulka, Tim, Ulrike Kluge.

12.6.2 How Can Your Results Help Us Understand the More Complex Reality?

From Being Affected to Getting Involved In the field of psychiatry, visions4people led to a critical questioning of the approaches of design thinking, participatory design, and artistic activity. Some of the attempted approaches and methods were not adequate for our specific situations. In our assessment, the use of methods such as prefabricated questionnaires and readymade interaction kits build up and maintain a distance that prevents the initiators from getting in contact with the people they want to interview. The roles of the researchers and researchees remain prefabricated and predefined by the tools, channeling the contact and the outcomes and keeping a distance that obstructs an exchange of knowledge and information. If the participatory act is methodically reduced to filling out forms, the activity is data extraction and not participation. Cooperation and collaboration are excluded, along with all possibilities for opening decision-making processes.

For the area of psychiatry, as well as for many other areas of public and social participation, an interpersonal exchange between affected and researching subjects with the objective of a cooperative or even collaborative way of working is a prerequisite for participation to take place.

The notion of social participation is no more than lip service if the active design and structuring of public and social spaces do not include participation in decision-making processes by the affected parties. The question is always, however, who initiates these processes, and out of what interest. In the worst case, “participation is used as a veiled tactic to increase profitability” (Miessen, 2012, p. 35).

Working in transdisciplinary contexts means encountering one’s own restrictive viewpoints first, then finding out about the political foundations, rules, and restrictions—and making others aware of them. Framed by a profession, a role, a discipline, or a code of behavior, and at the same time changing that role will inevitably cause friction in your respective field. The challenge is to articulate destructive

framing and routines of conduct, and to prepare the ground for concepts that open up space and time for improving energy flows and forces among involved people.

As far as my experience goes, science is not the only source for knowledge production, but part of it, with a strong emphasis on analytic activities. Still, science, knowledge production, and practice are treated as different areas: Science does not actively extend into the improvement of situations, while scientific results do not change destructive practices, behavior, approaches, or processes.

A flow from scientific investigation to practical consequences seems to be a rare phenomenon. The effect on the field that was data-extracted often remains slim: "Not all authors express this in such a decisive form as Wolcott (2005), who declares outright: 'The researcher has nothing to offer the field' and points out that research is ultimately of use especially for the researchers themselves" (Hamm, 2013, p. 68, Wolcott 2005, p. 128).

Here, it might be time to extend the field of responsibility, and voice options for offering something for that field.

Also, knowledge production advances often in heterogenic fields outside academia and its disciplines. The sources for novel approaches to knowledge production might not be found solely in conventional institutions.

Made-Ness The six words "from being affected to getting involved" outline the conclusion of visions4people. They refer not only to the roles of the patient, but also to those of the psychiatrist, psychologist, or researcher, and can also be transmitted to their respective institutional roles.

As a consequence of this conclusion, I developed teaching and learning modes that enable decision-making processes as a joint activity.

In awareness of the made-ness of structures and knowledge, I learned to ask:

What am I actually "making"?
Whom am I "making" it for?
Is my "making" helpful to those who are affected by it?
Are their voices heard—and if not, how can I "make" them heard?
Do they have the power to decide, and if not, who is "making it" for them? (Fig. 12.11)

12.7 The Bigger Picture

I would like to explain how visions4people is embedded in the two interleaving fields of transdisciplinarity and artistic research.

Fig. 12.11 After Vernissage, visions4people on Brunnenstrasse, Berlin Mitte

12.7.1 Transdisciplinarity

> Transdisciplinarity has emerged over the last few decades as an attempt to address disciplinary fragmentation. It presents an alternative to the paradigm of simplification, reduction and disjunction, taking on the challenge of complexity and proposing to connect and contextualize knowledge. […] Its goals are to propose generative frameworks that can integrate new perspectives and raise different questions. It also tackles problems that have historically not been addressed because they are blind spots in disciplinary discourse, living in between disciplinary perspectives, or are simply considered too large to be addressed by hyperspecialized researchers (Montuori & Donnelly, 2016, p. 752).

Today, transdisciplinary projects are being performed in all artistic and scientific disciplines. They share the awareness that our knowledge is constructed, developed in the contexts of existing cultures, and can be linked and exchanged in an overarching manner. The implicit reflexive process questions each individual researcher and their theoretical and cultural basic assumptions.

