

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

# Prosaic Intertexting

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A methodological enquiry into human be-ing

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# DECLARATION

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
MSocSc Psychology (Research),  
in the Graduate Programme of the School of Psychology,  
Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Science,  
University of KwaZulu-Natal,  
Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. All citations, references and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged.

It is being submitted for the degree of MSocSc Psychology (Research) in the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Science, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any other University.

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Date

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## Abstract

The thesis is the rhetorical development of a model of the utterance (principally) and of narrative (secondarily). The utterance is treated as the basic unit of human *be-ing* and therefore the basic analytic unit for social science. The starting motivation for the thesis is to provide a philosophical and methodological foundation upon which persons and people can be re-conceived in multiple and constructive renderings. The thesis draws on the collective works of Mikhail Bakhtin to generate new diction with which to characterize the model. First the model is stated, then six arguments to which the model is in answer are developed, finally the model is put into practice in nine analytics of data. Data from 65 editions of 'letters to the editor' of the *Daily News* newspaper are used as prototypes to demonstrate prosaic intertexting as an analytic model. Each letter to the editor is treated as representing a possible unit of the writer's *be-ing*. Prosaic intertexting is demonstrated in creating these 'letters to the editor' as data (utterances) as a unit of analysis for social science. What is achieved is a model of *how*, not *what*, social science should do, though there are immediate implications for the ethics of research, therapy and peace-building.

## Chapter 1: Enter our dialogue

Prosaic intertexting is both a model of how meaning(s) *is/are*, and a model by which social science can re-create things as variously meaningful. In the limited space that is this dissertation I cannot (and will not attempt to) argue – in a philosophically convincing manner – that this model is the ‘real’ or ‘correct’ one. Rather, I must only argue ‘what if it were so?’, and rely on affirmation to ‘does this make sense to you?’. There are two reasons for me being limited in this way. Firstly, I cannot do justice to the detailed and complex thought traditions that exist already – if I attempted to do so I would say nothing new. Secondly, a central tenet of prosaic intertexting is that ‘reality’/‘correctness’ are rhetorical and indefinite – so pursuing them through conventional ‘weighing of logical evidence’, as in a philosophical debate, is not profitable. In order to overcome this I take it for granted that all of the thesis is answerable – and therefore referent to – chapter 3. I place this disclaimer at the start of the thesis to mollify readers if the crassness of my handling of a given thought-school is offensive. I also put it here to encourage readers to approach prosaic intertexting, to comprehend it, *as if* it were ‘true’, all true, and not be stymied by immediate objections.

Prosaic intertexting goes to the heart of personhood (and its study; social science) by asking ‘What is happening here?’ A most bald and true answer in this case is that ‘words are being read’. That seems somewhat dry, so let us try again: ‘What does ‘*what is happening*’ mean?’ Well, it depends, what are we going to say it means? How perspicacious of us. Prosaic intertexting is a model by which the meaning of an event can be created – whether in a retrospective, analytic sense, or in a prospective, prosaic sense. Prosaic intertexting is a picture of how we create things to have meaning as we say them to have. Since meaning creating is definitive of human *be-ing* (an active process), prosaic intertexting is also a model

of personhood. Smagorinsky (2001) has applied a similar philosophy to the one outlined in this research to an exploration of priority of culture to facilitate protocol analysis. Prosaic intertexting is much more fundamental in that it is an attempt to provide a starting point to social science in general, not just protocol analysis. This ‘fundamentality’ means prosaic intertexting has many implications and will therefore be described multiply in this dissertation.

Prosaic intertexting differs from both lay and scientific models of being. Some of this difference is to be outlined in chapter 2. Historically the models of human *be-ing* used in social science are based either on the self as the rational thinker (see Hume, 1737), the self as a conditioned responder (see Skinner, 1980), or the self as a cultural artefact (see Mead, 2001). Clearly this is not an exhaustive list, but it serves to make this point: Prosaic intertexting is none of these things. Prosaic intertexting is an attempt to do for the social science methodology of self and meaning creating on a micro-level, what Chomsky (see Chomsky, 1987; Chomsky & Pateman, 2005; Chomsky, Ronat & Viertel, 1979; Chomsky, van Buren & Allen, 1971) does for the ethicopolitics of self, self-determination and group meaning sanction and dismissal.

