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Editorial Office

Faculty of Quality Enhancement,
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Ghazali Block,
National University of Modern Languages,
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Tel: +92-51-925158, 9257646 Ext 341 & 214

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Editor's Note

Text editors are the behind-the-scene sculptors of the writer's work. The editor sees every single text as a place for solitude and much reflexive thought. He or she stops here to wonder at and wander around and within Words in the world of the text, admiring how from tiny coral ideas grows a marvel and yet, at the same time, standing back to know what lies ahead. The editor, along with his/her photographic lens, has a third eye with which s/he picks upon every missed opportunity and uses everything at hand to correct, coach, and inspire researchers and new writers to take the text back and do better, supporting their obsession to get it right, and all the time, reminding himself or herself, 'To edit a text I need to know the subject thoroughly. I always must do my homework. I need to have a PhD in every subject I work on.'

Such an editor and his/her editorial team sit in distinctive and unique company with researchers and writers who work endlessly for their unshakable belief in excellence. These are lessons they have taken to heart, and their resolve to challenge and critique pedagogies and practices, attitudes and views that want to play safe 'inside the box' and thereby, resist indeterminacy and play that may ask them to cross borders and disciplines, approaches and orthodoxies; rethink the audience and reader relationship; reconfigure the systems and structures; meet and transgress standards but not without reflection on reflection. Such powerful bases for scepticism is a given in research, and that presupposes a criticalist attitude with which researchers raise awareness of available signifying systems and

subsequently, point to a hinterland of meaning that can bring about “change through critical understanding” (van Dijk, 1993).

It is with this critical-centric approach of research and scholarship that the Journal of Critical Inquiry has been envisioned and prepared. The intent is to encourage a critical consciousness and critical intelligence in our researchers, scholars and writers, and thus prepare them for a critical inquisitioning of their subjects, and the monologic and monolithic state of mind that refuses to see, hear and respond to the other. This insistent moment will arrest them in a continual bout of work that has to be done in the best way.

Individually, the papers in this issue vary in style and intent. Collectively, the papers discuss challenges in (a) the conceptualization, (b) the ‘doing’, (c) the writing up and (d) the author’s lived personal experiences within and against the academic and non-academic institutions and their practices, provoking us to know their effects and implications for society and the world at large; relocating the researcher as writer, and writer as researcher in the center of interpretation that involves the experience of ‘standing in the midst of something’, that can be text, and context within (con)text and outside context as well. This kind of relocationing furbishes new thinkings, doings, beings and becomings that are “full of truth-seeking and vulnerability and heartfelt engagement” as Carl Leggo (2009, p. Xi) would like us to reimagine. And like Freire (1993), we will understand that “the role of a consciously progressive education is ... to stimulate doubt, criticism, curiosity, questioning, a taste for risk taking, the adventure of creating” (p. 50). Only then texts and narratives invite us to engage in researching with an open mind and

heart in order to “pursue vibrant possibilities of transformation”, and focus on “opening up possibilities for wide-ranging connections, questions, and insights.”

Such a courageous and creative questing would be both prophetic and provocative, asking for the evocation of alternative realities that can take us beyond “the language of the empire (that is) surely the language of manageability, of production and schedule and market. But that language will never permit or cause freedom because there is no newness in it” (2001, p. 18). To cultivate that freedom, our researchers, scholars, educators and writers need to re-search for diverse and divergent paths, critical pedagogy, contemporary and innovative scholarship and practice, and more than ever, make an enthusiastic commitment to collective truth-seeking, even transcendence of truth with its invocation to a form of being that has assigned for itself a deeply radical task of human solidarity through insightful change.

The editorial team takes advantage of this space to thank Barbra Bickel, the celebrated Canadian artist for graciously contributing to this journal with her art piece. It significantly crosses borders and continents to initiate exchanges and conversations that are transformational.

Time awaits to see our rebirthing that is infinitely leavening for self-surrender.

Come on!