Transdisciplinarity offers no firmly established research methods, but instead entails examining, integrating, and developing possibilities and approaches from various disciplines in order to mutually explore new trails of scientific, social, or cultural change. But these endeavors are not wonderlands; they contain stubborn structures, unmentioned rules and restrictions from participating institutions, and your own and your research partner's fears, reservations, prejudices, avoidance strategies, routines, mannerisms, objectives, idealizations, and ideologies.

Conflicts cannot be avoided when collaborating in a transdisciplinary manner, as different backgrounds, assumptions, and perspectives collide—with the enormous benefit that the outcome might depict problems more plastically and thoroughly.

> Whether bridging disciplinary divides between different ways of knowing within academia (inter-disciplinarity), or extending the "right to do research" to marginalized communities and groups (trans-disciplinarity), a key feature of these processes is that of reflection—both on the world and on one's role in that world (Toomey et al., 2015, p. 1).

12.7.2 Artistic Research

> If "art" is but a mode of perception, "artistic research" must also be the mode of a process. Therefore, there can be no categorical distinction between "scientific" and "artistic" research — because the attributes independently modulate a common carrier, namely, the aim for knowledge within research. Artistic research can therefore always *also* be scientific research […]. For this reason, many artistic research projects are genuinely interdisciplinary, or, to be more exact, indisciplinary (Klein, 2010/2017, 11th para.).

Artistic research is carried out in all artistic disciplines and is heterogeneous in terms of content, methods, practices, conducts, and outcomes. Topics and methods for investigating can be selected from all areas of human activity, and will be compiled for the specific project. Projects might not follow the linear structure of a scientific study, but apply iterative, spiral constructions. Each artistic research project creates its own composition of starting points, methods, and outcomes. In the context of visions4people, the term "artistic research" lent itself as a possible definition of what we were doing—perhaps the only one.

A more specific aspect might be disclosed by Gilles Deleuze, who has had a strong impact on artistic research. We also intensely discussed the revolutionary step towards a complete transformation of psychiatry in la Borde, initiated by Guattari, Deleuze, and Oury. Deleuze thought of art and "[…] literature as a clinic that complements or corrects medicine, for it situates itself at the level of a symptomatology of real effects rather than an etiology of abstract causes" (Sauvagnargues, 2019, p. 15).

According to Deleuze, artistic activity does not consist of a production of aesthetic forms but of capturing the forces that permeate our bodies and societies. The assembling, disclosing, and displaying of these forces allows intensifications, subverting stereotypes and clichés, thus unleashing political power through the artwork.

A reason for the interest in artistic research from other fields of knowledge production—but also for the challenges in transdisciplinary projects—is provided by the following quote:

> But the image is not a statement and, according to Deleuze's distinction, requires semiotics and not semantics, that is, a theory of non-discursive signs that is not content to duplicate the rhetorics of signification or to imitate linguistic operations. Semiotics defines itself as a system of images and signs independent of language in general. Hence the difficulty of an analysis of the non-discursive arts, for it is necessary to learn in discourse what is not derived by it, and to extract thought from a signaletic, non-linguistic matter that is nevertheless not amorphous but semiotic (Sauvagnargues, 2019, p. 12).

12.7.3 Massive Serialized Collaborative Fictions

Agnes Bolinska and Joseph D. Martin (2020), scholars in the history and philosophy of science, offer this perspective:

> Science, therefore, does not resemble a television show so much as a more sprawling fictional world, the product of many (often competing) authorial visions, with diverse and interlocking, but not necessarily unified, sub-plots, that evolves through multiple media. Cook (2013) calls these Massive Serialized Collaborative Fictions (MSCFs).

This novel approach to science places art and science in the same field of engagement in collaborative fiction. Following this plot, I recapped what we had experienced with visions4people and found a term—and a title. We had experienced collaborative realities.

12.8 Conclusion

I see knowledge production as an extensive, multi-dimensional structure that is continuously deformed and reformed, deconstructed and reconstructed, formalized, expanded, and disrupted. These transformations rearrange and reshape approaches to past, present, and future events and circumstances, whereas visions—be they scientific, science-fictional, or fictional—are the first potential anchor points for future realizations.

Fig. 12.12 Harmonic distortion mirrored, photo from architectural model of Psychiatry Charité Berlin Mitte

This constant information is entwined and entangled with cultural, political, societal, social, psychological, ecological, and as-yet unlabeled activities of knowledge production. They appear massively interconnected, with overlaps and exclusions, evolving, uniting, dividing, vanishing, or morphing into something novel—thus creating exponential complexity.