A distinct point about prosaic intertexting is that it operates from the assumption that an act is inseparable from its meaning. This is because all acts are only social/human acts by virtue of their meaning. In this sense prosaic intertexting is a *formulation* of embodied and interpersonal meaning-creating. Prosaic intertexting is in answer to many lines of thought (some of which are outlined in chapter 3), and the real uniqueness about the model is its ability to accommodate superficially discordant ideas – for example that things cannot have a ‘true’ meaning, but that a thing has a specific meaning. However, my comment on how



prosaic intertexting is different from other models is as much a statement of categorical difference as it is an argument for why you and I should invest in exploring its possibilities. In short, what does prosaic intertexting offer that is new? Prosaic intertexting allows ontological relativism to escape infinite meaning-subjectivity by outlining a process for meaning-creation inter-subjectively. Prosaic intertexting is an attempt to do for social science what a model of the atom did for physics. It gives social scientists the opportunity to engage with the human world of meaning with a new exploratory tool. Although I specify some possible applications in chapters 3 and 4 these are simply examples to frame prosaic intertexting for the reader. The focus of this dissertation is to provide an initial starting point to which further work can expand on the application of prosaic intertexting in other settings.

There are three specific problems that this research aims to address. Firstly, can a model of the utterance with ontologically relativist assumptions, have face validity? Secondly, does this model of the utterance also accurately model the self-in-*be*-ing as it should in theory? Thirdly, is this model of self applicable in such a way that it adds value and possibilities to social science? The research is exploratory in the sense that it is a first attempt into a bringing ideas together into a work-able model.

Why is it important to meet these objectives? I argue that existing models of *be*-ing are disparately successful in modelling only parts of the complexity of human *be*-ing. Often models of *be*-ing appear at a dis-juncture to each other, but if the philosophical divide that stretches between them could be bridged then a greater completeness of human *be*-ing would be mapped. The existing models of *be*-ing are either static or unarticulated. This leads to social research that neither captures the complexity of social living, nor the possibility for creation and re-creation in novel ways that characterises adaptive social living. If the

research cannot meet the second aim then it is incongruent with its philosophical origins, and if it cannot meet the third aim then it is no different from the conventional social science it claims to differ from. Further examples of the function of the research will be outlined in chapter 2, and a specific application of prosaic intertexting is the substance for chapter 4.

This thesis is an act of social science. In it, I argue that social science needs to be done differently. I argue that traditional social science operates on a false split between ‘what is being studied’, and ‘how it is known to be that’. This thesis argues that ontology, epistemology and methodology are best considered together. I furthermore argue that social science is a study of human *be-ing*, but that human *be-ing* is a time extended process of meaning created acts. In consequence, I advance an alternative methodology for rendering the meaning creation of acts intelligible. This methodology takes the form of a model of utterance. If this model of utterance is to social science what an atom is to physics, then implications of accepting this model to social science is what Einstein’s relativity theory was to Newtonian physics.

In order to avoid being hypocritical I have to create this dissertation alternatively to conventional dissertations. This chapter (chapter 1) is a definition of the answerability/addressivity (a/a) complex that focuses the thesis as a whole – *consider* chapter 1 the introduction. Chapter 2 is the explicit speech-act I am making with regard to meaning creation in the social sciences – *consider* it as a definition of the data. Chapter 3 is a collection of six answerings – *consider* it as the literature review. Chapter 4 is nine addressings – *consider* it as the analysis section. Chapter 5 is what is written on the packet of this meaning seed – *consider* it as the discussion section. The arrangement of the thesis is

presented diagrammatically in Figure 1. If chapter 2 is our ‘data’, a definition of what *is*, then the other chapters are a rhetorical creation of *how* that data can be meaningful.