There is great adventure beyond

The gift of seeing at all levels, and ideas lying unambiguously

in moments we know not,
open acorns for minds not familiar to the caprices of habit,
weary of playing on both sides,
now all the more ready to resist the playfulness of an
'eye' that has already seen or was able to see,
but to see some nuances in the act of seeing, subtly
harmonized by the indulgent heart and nerves,
wrapping up the indulgence, and
give meaning to that great adventure beyond

Good word!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ashaile Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'A'.

Final word from the Editor

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NUML Journal of Critical Inquiry

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Tel: +92-51-925158, 9257646 Ext 341 & 214

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Contributors

Politics, pedagogies and poetics of belonging: Negotiating differences between home and school communities/cultures

Hartej Gill, PhD, has worked as a teacher and vice-principal before beginning her role as an Assistant Professor at the Educational Administration Faculty in the Department of Educational Studies, the University of British Columbia. Hartej is particularly interested in Social Justice and Leadership and in using research to bridge the gap between theory, practice, and social activism. From her professorship position designated by the EADM as a scholar-practitioner, she hopes to use her praxis as way of co-creating transformative and reciprocal relationships between universities, public schools, and the larger community.

Gloria Lin is a PhD student in Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia. Her research areas include international education programs in public secondary schools, social justice, policy, and research methodologies. She is particularly interested in examining the implications of (or lack of) policy and regulation for international high school students at various levels of administration: local, provincial, national and transnational.

Kadi Purru, PhD, received her doctoral degree in Education from the University of British Columbia (UBC). Kadi has been involved in the research projects on parent leadership (Post-doctoral Fellow,

UBC) and worked as a Visiting Graduate Professor at Athabasca University in the graduate program of Integrated Studies, Athabasca, Canada. At the heart of her research is the intent to decolonize the Canadian multicultural imagination and create a different, immigrant culture of scholarship and pedagogical knowing. Currently, Kadi is working with the families of children with autistic spectrum disorder in the Special Education Program at the Self Design Learning Centre, Vancouver, Canada.

Email: kadip10@gmail.com

Next Insights: Critical Inquiry into Narratives of Lived Experiences and Literature

Sohaila Javed is a PhD graduate (November 2004) from the University of British Columbia (UBC), Vancouver, Canada. Sohaila has an extensive background in English literature and language, and a wonderful experience of teaching these for almost 19 years in 4 federal colleges of Islamabad, Pakistan.

She began as Associate Professor and Graduate Advisor to the MPhil and PhD students in the Faculty of Advanced Integrated Studies & Research at the National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad, in 2005, and now, along with her administrative headship of the departments of Japanese and Italian languages, is working as Dean of the Faculty of Quality Enhancement, Research & Publication. With her research interests in interdisciplinary knowledge, qualitative research methodologies, transformational pedagogy and transcendence, and critical discourse studies, she is

passionate about the praxis of compassionate communication, which she believes has transformational potential for human sustainability and human flourishing.

Email: jsohaila@hotmail.com

Language as a Discursive Practice: A Study of Scarlett Thomas' Novel

Muhammad Munawar Khan is a PhD scholar at National University of Modern Languages (NUML) Islamabad, Pakistan. His area of research is study of discourses and discursive practices.

Email: khan13425@yahoo.com

Speech Generation by Artificial Intelligent Systems: Issues and Challenges

Mian Khurram Shahzad Azam is a PhD scholar at National University of Modern Languages (NUML) Islamabad, Pakistan. He is currently working as the Deputy Director/Lecturer in Quality Enhancement Cell at NUML. His major areas of research include Human-Machine communication, Quality Assurance in Education, CALL, Educational Research, Transhumanism, Artificial Intelligence and Speech processing technologies.