We humans live among, on, in, and with these formations, shaping and being shaped by them. We are in-formed by and dividuals of them: part-givers and part-takers.

Our individual perspective's starting points: an indisciplinary mélange of aims and desires; polyphony, polytely. From here, we emplot our collaborative fictions in interactions with complex realities. And when facing the target points of our investigations, we find them constructed—by us (Fig. 12.12).

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Part III
Part III: What Does Being Courageous Mean After All?

Chapter 13
Researching in Spite of Resistance: Courage and Responsibility in (Re)Breaking New Ground

Meike Watzlawik and Ska Salden

> Every individual is something singular, a unique entity, existing nowhere and never elsewhere. Certain regularities may be active in it, certain types may be embodied in it, but it is not completely absorbed in these regularities and types; there always remains a plus by which it differs from other individuals who are subject to the same laws and types. And this last nucleus of essence, which causes the individual to be such and such a thing, quite heterogeneous to all others, is inexpressible, unclassifiable, incommensurable in scientific terms. In this sense, the individual is a borderline concept toward which theoretical research strives, but which it can never reach; it is, one might say, the asymptote of science. (Stern, 1900, p. 15f)

When we research a person—or, ideally, research with them—we are dealing with a complex entity that is also in a state of constant change, as Stern indicates in the opening quote. Goethe already pointed to the latter when he wrote in his book *Farbenlehre* [*Color Theory*]: "If we look at all these Gestalten, especially the organic ones, we will discover that nothing in them is permanent, nothing at rest or defined—everything is in a flux of continual motion" (Goethe, 1810/1995, p. 63f). What does this mean for research—and specifically, for research within cultural psychology?

In order to answer the question, it is probably advisable to recall once again what *cultural psychology* actually is—or, better still, what it can be. On the one hand, it should be said that it is not a unified or homogenous discipline; different currents within the field can be observed (e.g., Valsiner, 2012; Slunecko & Wieser, 2014). On the other hand, these currents have in common that they do not equate culture with *context* that can be varied on the part of the researcher. Accordingly, questions such as "Do people in culture A differ from people in culture B in terms of certain personality traits?" make little sense in cultural psychology. Most of the time,

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qualitative methods seem more suitable for capturing the complexity and processuality of phenomena from a cultural-psychology perspective. This becomes even more apparent when looking at possible definitions of culture from this viewpoint.

Valsiner (2012) defines culture from a cultural-psychology perspective as being a "unique organizer of person–environment relations" (p. 6); i.e., a *tool* within the person. We do not come to this tool alone, but through a lifelong history of learning in specific sociohistorical contexts—accordingly, this tool is also complex and potentially in flux. On the one hand, it represents an individual internal organizer, but on the other, a collective regulator that guides social practices and interactions. A church, for example, only becomes a church through the shared interpretation as such by its visitors—who also know what is appropriate, inappropriate, allowed, and forbidden in this specific space/place. The church building itself is therefore a cultural *artifact* which, by itself, tells us little about the "culture" for which it is meaningful. And artifacts can change their meaning over time: In recent years, church buildings have been transformed, into (for example) a dance club in New York and a public swimming pool in London—something that would not have been possible at times when the Christian faith enjoyed supremacy in the according countries. Cultural psychology is thus "*interpretative* in nature, i.e., it wants to understand the orientations, practical and discursive rules, according to which people of certain times and places create their cultural web of meaning and act accordingly" (Slunecko & Wieser, 2014, p. 349).

13.1 Understanding Meaning-Making with the Help of Language

When co-author Watzlawik talks to students about possible master's, bachelor's, or even doctoral thesis topics and then brings up data-collection choices, most of these degree candidates suggest interviewing people, using questionnaires, or looking at other linguistic data material to explore the phenomena of interest. Linguistic data are therefore very popular, but they also have their pitfalls: Language exchange between individuals is in itself a complex process; one must be able to express oneself, to hear, see, or read, to interpret what the other means, then decide what to answer and how, and so on. Misunderstandings certainly arose in the making of this book, due—in part—to the fact that the editors and the contributors had different ideas about concepts such as "science" or "scientific texts" (see Pollmann, Chap.12, this volume, for a more detailed discussion). Thus, the question was not only whether one spoke the same language but also whether one used it in the same way. Talking with each other and explaining what each party intended helped to resolve the issue. We thus do not only "present" meaning with the help of language, we construct meaning dialogically/discursively through interaction with others.

