Society of Mind as a Scene for Internal Interlocutors and Their Relationships

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Outline

- Why do I think that dialogue is one of the forms of internal dialogical activity?
- How did I identify four main types of internal interlocutors and their functions?
- What types of interlocutors are typical of integrative and confrontational dialogues?
- How does society of mind reflect our social relationships?
Dialogical Self
(cf. Hermans, 2003)
Forms of internal dialogical activity (cf. Josephs, 1998)

- **Internal monologue**: only one I-position is speaking. The utterance is addressed to another I-position – a silent but active listener.

- **Perspective change**: distancing for a moment from one’s own viewpoint and adopting another point of view without voicing it ("to look through someone else’s eyes").

- **Internal dialogue**: at least two I-positions speak, interacting with one another as interlocutors.
Dialogue vs monologue – comparison of traits

- Openness
- Fantasy
- Aesthetics
- Feelings
- Self-Consciousness
- Assertiveness

Graph showing comparison between Dialogue and Monologue.
There is no internal dialogue without internal interlocutor...

A person alternately adopts (at least) two different perspectives and utterances formulated from these viewpoints refer to one another.

Internal dialogue implies internal interlocutor.
I-positions as internal interlocutors

I as a Polish woman
I as a wife of Frenchman
I as a Catholic
I as a fighter
I as vulnerable

mother
father
mother-in-law
father-in-law
In search of interlocutor types

Starting point: the correspondence of internal interlocutors' names does not necessarily indicate their deeper affinity

What is an indicator describing the internal interlocutor and the relationship between that interlocutor and the author of the dialogue?

Interlocutor's emotional attitude presented during internal dialogue
Figure’s Emotional Climate Inventory (FECI)

Similarities to Self-Confrontation Method:
- list of 24 affect terms
- affective pattern index
- experience categorization criteria
- assumption: various types of experience result from gratification/frustration of 2 basic motives: self-enhancement (S) and contact with others (O). Their gratification is accompanied by positive feelings, and frustration – by negative ones.
### FECI - list of 24 affect terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Joy (P)</th>
<th>Care (O)</th>
<th>Inferiority (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Powerlessness (N)</td>
<td>Love (O)</td>
<td>Intimacy (O)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Esteem (S)</td>
<td>Self-Alienation (N)</td>
<td>Safety (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety (N)</td>
<td>Tenderness (O)</td>
<td>Anger (N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction (P)</td>
<td>Guilt (N)</td>
<td>Pride (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength (S)</td>
<td>Self-Confidence (S)</td>
<td>Energy (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame (N)</td>
<td>Loneliness (N)</td>
<td>Inner Calm (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment (P)</td>
<td>Trust (P)</td>
<td>Freedom (P)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interlocutor’s affective pattern

- **S**: the sum score of 4 affect terms expressing self-enhancement
- **O**: ......................... 4 affect terms expressing contact with others
- **P**: ......................... 8 positive affects
- **N**: ......................... 8 negative affects

(cf. Hermans, Hermans-Jansen, 1995)
Types of experience

- **+S:** autonomy and success – *when* \( S > O \) *and* \( P > N \)
- **–S:** aggression and anger – *when* \( S > O \) *and* \( N > P \)
- **+O:** unity and love – *when* \( O > S \) *and* \( P > N \)
- **–O:** unfulfilled longing – *when* \( O > S \) *and* \( N > P \)
- **–LL:** powerlessness and isolation – *when* \( S \downarrow \) *and* \( O \downarrow \) *and* \( N > P \)
- **+HH:** strength and unity – *when* \( S \uparrow \) *and* \( O \uparrow \) *and* \( P > N \)
- **+/-:** ambivalence – *when* \( P \approx N \)

(Hermans, Hermans-Jansen, 1995)
Studies on interlocutor types

Study 1 – 649 interlocutors
(Journal of Constructivist Psychology, 2008)

Study 2 – 97 interlocutors
Study 3 – 449 interlocutors
General statistical strategy

- Interlocutors’ affective patterns were subjected to k-means clustering.
- Analyses with various numbers of clusters were performed.
- Averaged affective patterns of clusters were related to the Hermans’s experience categorization criteria.
- If any cluster obtained for k-means had an ambivalent pattern, clustering was conducted again for k+1 means.
- Procedure was stopped when adding an additional cluster yielded redundant types.
Proud Rival
“autonomy and success”

autonomous, self-confident, self-efficacious, and often with a sense of superiority
Helpless Child
“powerlessness and isolation”
interlocutor who awaits help or has lost hope for it, full of loneliness and helplessness
Faithful Friend
“strength and unity”

warm and caring, full of love and strong with the strength of the bond with the dialogue partner
Ambivalent Parent
ambivalence with strong contact motive

close and loving, full of positive but sometimes also negative feelings towards the dialogue partner (ambivalence)
Drawbacks of Studies 1, 2 and 3