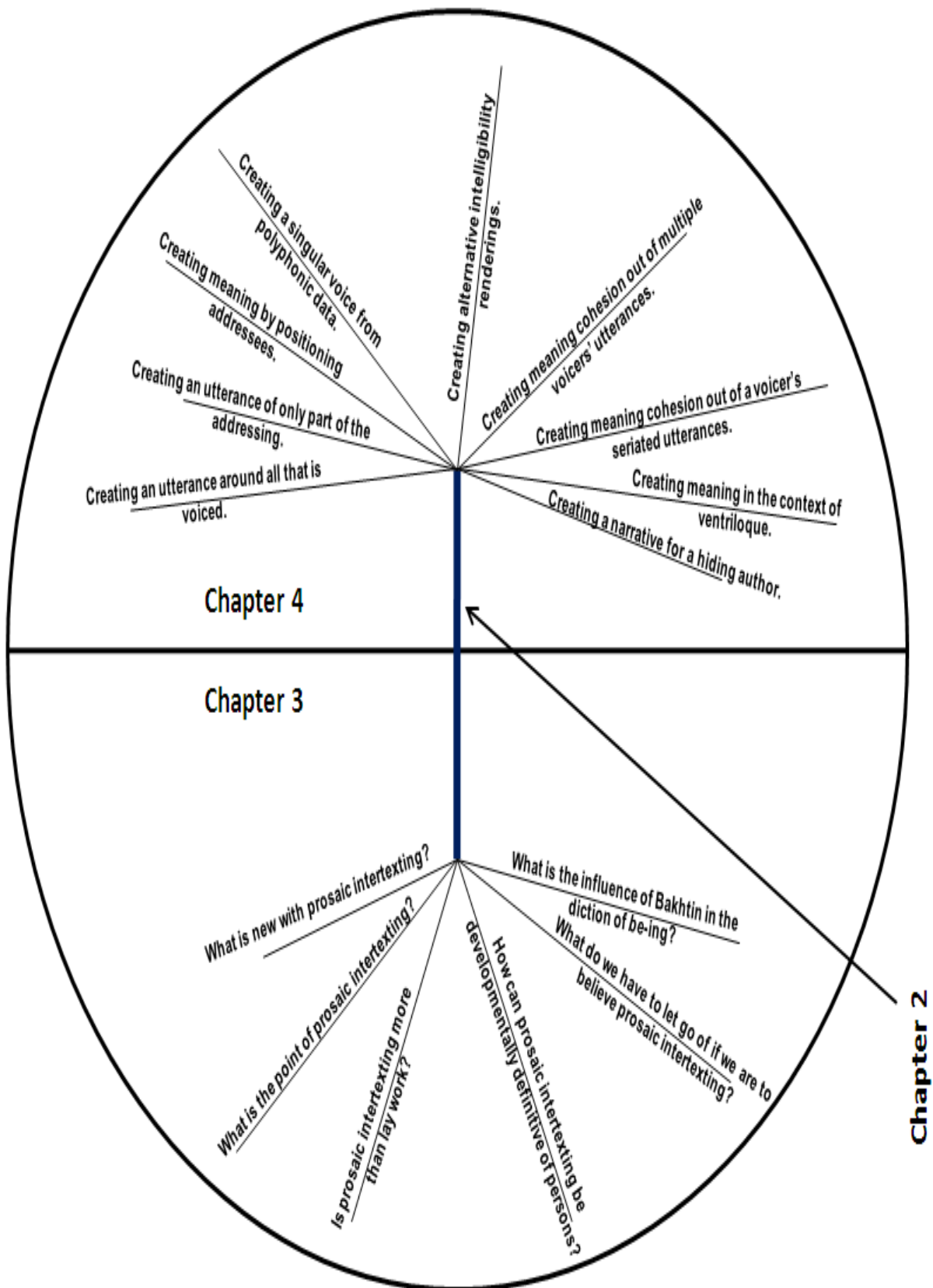


Figure 1. The thesis.

This is not a conventional thesis though. These are not merely aesthetic name-changes in order for me to appear clever. The thesis advertently challenges some of the norms of academic research and reporting. This is not a simply rebellious act. Rather it is to highlight the developmental, innovative aspirations for social science that is a primary pillar of the thesis. This thesis is about finding new diction with which to move about in the field of human *be-ing*. It is about asking and answering questions – with new eyes, hands, mouths, ears, tongues and *brains* – on ‘what is happening when humans *be*?’ and ‘what does human *be-ing*(s) mean?’. A new answer to ‘what does social science mean?’ should be accompanied by a new question on how ‘what is happening *here*’ is social scientific? The tone of this introduction is as it is as an attempt to establish a new genre we can talk through. The success of this is left as an open question as part of the utterance that is this thesis.