Brockmeier and Harré (2001, p. 50) offer an apt description in reference to narratives:[1]

> To present something as a narrative does not mean to "externalize" some kind of "internal" reality and to give a linguistic shape to it. Rather, narratives are forms inherent in our ways of getting knowledge that structure experience about the world and ourselves. To put it another way, the discursive order in which we weave the world of our experiences emerges only as *modus operandi* of the narrative process itself. That is, we are primarily dealing not with a mode of representing but with a specific mode of constructing and constituting reality […].

When asked to tell their life story, for example, people construct a narrative in a specific setting for a specific purpose, and as part of interaction with a specific other. They construct and change meaning through and with the emergent narrative. Meaning construction and self-reflection do not need a full-scale biographical account, however: Diriwächter et al. (2004) showed that items of a personality test are enough to trigger different forms of self-reflection, so that a ticked 5 (e.g., to indicate that someone fully agrees) on a scale of 1 to 5 can have a wide variety of meanings that remain invisible when the researcher only looks at the number itself. When we want to understand the meaning-making processes involved, we need more than a number (e.g., a verbal account of what the person thought when answering the questions).

Yet we must take into account the fact that when someone is answering questions or following a narrative prompt, different factors influence the answers given. Does the research participant trust the researcher—and vice versa? And how does this influence what is (or is not) being said? Simão et al. (2016) stress the importance of the researcher–participant relationship for the research process, and declare that, indeed, a co-construction of meaning is taking place. The mutual influence of researcher and researched becomes apparent when one asks questions such as: What assumptions does the research participant have about the purpose of a certain question the researcher is asking? And with what anticipated audience will the researcher later share their findings? A student of mine (Meike Watzlawik) recently interviewed a friend of hers to better understand how pornography is linked to the idea of a "fulfilled sexual life." Later, she was quite disappointed, because her friend would not talk about "the most interesting stuff" in the actual interview—and she did not have permission to incorporate what she knew from private conversations that took place *before* data collection. We both assume that her friend was hesitant to reveal "the interesting stuff" because he knew that the interview transcript would be analyzed later on, and that others (whom he did not know) would listen to what he said. Preconceptions and presumptions on the part of the participants thus

[1] "The most general category of linguistic productions is discourse. Human beings communicate by a number of means, including the verbal. Typically, verbal communication occurs cotemporaneously with and not independently of other material and symbolic activities, and it is in this sense that we call linguistic production (as result as well as process) *discourse*. […] We conceive of narrative as a subtype of discourse but as the highest level type or classificatory concept, in a taxonomy of lower level narrative forms" (Brockmeier & Harré, 2001, p. 42).

influence data collection—a general phenomenon that does not only apply to verbal data (cp. Simão et al., 2016). After what she experienced, the above-mentioned student of mine would probably agree with what could be read on one of the first slides Brendan Gough presented at our second annual winter school "Culture, Psychology & Qualitative Research: Qualitative Research Beyond the Interview" this year:[2]

"Interviews + themes = boring!"

Following this statement, Gough (2021) referred to Brinkmann's warning (2012) that qualitative research is endangered by "McDonaldization" (p. 62). In his paper, Brinkmann states that "interviewing is becoming the preferred choice in qualitative research, not because it is always the optimal way to answer one's research question, […] but because it appears to be less time consuming than ethnographic fieldwork" (p. 63). "McDonaldization" is defined as follows: Qualitative research, which is now becoming more popular in psychology, seemingly has to be *efficient*; it has to reach a certain number of participants (*calculability*), standardization of interview questions being a common goal so that *predictability* is guaranteed, and sophisticated computer programs assist with analyses (providing *control*)—potentially preventing researchers from actually engaging with their data and being surprised by it (Brinkmann, 2012).