Email: mian_ksa@hotmail.com

**Politics, pedagogies and poetics of belonging:
Negotiating differences between home
and school communities/cultures**

Hartej Gill

Gloria Lin

Kadi Purru

Abstract

This paper is based on our inquiry into the literature on parental involvement in public education from diverse scholarly, personal, and community perspectives. This paper interrupts the convention of reviewing as a form of surveying or overviewing and brings together our voices as citizens and academics belonging to and rooted in diverse communities, cultures and experiences. Our multiple cultural identities (Punjabi, Taiwanese, Estonian, Colombian) and our social positions in Canadian school system, our voices such as those of daughters, parents, teachers, and administrators are interwoven within the scholarly text to interrogate some of the following questions: How do families from diverse backgrounds negotiate differences between ‘home’ and ‘school’ cultures? To what extent do parents from marginalized groups feel welcome to participate in their children’s education? Finally, how do parents assume leadership roles in their school communities? We hope to respond to critical questions of identity, inclusion and exclusion, and emotional attachments on one’s sense of belonging; how local and global conflicts and tensions inform, form and transform families, schools and community relationships.

*Keywords: Pedagogy, School and Home Communities/Cultures,
Belongingness*

Introduction

When in English class we talk about Canada, I mean, I really don't care about Canada.

No?

I live here – yeah! I speak the language – yeah! But I don't feel Canadian.

Who is Canadian? What does to be 'Canadian' mean?

I don't know. But when we were talking about past history of Canada or geography of Canada

at school . . . whatever, I couldn't care less.

Why?

I don't know. I just don't care. It's not valued and it doesn't feel important!

(Purru, 2003)

Canada is a nation of complex ethno-racial composition where critical understandings of identity, race, ethnicity, citizenship and other ways of social belonging are increasingly important goals for social justice, equity, and inclusion. The so-called 'diverse' population in Canadian schools is growing dramatically due to continuing immigration and the increased presence of socially, racially, linguistically, and economically etc. disadvantaged families. How do families from diverse backgrounds negotiate the differences between 'home' and 'school' cultures? To what extent do parents from marginalized groups feel a genuine sense of belonging in their children's education? By placing the largely unexplored but increasingly compelling notion of belonging (Probyn 1996; Beck & Malley

1998; Ahmed, Castañeda, Fortier & Sheller 2003; Yuval-Davis, Kannabiran & Vieten, 2006) at the center of this inquiry, we hope to encompass critical questions of identity, inclusion and exclusion, emotional attachments, local and global conflicts and tensions informing, forming and transforming family, school and community relationships.

Next Insights: Critical Inquiry into Narratives of Lived Experiences and Literature

Sohaila Javed

Abstract

This qualitative critically reflexive paper explores the transformative potential of Literature and gives expression to lived experience as context, and advances interpretation to a new performative level when challenging existing dehumanizing systems in a compassionate teaching ethos. Approaching teaching as an interpretative narrative inquiry from a phenomenological perspective, this author's narration about her experience of teaching literature brings the literary text as one provoking curriculum right in the middle of the contemporary world context (Sohaila Javed, 2004), and raises specific critical issues about the problem of meaning in con/text: What kinds of meanings, what kind of truths does an interpretation of a poetic text claim? Whose views are not being acknowledged in that interpretation? How do texts have their own effects and how the wider social context shapes its production and reception? And with what effects?

Inviting critical reflection and action on humanistic issues, this paper calls all readers to challenge their monological epistemologies and work together for a "transdisciplinary" learning experience which, according to Giri (2002, p. xxi), requires a "dialogue between different – mutually competing – perspectives." It is time for intellectuals, scholars, and teachers worldwide to return to the phenomenological world, where life experiences its meaning, and

understand “the shared, cultural, and historical horizon” that in-forms and presupposes “the ontological priority of belonging whereby we are always already practically involved in the world” (Kaplan, 2003, in *Qualitative Research*, 2009, p. 27), and as a consequence, coalesces with a revitalization of the humanistic ethos that has been taken over by self-aggrandizing individualists the world over.

With its theoretical frames running throughout the paper, it adopts the qualitative methodology with focus on phenomenology and narrative inquiry, has Endnotes (words with superscript), Basic Glossary (words in bold), author’s creation (words in italics) and Bibliography sections.