The thesis assumes a relativist ontology and a rhetorical ideology for social science. The dissertation will not include explicit de-bunking of any ‘conventional’ social science, rather it is a positive statement of social science created in an alternative way. I assume implicit value in any new rendering of social science by virtue of the fact that it may give us greater capacity/more diction with which to do the work of social science. The dissertation is only a masters level work. Space is therefore constrained, and the work-around I have chosen for this is to ask the reader to explore the text *as if* it were meaningful/sensible/‘true’. This is not simply a convenient strategy though, treating an utterance (for example this dissertation) *as if* it makes sense is integral to rendering it intelligible. The dissertation will fail if the reader experiences no novelty in it. While the validity of the proposed model is yet to be explored and verified, the face value of the model must be established with the reader. The dissertation is a positing of a possibility, the re-rendering of this possibility as established and not conjectural is beyond this work.

## Chapter 2: Prosaic intertexting – the method

Prosaic intertexting is a social scientific *method*. Chapter 2 is the space in which the method is stated. The analogy for prosaic intertexting is that *a meaning* is a tree. This tree is in dialogue with the ‘earth’ (historical speech-act possibilities) and the ‘air’ (consequential speech-act possibilities). By the same analogy, *meaning* (an extended set of singular meanings) is a forest in a ball, as possible meaning trees overlay each other in multiple dimensions. The model stated here is incomplete – and cannot be intelligible as an utterance in the living moment of its creation – without its histories, in chapter 3, and its consequential possibilities, in chapter 4. Prosaic intertexting is both a model of human *be-ing* and a model by which to render human *be-ing* intelligible. Why prosaic intertexting? ‘Prosaic’, because it privileges the everyday, the non-poetic, base acts of persons and not the ‘form’, the art or the heroically definitive. ‘Intertexting’, because it imposes voice arbiters *into* ‘possible texts’ or between two spheres of contestation among utterances-*in-potentia*.

Prosaic intertexting is an act of utterance creation. An utterance is a unit of meaning. An utterance is any act that is rendered intelligible as a communication, whether by the ‘utterer’ or by the ‘hearer/s’. Utterances are directed, they are intentional; they are both in answer to other utterances and they demand answerability from other utterances. These other utterances, in both answering and demanding answerability, may be real or perceived previous utterances or possible contemporary/future utterances. Utterances are defined by their wholeness in relation to other utterances. They are bounded by the space they fill in a ‘dialogue’. The utterance is not defined by its internal elements. For example, the same set of words, a sentence perhaps, will be many different utterances when ‘spoken’/‘heard’ in different dialogue contexts. These utterances are as distinct as if the words were completely

changed. This thesis is an utterance. It is a unit for conveying my meaning on the ‘reality’ of human *be-ing*. So, how is this unit created? Prosaic intertexting is the method of creating utterances.

Firstly, what is the distinction between an ‘utterance’ and what is transcribed as conventional social scientific data? In prosaic intertexting a distinction is made between utterances and explicit speech-acts. Utterances are (a) whole, (b) only producible (not reproducible) and (c) in a ‘living moment of being’. Explicit speech-acts, or speech/acts, or speech:acts, are all that is perceptibly (through the five primary senses and not prosaic intertexting) part of a given event (as defined by the social scientist). For example, the *motion* and *sound* and *smell/taste* of a dancer’s body, or the *sound/transcription* of an interviewee talking. Figure 2 illustrates the lonely space that explicit speech-acts occupy in utterance creation. The vertical line is chosen because it, by itself, appears meaningless – it is what we will create *around* the line that will make the picture/utterance.