Surprises seem to be even less likely, because predictability is also important for many in a different sense than that mentioned above. When working with students, questions such as the following may arise: "But interviews with only three individuals—that is not representative! And what about reliability and validity?" Quality criteria, which make a lot of sense for quantitative research, have been hammered into students' brains due to an educational focus that is still very much one-sided, such that research per se is linked to these criteria. The question of meaningfulness is not asked at first. Obvious examples may help us take another critical look: if, for example, in studying narrative identity construction, we are looking at a phenomenon that, per definition,

> *remains a project to be worked on for much of the rest of the life course* [starting in adolescence]. Into and through the midlife years, adults continue to refashion their narrative understandings of themselves, incorporating developmentally on-time and off-time events, expected and unexpected life transitions, gains and losses, and their changing perspectives on who they were, are, and may be into their ongoing, self-defining life stories. (McAdams, 2011, p. 107)

So, concepts like retest reliability *cannot* apply here, because the phenomenon of interest is constantly changing. If we got exactly the same story from a person in two interviews, we should be quite suspicious and not happy, because the retest reliability is "perfect." Instead of just applying the criteria that became so popular for

[2] The idea for this book was born during the first Winter School "The Symbolic in Cultural Psychology: Empirical and Practical Approaches Beyond Words" held at the Sigmund Freud University Berlin, Germany.

quantitative research, Tracy (2010), for example, suggests we look for the following eight key markers to assess the quality of qualitative research: "(a) worthy topic, (b) rich rigor, (c) sincerity, (d) credibility, (e) resonance, (f) significant contribution, (g) ethics, and (h) meaningful coherence" (p. 837). We will later come back to (g) and (h), but we will now look more closely at (e): resonance. Tracy (2010) defines resonance as being present when the "research influences, affects, or moves particular readers or a variety of audiences through aesthetic, evocative representation, naturalistic generalizations, and transferable findings;" which brings us back to the question of generalizability. Can we generalize from a single case, or from small samples? No, and why not? Because—as Demuth (2018) points out—not all qualitative studies aim at generalization. Demuth differentiates the *intrinsic case study*, which seeks to understand a case in all its particularities, from the *instrumental* and *collective* case studies. Samantha was an autistic girl who would not talk but only sing, and her singing only used vowels. I (Meike Watzlawik) remember her quite vividly because she was well known at the university where I studied. The researchers were not looking for what Samantha had in common with other children, but rather tried to understand her many differences—and in so doing, they provided new perspectives on speech acquisition and creativity theory (El Mogharbel et al., 2003; Wenglorz & Deutsch, 1999). In contrast to the intrinsic case studies, the "cases" are carefully chosen while conducting collective and instrumental case studies. Such a study "attempts to identify patterns and themes and compare these with other cases. In that sense, it aims at a limited scope of generalization through checking the transferability […] of the findings from a single case to other cases" (p. 78).[3] One question remains: How is generalization possible *at all*, if we are dealing with phenomena that are in constant flux, and which therefore are inherently unique by nature? Demuth (2018), referencing other authors (e.g., Salvatore & Valsiner, 2010), points out that generalizability is

> present in any single case because people—in their unique situated interactions—act according to situation-transcending cultural traditions of how to conceive of and react to a given situation. In order to generalize, we therefore need to take into account not only the individual history of persons but also the prevailing socio-cultural traditions and the societal conditions that enable or restrict specific ways of acting and experiencing (p. 89).

This provides us with the opportunity to derive "generalized" conclusions for individuals who are part of the same sociocultural context and who have very likely experienced similar things on the basis of case studies—or small samples with whom we are able to do research in detail or in depth (rather than investigating hundreds of subjects with a limited number of items). What master narratives do these individuals most likely refer to or make use of—for example, in making sense of their life? What constraints do they experience? Even though we might not be able to apply the findings to other populations, we will still learn a lot about human

[3] Flick (2014) explains the criteria that need to be fulfilled to be able to generalize in more detail within qualitative research.

meaning-making and navigating in the world, and may therefore add to our theoretical understanding of human phenomena.

To be able to achieve this, both Brinkmann and Gough pledge a research approach that allows the researcher to be creative, to become a craftsman—that is, to stop looking for an established, efficient method that may be used, and instead seek one that rather poses the question of what is needed to approach the phenomenon of interest in the best way possible (cp. Valsiner, this volume). In this process, the researchers themselves become research instruments when allowing their intuition to guide their decisions as to what the next steps should be (cp. Huf or Pollmann, Chaps. 4 and 12, this volume). Had the student of mine, for example, dared to deviate from her interview guide and switch to a meta-level by sharing her observation that her interviewee was seemingly very reluctant to answer, the interview might have taken an interesting turn. But is talking to people the only way?