The new critics are critically aware.... They are beginning to adapt themselves to the new fact that literature is not a special pursuit and this cannot be cultivated away from life, that it is very much a part of life and society. And what is more, it has not only to interpret life and society as they are, it has to probe deeper to find out why they are what they are and upon that context, to suggest new directions and impetuses. This new criticism will not simply destroy; it will fulfill and provide us with the next insights!

Chittaranjan Das (1982a), *A Glimpse into Oriya Literature*, p. 35

Keywords: Literature, Narratives of Lived Experiences, Compassionate teaching ethos

Introduction: Waiting in the dark

It was late September 11, 2001: dark, somber, tearful. I sat abridged in darkness, and looked intently into the dark mosaic that had taken form in uncreative hands, and had stunned thought and numbed feeling. I was grieving at the collapse of humanity once again, and gazed strangely at Ricoeur's phenomenological space of our experiential living world. I found myself on the hermeneutical¹ Circle of Time² wondering on the human question: what it means to be a human subject, and meditating on the meaning of human existence. Orpheically³ in the realm of the dead, and, like Orpheus, I was experiencing the fullness of death that overwhelms living beings with its sterling truth and passion for life. To me, it was about understanding curriculum as lived (Aoki, 1986), that is about understanding the complementarity of body and mind and body-subject in a new key.

Language as a Discursive Practice: A Study of Scarlett Thomas' Novel

Muhammad Munawar Khan

Abstract

Language in use is not a neutral phenomenon. It is always contextual and perspectival. Language, as a discursive practice, is a historically and culturally mediated phenomenon, which is constitutive of as well as constituted by institutions and social structures existing at a larger scale. This paper is a theoretical study of language as a discursive practice with application on text of a novel "The End of Mr. Y" (2007) by Scarlett Thomas, using Critical Discourse Analysis as a method of analysis and interpretation. This investigation, under the perspective of *Poststructuralism*, suggests that language users remain in struggle to control the situation through their self-assumed legitimized discursive language use. It also appears that the meanings, language users seek to express, themselves struggle with one another in the construction of identities and relations.

Keywords: Language as discursive practice, Poststructuralism, Critical Discourse Analysis

Introduction

How do truth and reality get constructed in language use? How does language help users get free from cultural restrictions and create identities? What patterns of language are used, how, by whom and for what specific purpose? Guided by these research questions, this paper explores a novel (*The End of Mr. Y* by Scarlett Thomas, 2007) by placing it in its socio-cultural contexts, which involve in words of Fairclough (1989), situational, institutional and societal aspects. These questions are raised in the beginning because of their remarkable significance in language use in the text of the novel. The text selected for this study is assumed as a discourse presented from a specific perspective influenced as it is by the processes of social interaction. It is also assumed that this discourse is produced not only under the influence of certain social structures; rather it is produced also to counter the determining effects of those structures. It concerns with the constitutive effect of discourse upon identities and power relations with this perception that there is a dialectical relationship between the text (discourse) and the larger scale contexts. Though this intimate relationship exists between the discourse and the society given; however, this study primarily explores discourse not society; therefore, focuses on how the linguistic features function through the social relations. Influence of a society on the discourse is viewed as constraining and constitutive, as Foucault (1972) calls discursive practice/discourse a highly regulated grouping of sentences. In this regard, he says that

“Truth (discourse) is of the world; it is produced there by virtue of multiple constraints . . . Each society has its regime of truth, its general politics of truth: that is the type of discourses it harbours and causes to function as true” (cited in Mills, 1997, p. 18).

Speech Generation by Artificial Intelligent Systems: Issues and Challenges

Mian Khurram Shahzad Azam

Abstract

Natural Language Processing (NLP) technology has greatly evolved in the last decade. From simple text based processing systems to the emergence of speech comprehension and speech generation systems, natural language processing has shown credible achievements. Artificial Intelligence research has reported notable successes in speech processing technologies in humanoid robots like Kismet (2011) and ASIMO (2011). Yet, there are some basic issues which need to be highlighted in the artificial intelligence research so that meaningful and logical speech comprehension and generation is possible. To develop significant artificial intelligent speech systems for tourism, health, education, industrial and corporate sector, the imperative is to ask if machines can generate speech utterances that reckon with the idea of ‘self’ in a social and cultural context. For such successes to occur the process of communication has to become central for research in this area and it is critical to explore the human aspect in speech generation and speech comprehension systems.