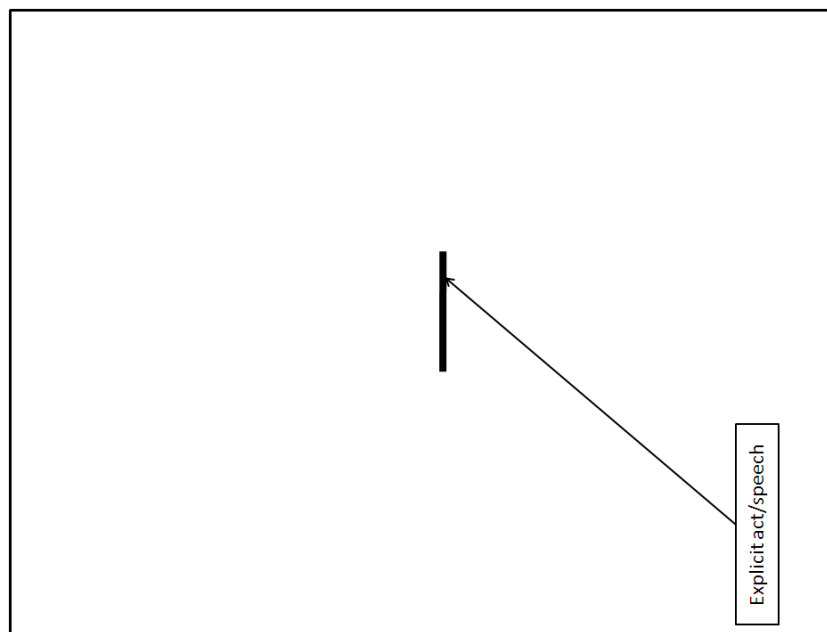


Figure 2. The explicit speech-act.

Explicit speech-acts are what are available to the conventional social scientist as data. For example, a quote from an open-ended interview. With prosaic intertexting the explicit speech-act is the ‘trunk’ from which the social scientist must create a meaning tree/utterance. The process of creation is outlined in this chapter, and Figure 2 is but a starting point. The utterance is the prosaic intertexting social scientist’s created data, not the explicit speech-act. The utterance is created as a moment in the social scientist’s rhetorical narrative.

Secondly, trees do not grow in empty spaces; they grow in an environment. The space that a tree (and a meaning) grows in is contested by other trees. No meaning can be created that is not contested, non-rhetorical (see Billig, 1996; Billig, Gane, Condor, Middleton & Edwards, 1988). Creating a meaning tree (an utterance) is akin to shifting to a particular focus through which the utterance is intelligible. This ‘focusing’ is a choice by the social scientist. The conventional social scientist argues for a particular interpretation of the ‘the facts’, calling on specific data to support this interpretation. The conventional social scientist though is intractably driven by a particular research question that *does* – even if this is denied – frame the interpretation of the data. For example, a strictly trained anthropologist with heavy ‘participatory research’ inclinations enters a community and requests them to use her skills to their benefit. This research will still be doubly framed. First, by the social scientist – as an act of facilitating ‘community’ agency and voice, and second by the community – as they define what they want to know. The answerability/addressivity (a/a) complex is the imposition of a frame in which to render an explicit speech-act intelligible as an utterance. This is represented in Figure 3 by a circular ‘biosphere’ within which the meaning tree will be grown. I choose a circle as it is naturally neutral and any point on the edge is equidistant to the centre. The two-dimensional circle is a poor approximation of the model though. The

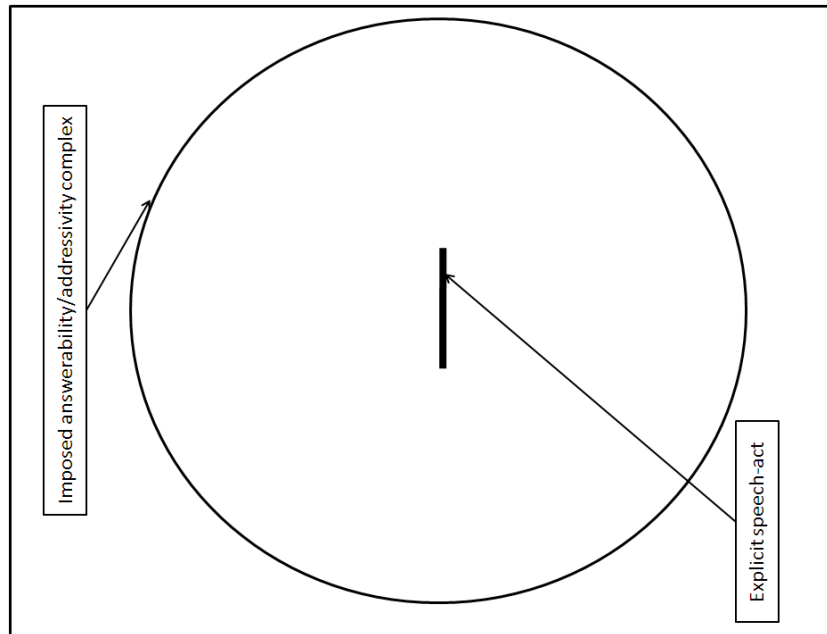


Figure 3. The answerability/addressivity complex.