13.2 The Courage and Necessity to Do Things Differently

> Language […] enables human beings to understand things as general, to reach the consciousness of their own generality, to express the ego. (Hegel, 1830, p. 80)

> Any human activity unfolds in a particular historical context, a particular life-world—and thus always refers to the activity of other humans and in particular to their artifacts. That activity is culturally prestructured is true even in the case of a lone actor; also, for such an actor, culture would be present and manifest in the language and tools he uses—in other words, in practices which he could have never come up with just by himself. To paraphrase Hegel, tools and language are objective culture; through them we are embedded or woven into a culture-specific matrix from which we can never escape. (Slunecko & Wieser, 2014, p. 352)

Language as a complex sign system is central to understanding human experience and behavior in a wide variety of historical contexts that are culturally shaped and culturally formative phenomena, as shown above—but it is certainly not the only way, as this book has attempted to stress. Photographs, paintings, drawings, clothing, fragrances, posture, bodies, and other variables can be very valuable (additional) resources in the process—even though we will, in the end, always need language to communicate with others about what we found. So what about a language *plus* research approach (see also Klempe, Chap. 3, this volume)? Or alternative research approaches *plus* language?

At our winter school, Brendan Gough (2021) invited students to change the usual interviewing protocol. He made the following suggestions: Incorporating photographs that interviewees would bring along (for example) and then view together so as to talk about them (cp. also Gupta & Chaudhary, Chap. 5, this volume); having people draw or paint so that the interview or even the whole data collection process could turn into a "multi-dimensional, multi-sensorial mode of representation and expression" (slide 14, cp. Sheese and Kietlińska, Chaps. 9 and 10, this volume); walking through certain places rather than staying put (cp. Wagoner et al., Chap.

7, Fitzek, Chap. 11, as well as Kietlińska, Chap. 9, this volume); and incorporating new technologies when useful (e.g., messengers, Skype, Zoom; cp. Giaxoglou & Georgakopoulou, 2021). New technologies have provided new opportunities to work with visual data, and we can, for example, observe an increasing use of video analysis in the social sciences (see Demuth, Chap. 8, this volume). Reavey (2011) also stresses that "visual research has grown significantly over the past 30 years" (p. xxvi). Nevertheless, the use of rather new technologies such as cameras has also its limitations, which is why "traditional" participant observation remains an option that might also be combined with other methods of data collection (see Shabel & García, Chap. 6, this volume).The inclusion of visual and/or non-verbal data is, nevertheless, not new territory in psychology: When we look at the discipline's history, researchers have indeed incorporated all sorts of data. A famous, but at the same time very controversial, example is the constitutional typology research of Ernst Kretschmer (1921), in which physique, but also typeface and similar data sources played a major role. Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie* (1900–1920), as another example, entailed a hermeneutic approach incorporating the study of cultural "products." Wieser (Chap. 2, this volume) provides additional examples: reading traces, *Ausdruckspsychologie*, and the semiotic model. Newer technologies also facilitate the *emergence* of new phenomena: Social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and the like allow for an unprecedented dynamic interplay between images, sound, and text. According to Reavey (2011), images mediate our experience of the information presented online and the interactions with others in virtual spaces. Addressing and capturing this multi-modality thus has to be part of phenomena-adequate research endeavors—an observation that also holds true for offline interaction and meaning-making processes (Demuth, Chap. 8, this volume). Multimodal approaches to studying social interaction have already been proposed by different scholars (e.g., Mondada, 2013; Streeck et al., 2011), and are "presently experiencing an upsurge within studies on social interaction […], as well as in discursive psychology […]" (Bamberg et al., 2021). Also important is the fact that multi-modality does not mean documenting different "modes" in parallel, but rather examining their interplay, for which Finnegan (2015) provides an example in her chapter, "Forget the words…: It's *performance!*"—which is featured in the book, *Where is language?*

> "Performance" is not some simple "add-on" to text, but a range of multimodal dimensions through which verbal art exists. Not all will be present, or equally present, on any one occasion or in every genre. But whatever the example, our grasp of its ontology and meaning can be enriched by exploring the kinds of dimensions sketched here: the immediate and imagined settings; participants; diverse multimodal actualities and resonances (not just acoustic and visual, but sometimes tactile and somatic too); the situations and ideologies (perhaps contested or multiply interpreted); and the generic conventions creatively marshalled in both unique and recurrent ways. (p. 61)

In general, there is a consensus in psychology that complex phenomena

> such as remembering, identity, and self need to be understood as *dynamic processes* that are *dialogically* intertwined with the social world, meaning that they are *locally situated* in social interaction and embedded in the *phenomenological*, *bodily,* and *material* world as well as in historical time and place. (Bamberg et al., 2021, p. 636)

This represents a challenging task, one that again stresses the need for creative approaches and craftsmanship. However, there are a few things to consider when embarking on this adventurous journey.