The paper raises critical questions identified during a comprehensive survey of the existing literature in this area of research and these are: would speech generation systems be able to

produce ‘creative’ utterances? Would these systems still be called creative when they rely on the database of human languages? Serious attention to these questions can give a new direction to the future researchers to look deeply for the development of artificial intelligent speech comprehension and generation systems that adhere to the socio-cultural aspect of utterances if reliable, logical, meaningful and effective communication act between humans and machines is the goal of speech processing by artificial intelligent systems.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Human-Machine Communication, Transhumanism

Introduction

In the last two decades, a sizeable amount of research work has been done by researchers like Naoko (1993), Hirschberg et al. (1999), Zue et al (2000), Varchavskaia et al (2001) and Fitzpatrick (2003), to develop an artificial intelligent system that can generate human-like speech as simple speech utterances in a human-machine communication act. The desired outcome of all these research endeavors is to have a logical and meaningful speech act between humans and artificial intelligent systems. To assemble an artificial intelligent communication system which can work better than the human brain in creativity and communication has been a dream of researchers in artificial intelligence. Recent developments in computer science research have achieved success in creating computing systems that are highly efficient in processing data. It appears that gradually the comparison of human capacity with computer performance is losing appeal as faster and more efficient systems are competing with each other for greater speed in performance and processing of data.

Cover Art Image: Artist Statement and Biography

The art image adorning the cover of this journal, identified as 'Border Crossings', is one of a series of spontaneous artworkings, still in process, that respond to the commercialized phallic driven world of contemporary art. With intense physical gestures, I draw and move within the trauma of the art world's edges, tracing and retracing the rectangular form of the mail-in subscription card found within the art magazine.

Densely drawn lines of black and blue oil pastel colors mask the return postage emblem and blanket the publisher's address. Its intended transport and return, with the promise of payment for future connection to the art world, is interrupted and rerouted back to its matrixial origins--the sacred act itself of making art. Rendered unreadable in the English language of business, an oracular voice emerges in response to the artworking. Non-verbal acoustic sounds emerge from my throat, my belly, as a layer of sound is drawn onto the image, offering com-passionate counsel to those willing to listen to the submerged voice of knowing and unknowing from the matrixial sphere (to listen to the sound drawing go to <http://www.gestareartcollective.com/barbara-bickel.php>)

The art and writing of artist, psychoanalyst and theorist Bracha L. Ettinger (2004), who has developed a theory based in matrixial borderspaces, offers an aesthetic and ethical feminine-based embodied and relational language to articulate what has been suppressed and lost within the phallic sphere.

To be an artist operating in the matrixial sphere is a fragile endeavor where “the future traumatically meets the past... and the outside meets inside (p. 77).” As I draw and sound my way through/with/beyond/behind this series, I engage what Ettinger calls *metamorphosis*:

a process of inter-psyche communication and transformation that transgresses borders of the individual subject and takes place between several entities. It is a joint awakening of unthoughtful-knowledge on the borderline, as well as an inscription of the encounter in traces that open a space in and along the borderline itself.

As I encounter the momentarily opened spaces of the borderline that separates me from communication with others in the phallic sphere of the art world, I reach out to the other with a radical trust in these artworkings that was not possible otherwise.

From the borders and edges of the phallic sphere of the contemporary art world oracular movements, images and sounds from the matrixial sphere continue to lead us into/through/beside/behind the trauma of erasure and separation, returning us to precious aesthetic and ethical moments of interconnectivity, and our jointers in difference.