- In cluster analysis, individual cases of interlocutors with emotional climate clearly different from the others may be overlooked.
- Studies were conducted on Polish students.
Functions of internal interlocutors - examples

Dialogue with X (the name of an internal interlocutor):

- ... gives me a sense of being understood
- ... is a form of seeking some new experiences
- ... is the only way of telling the other person what I really think
- ... is a form of preparation for new types of situations
Meta-functions of internal interlocutors

- **Support** - a source of hope, sense of security, and meaning in life;
- **Substitution** - a substitute for real contact, argumentation practice, catharsis;
- **Exploration** - search for new experiences, escape from dull reality;
- **Bond** - experience of deep relation, bond with someone close, and being needed;
Meta-functions of internal interlocutors

- Self-improvement - warning against a mistake, learning from other people's mistakes, a self-evaluation criterion;

- Insight - a way of gaining a new perspective, advice, and distance from a problem;

- Self-guiding - a factor motivating for action and development, guidance in setting new goals, a source of a sense of control over the situation.
Types and functions of interlocutors

Faithful Friend  
Ambivalent Parent  
Proud Rival  
Helpless Child
Types and functions of interlocutors

- Support
- Substitution
- Exploration
- Bond
- Self-improvement
- Insight
- Self-guiding

Faithful Friend
Ambivalent Parent
Types and functions of interlocutors

- Support
- Substitution
- Exploration
- Bond
- Self-improvement
- Insight
- Self-guiding

Proud Rival
Helpless Child
Types and functions of interlocutors

-0.6
-0.4
-0.2
0
0.2
0.4
0.6
0.8

Support
Substitution
Exploration
Bond
Self-improvement
Insight
Self-guiding

- Faithful Friend
- Ambivalent Parent
- Proud Rival
- Helpless Child
Integrative and confrontational dialogues

➢ Integrative dialogues take into account and integrate all the viewpoints involved; they can result in creative solutions.

➢ Confrontational dialogues emphasize differences between standpoints and enhance one of them and ignore or depreciate the others.

(cf. Nir, 2012; Oleś, 2012)
Integrative dialogues

- are conducive to well-being and better psychological functioning (Hermans, 2003; Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995; Nir, 2012)
- enhance situational self-esteem and positive emotions (Borawski, 2012)
- can reduce discrepancies between ideal and ought selves (Młynarczyk, 2012)
Interlocutors of integrative and confrontational dialogues

Study 4 – 101 interlocutors (Journal of Constructivist Psychology, 2016)

H1: Faithful Friend and Ambivalent Parent are typical of integrative dialogues whereas Proud Rival and Helpless Child are typical of confrontational dialogues
Functions of integrative and confrontational dialogues

Study 5 – 99 interlocutors (*Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, 2016)

H2: Integrative dialogues (FF & AP) fulfil meta-functions of Support, Exploration, Bond and Insight to a higher degree than confrontational dialogues (PR & HCh).
Functions of integrative and confrontational dialogues

Study 5 – 99 interlocutors (Journal of Constructivist Psychology, 2016)

H2: Integrative dialogues (FF & AP) fulfil meta-functions of Support, Exploration, Bond and Insight and Self-guiding to higher degree than confrontational dialogues (PR & HCh).
Types and functions of interlocutors – Study 5

![Bar chart showing the types and functions of interlocutors]

- **Faithful Friend**
- **Ambivalent Parent**
- **Proud Rival**
- **Helpless Child**

**Types and Functions (Study 5):**
- Support
- Substitution
- Exploration
- Bond
- Self-improvement
- Insight
- Self-guiding
Types and functions of interlocutors – Study 5
Perception of interlocutors and integration/confrontation in dialogues

Study 6 (Japanese Psychological Research, 2016)

$N = 119$

- important personal problem and a person who contributed to the occurrence of it
- imaginary dialogue with that person about the problem
- *Figure’s Emotional Climate Inventory (FECI)*
- *Integration-Confrontation (ICON)*
Integration-Confrontation (ICON)

Assumption: integration and confrontation are independent dimensions of internal dialogue description.

Integration - the agreement between the standpoints clashing in dialogue (modification of the adopted stance).