13.3 Research Needs to Reflect on Power

> What do psychotechnics and practical psychology mean for the individual persons who are subjected to their methods? Precisely because this question is usually very much neglected in the usual discussion of the nature and significance of psychotechnics, I thought I should treat it separately for once. (Stern, 1933, p. 63)

As mentioned above, Tracy (2010) pointed out that the best qualitative research considers ethics and is meaningfully coherent. What does that mean? Research is meaningful and coherent when a clear research goal is established and matches the research methods and presentations of the final results,[4] while ethical research considers the people we work with and for (Fig. 13.1):

Good relationships within the research team are an important prerequisite for doing good research. In this scenario, people keep each other informed and up to date, consult with each other on publication and the order in which authors are named, learn from each other in the research process, and stand in for each other—to name just a few examples.

As Wieser (Chap. 2, this volume) has shown, supervisors and funders can have a big influence on what research takes place to begin with. What if a research team does not deliver what the sponsor expects, because the study made no sense after it came into focus? Do you still deliver what the sponsor asked for, or do you enter a confrontation and stand up for what ultimately seems to be more effective from your

Fig. 13.1 Different levels of ethical considerations (cp. Tracy, 2010)

[4] Tracy (2010) advises researchers to "promise small and deliver big" (p. 848) rather than promise too much and then fail to deliver.

own perspective? What if you are asked to return the funding, or never get it in the first place? In recent years, my colleagues and I have said things like, "We'll have to do something else with questionnaires and big samples, or we won't get the money!" Apparently, this seemed to be one of the few ways to get funding for qualitative research. Also, applications were less about content and more about the right choice of words: It was best to "copy what is written in the call for proposals" because that would supposedly improve your chances. Or else we tried to predict who the reviewers would be, so that the appropriate references could be inserted. These examples are intended to stress that research projects are usually part of a bigger power system in which researchers have to find their niche. Reflecting on these power relations can help researchers better position and assert themselves in the system—which might not always be easy.

The most important ethical concern, however, is always that no harm is done to those who participate in the research. This includes being sure to tell participants what the research is about, establishing informed consent, securing the data collected, and ensuring privacy and confidentiality. Sometimes it is hard to judge whether research is actually doing harm to those who take part in it, because we cannot always foresee who is using the results, and for what purpose. When publishing results on the fluidity of sexual orientation, for example, one author stressed the variability of the phenomenon, while the other argued that, if indeed it was fluid, sexual orientation might also be changeable and thus can be treated therapeutically—a theory that can harm individuals tremendously (Dickinson et al., 2012; cp. *exiting* ethics, Tracy 2010). This unpredictability also applies to the assessment of *situational* ethics, as Tracy (2010) calls them. When performing research in the field, we must always reassess whether what we are doing is ethically justifiable. Are we interfering too much in what is happening? Does the result justify the means? Can we meet the expectations that the research participants have of us? In Berlin, for example, the LGBTI* communities receive so many research requests that this question arises: Which ones should they respond to, and which ones should they ignore? In the past, some members of these communities made requests on their Internet pages that people should read up on basic terms *before* getting in touch with them—in part because some of those interested were so uninformed that discriminating situations could not be ruled out. The researchers thus need to ask themselves: Why do we want to study a certain group of people? Curiosity alone is not an acceptable motive, such that a further question is required: What do the *research participants* have to gain from the project? This brings us to the final aspect of ethical considerations that Tracy (2010) points out: relational ethics: "Relationally ethical investigators engage in reciprocity with participants and do not co-opt others just to get a 'great story'" (p. 847).

And so, this book invites us to become *courageous research artists* who critically reflect on the context in which research takes place and who are able to build as well as maintain eye-to-eye relationships with those *with* whom they conduct research. This involves participants helping to establish the rules of research and helping researchers understand the consequences of their own actions.

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