I invite you to contribute to future art in this series by mailing me the mail-in subscription card from inside contemporary art magazines that you may have in your possession. Thus far I have worked with North American art magazines and I would like this series to cross continents as well. Contact me at bickel.barbara@gmail.com for the mailing address.

Ettinger, Bracha L. (2004). Weaving a woman artist with-in the matrixial encounter-event. *Theory, Culture and Society*, 21(1), 69-93.

Artist Biography

Barbara Bickel is an artist, researcher and educator. An Assistant Professor in Art Education and Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, USA, Bickel teaches art as an inquiry process. Her arts-based Ph.D. in Art Education from The University of British Columbia (UBC), Canada, focused on women, collaborative art making, ritual, and spiritual leadership in multi-faith contexts. It was awarded the Arts Based Educational Research (ABER) Outstanding Dissertation Award from the American Educational Research Association in 2009. Her MA in Education at UBC, which inquired into the body as a site of knowing -- performing itself as text was awarded the ABER Thesis Award in 2005 from AERA. She holds a BFA in Painting from the University of Calgary and a BA in Sociology and Art History from the University of Alberta. Her art and performance rituals have been exhibited and performed in North America since 1991. Her articles on arts-based inquiry and a/r/tography have been published in numerous journals and book chapters. She is a co-founder and member of the Gestare Art Collective. To view her art portfolio and arts-based research on-line visit <http://www.barbarabickel.com> and <http://www.gestareartcollective.com>

Academic Achievements and Performance

English MPhil Theses Completed during January-June 2011

Rizwan Aftab, “Exploring Relationship in Language, Culture and Interpretive Frames in Pakistani Texts”

Amina Ayaz, “Translation as an Act of Manipulation”

Adnan Rashid, “An Interplay of English and Urdu Languages in Pakistani ESL Learners: Implications of Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis of Linguistic Relativity”

Urdu MPhil Thesis Completed during January-June, 2011

Muhammad Javed Khan, “The Tradition of Urdu Research and Criticism in Azad Kashmir”

Seminar

Teaching of Urdu in Universities: New Perspective

Two day International Seminar, organized by the department of Urdu language and literature in collaboration with Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, 7 – 8 June, 2011

Teacher Training Program

Professional Competency Enhancement Course for University Teachers under the project National Academy of Higher Education, Phase-II, 4th May to 24th May, 2011

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Call for Papers

In this age of rapidly growing and progressing world, a huge drawback still persists in the field of Education in general. Centuries old trends, approaches and methods still dominate the minds and cognitive processes of our researchers. There is still a shared disapproval by the veterans for the “new” and the “unconventional”, which hovers like a threat on the minds of many while attempting to write. For one reason or the other, we are still unable to tear away the net of repetition(s) and present something that can truly be owned “personally”, and that may be striking, individually credible and captivating.

In order to set new trends and be the trendsetters, what needs to be done is to re-search and re-investigate matters from an approach that may be individual. The NUML JCI encourages the impulse to challenge the outdated and create alternative knowledges, skills and practices based on innovation of thought and research. Therefore, we call for papers that engage a deconstructive/theoretical/ ideological critique of the standardized predicament as well as offer an intellectually challenging education that is international in scope, interactive in process, and interdisciplinary in content and approach.

Topics from all areas of Research, Language, Literature, Linguistics and Education are welcome without any limitations as long as there is conviction and reasoning. These topics might include (but are not limited to):

- How are we going to do language differently in diverse contexts of the world and explore it in its multidimensional perspective?
- How can we create legitimate spaces for, and practically build alternative knowledges, practices, and subjectivities?
- How can emerging trends in related fields (e.g. in language and literacy, second and foreign language education, (critical) applied linguistics, literature, critical pedagogies and education) that challenge ethnic or cultural self closure help to bring about new developments and paradigm shifts?
- How to bring about new ways of being in collaborative/participatory research?
- How may the personal observations and experiences of researchers and writers be the springboard for epistemologies and pedagogies that are transformational?

If you are interested in submitting papers, please consult the NUML JCI, [Note for Contributors](#) link on <http://www.numl.edu.pk/> and respond.

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