‘circle’ should be a multi-dimensional space where multitudinous possible meaning trees over-lay each other. The a/a complex is also a conscious act by the social scientist that is part of the intelligibility rendering. The act of creating an a/a complex is contested, when it is proposed (for funding or to colleagues), when it is imposed (in the social scientist’s deliberations/analysis), and when it is produced (in a journal submission or presentation). The a/a complex is a first step in intelligibility rendering. By creating an a/a complex as an *explicit* part of the social scientific process, the results are more accessible to challenge and therefore more useful/valid.

Thirdly, the a/a complex is divisible into two hemispheres, as in Figure 4. This division is not real, but a rhetorical device for meaning creating by imposing chronospace on explicit speech-acts. Chronospatial contextualizing is an act of arranging events in space and time. This act is rhetorical because the arrangement of events in a particular way serves a particular rendering of intelligibility. For example, chronospatial contextualization is the difference



between 'seeing a person and shooting a gun' and 'shooting a gun and (then) seeing a person'.

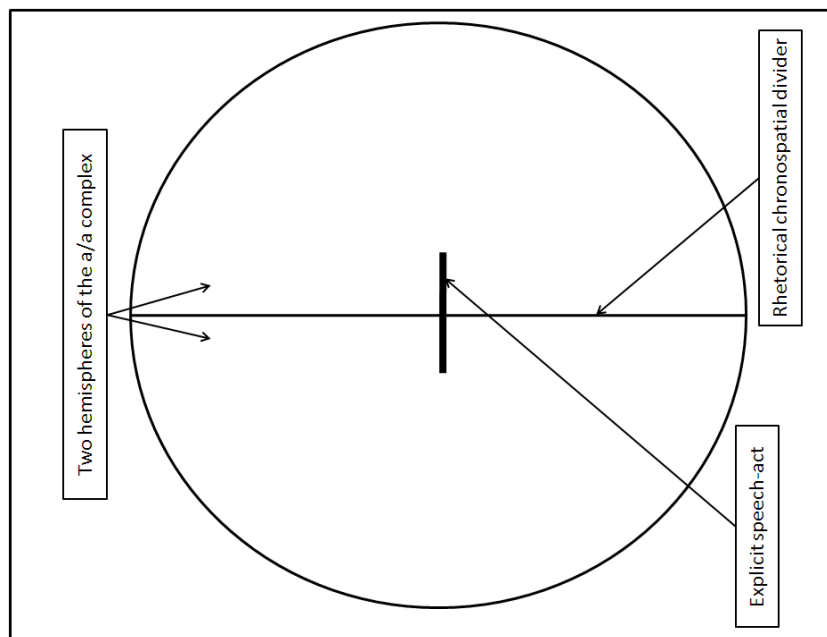


Figure 4. Chronospatial division of the a/a complex.

Above I argued that the a/a complex is a contested space. In Figure 5 the rhetorical