Confrontation - the advantage of one party to dialogue over the other party (disproportion in perceiving the parties).
ICON - analyzed variables

- integrative attitude of dialogue’s author (INT_aut)
- interlocutor’s integrative attitude (INT_int)
- author’s confrontational attitude (CONF_aut)
- interlocutor’s confrontational attitude (CONF_int)
- participant’s similarity to the interlocutor (SIM)
- the wishfulness of the dialogue (WISH)
Canonical correlation analysis

6 predictors: wishfulness (WISH), similarity of the dialoguing parties (SIM), interlocutor’s characteristics: S, O, P, N

4 criteria: INT_aut, CONF_aut, INT_int, CONF_int

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Canonical function</th>
<th>Canonical correlation</th>
<th>Canonical $R^2$</th>
<th>Wilks $\lambda$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.370</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.628</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.885</td>
<td>.090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.968</td>
<td>.294</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Function 1: “Integration based on similarity”

The bigger the similarity between of the dialoguing parties:

1. the more positively the dialogue’s author feels about the interlocutor (↓N, ↑P, ↑O)

2. the stronger the author's integrative attitude

3. the weaker the author's confrontational attitude and the bigger the chance of the interlocutor's success in discussion
Function 1: “Integration based on similarity” – 1

1. The bigger the similarity of the dialoguing parties, the more positively the dialogue’s author feels about the interlocutor (↓N, ↑P, ↑O).

People are egotistic, i.e., judge themselves favourably and prefer that which resembles the self (Pelham, Carvallo, & Jones, 2005) → judging someone as similar to oneself = judging them positively
Function 1: “Integration based on similarity” – 2

2. The bigger the similarity of the dialoguing parties, the stronger the author's integrative attitude.

There is a connection between treating others as similar to oneself and perceiving them as attractive and liking them (Sprecher, 2014) → dialogue's author who perceives the interlocutor as similar exhibits integrative behaviours in order to maintain a good relationship with them.
Function 1: “Integration based on similarity” – 3

3. The bigger the similarity of the dialoguing parties, the weaker the author's confrontational attitude and the bigger the chance of the interlocutor's success.

Author's confrontational attitude involves the author's victory and the interlocutor's defeat. A defeat of a person one likes (as similar to themselves) would evoke sorrow; a success evokes joy (Pietraszkiewicz & Wojciszke, 2014).
Function 2: “Confrontation based on wishfulness”

The stronger the wishfulness of the dialogue:

1. the stronger the author’s confrontational attitude
2. the worse the perception of the internal interlocutor (↓S, ↑N)
3. the stronger the interlocutor’s integrative attitude
Function 2: “Confrontation based on wishfulness” - 1

1. The stronger the wishfulness of the dialogue, the stronger the author’s confrontational attitude.

In a wishful dialogue egotistic tendencies are not restrained → the author wants to consider themselves the absolute winner and makes the internal interlocutor a loser.
Function 2: “Confrontation based on wishfulness” - 2

2. The stronger the wishfulness of the dialogue, the worse
the perception of the internal interlocutor (↓S, ↑N)

Making the interlocutor a loser ➔ doing harm to the partner (who cannot prevent it) ➔ dissonance between the high opinion of oneself and the sense of harm done ➔ perceiving the interlocutor as deserving such treatment ➔ interlocutor negatively disposed and weak (Festinger, 1957; Glass, 1964)
Function 2: “Confrontation based on wishfulness” – 3

3. The stronger the wishfulness of the dialogue, the stronger the interlocutor’s integrative attitude.

Dialogue’s author creates the interlocutor as someone who finally admits their mistake and modifies their stance → author can have the satisfaction of victory and is free from the sense of guilt.
Conclusion: Our internal dialogues reflect our ‘external’ social relationships.

Can our internal dialogues shape our social relationships? Can they be a kind of “prototype” of interpersonal relations?

Is it possible that real conversation concerning a difficult matter becomes less confrontational after (at least) one of the parties looked for similarities between themselves and their interlocutor when imagining the dialogue earlier?
Questions for further research

- Are the other (less common) types of internal interlocutors, apart from Faithful Friend, Ambivalent Parent, Proud Rival and Helpless Child?

- In what type of dialogues do they appear?

- What functions do they fulfil?

- Are all the functions of a given interlocutor type fulfilled at the same time in one dialogue or rather in different dialogues, in different situations?
“A single voice ends nothing and resolves nothing. Two voices is the minimum for life, the minimum for existence.”

(Bakhtin, 1984, p. 252)
Thank you for your attention!

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References


References