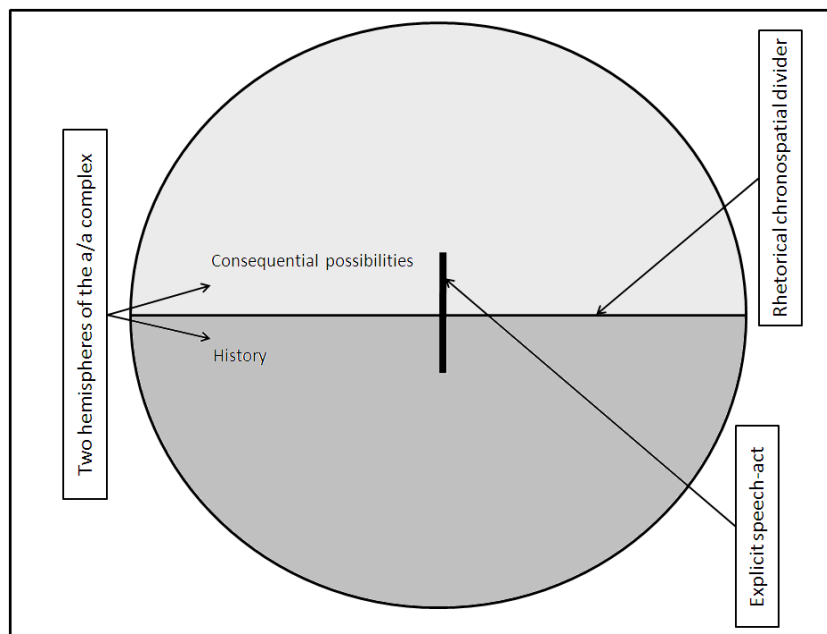


Figure 5. Coloured chronospatial division of the a/a complex.

chronospatial divider separates that space into ‘earth’ – darker grey area – and ‘air’ – lighter grey area. The ‘earth’ is a space full of historical ‘*logical precedings*’ to the explicit speech act. The ‘air’ is a space full of *consequential possibilities* of the speech-act if it is accepted as rhetorically intended – including further applications, appropriations and objections. Both the ‘earth’ and ‘air’ are fictive, *in potential* elements, imposed by the intelligibility renderer with the rhetorical aims. The ‘earth’ may seem more solid (the past seems more easily corroborated than the future is now), and the ‘air’ may seem to be bigger or have more potential (because the future is so indeterminate now that anything is possible). However, both the ‘earth’ and ‘air’ are fictive and are full of potential because they exist, not as truths that may be corroborated, but only as rhetorical elements of the rendering of the explicit speech-act as an utterance.

Fourthly, the amorphous mush of the ‘earth’ is given voices to exemplify it. Just as tree roots push into the earth, so too ‘*answerings*’ push into the ‘earth-history’ of an utterance, as with ‘c’, ‘d’, ‘e’ and ‘f’ in Figure 6. The explicit speech-act is *in answer* to these ‘answerings’.

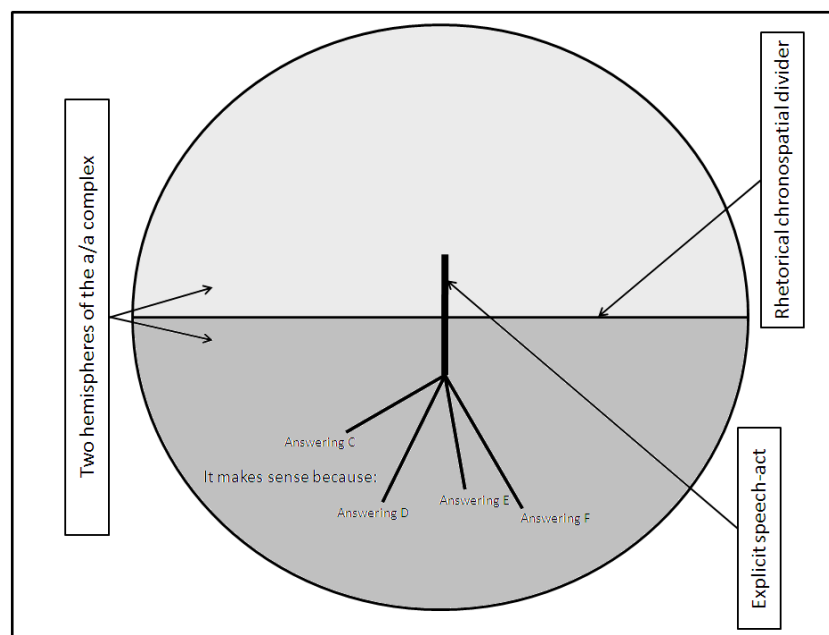


Figure 6. Answerings.

The answerings are pseudo speech-acts that are *created* as explicit by the social scientist – the ‘essays’ in chapter 3 are created as answerings to this thesis. The answerings are tied to the explicit speech-act when it is manifested as an utterance. The number and nature of the answerings is dependent on the intelligibility renderer (social scientist) and their rhetoric. The answerings are not ‘real’ – in the sense that they need to have been explicitly voiced by a person – but at the same time the explicit speech-act is unintelligible (not an utterance) without them. In the contested earth-space, where possible, heteroglossic voices *contest* to be answered by an explicit speech-act, the answerings are fictional voices by which the prosaic intertexter exerts rhetorical force to a *particular* intelligibility rendering. Each answering has a voice imposed on it such that each answering becomes the fictive ventriloque of a speech genre. To represent this in prosaic intertexting methodology, each ‘voice’ is explicitly labelled with a genre archetype/prosopopoeia. For example, in order to impose a rhetoric of the explicit speech-act being motivated by person X’s personal interests, the prosopopoeia ‘person X’s altruism’ may be imposed as an answering voice. This is not a direct quote from ‘real’ history, but rather an imposed and fictional quote from a rhetorical earth-history.

Fifthly, the tree has roots but it still needs branches. Just as the ‘earth’ is given voice, so too the ethereal openness of ‘air’ is given prosopopoeial voices, as in ‘*addressings*’ ‘h’, ‘i’, ‘j’ and ‘k’ in Figure 7. All utterances are addressive, they call other utterances to respond to them. This addressivity is not a function of the explicit speech-act being a question or not. Rather, addressivity is a function of the utterance’s attempt to impose meaning. Speech-acts have form and implications determined by long traditions of social consensus. These forms make particular answerings seem to ‘flow’ more easily. For example, two people meet and one person extends her hand towards the other. This is addressive of her hand being taken in-hand and gently, but firmly, shook. It is difficult to render ‘the other person taking

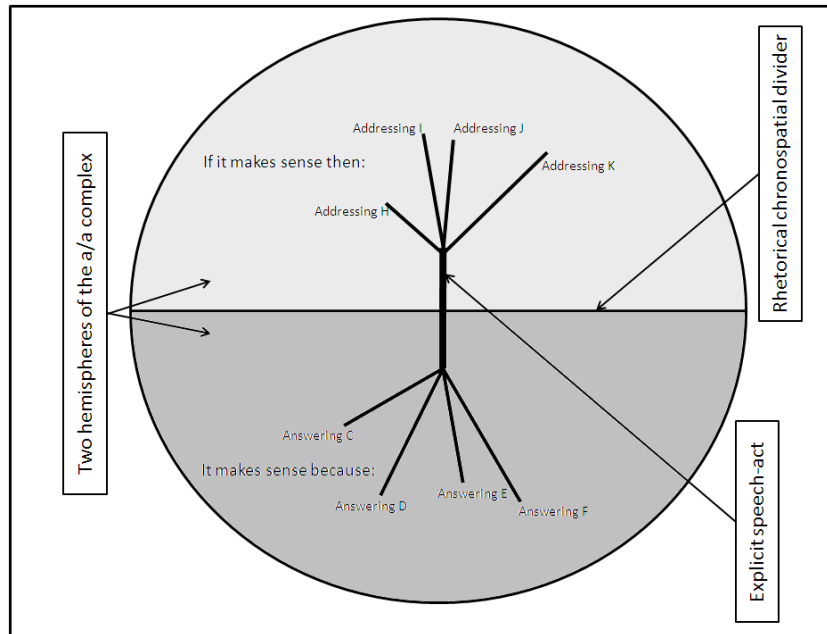


Figure 7. Addressings.

her hand, pulling her towards him and embracing her’ without adding special and additional circumstances – he recognizes her as long-lost pre-school friend for instance. Addressings are imposed genre archetypes through which an explicit speech-act is rendered intelligible. Addressings are not real, but without them an explicit speech act is unintelligible. It is the social scientist’s task to create and explicate addressings such that the explicit speech-act may be scrutinized as a meaningful utterance. As part of this task the addressings are also ascribed fictive voice-names to further ventriloque/give prosopopoeia to a speech genre. For example ‘the pope’ voice-name may be imposed to ventriloque catholic morals. Alternatively Rocky Balboa could be imposed as a genre archetype of ‘bull-headedness leading to success’. The addressings are clearly not quotes of either the pope or Rocky though. The same process of imposing voice-naming is used for creating answerings.

Finally, Figure 8 is an utterance. The utterance is whole, produced in its moment of being by a rhetorically motivated social scientist. The utterance is more than what is explicit. The aim of adding an allegory-filled a/a complex is for social science to mimic the process of *be-ing*

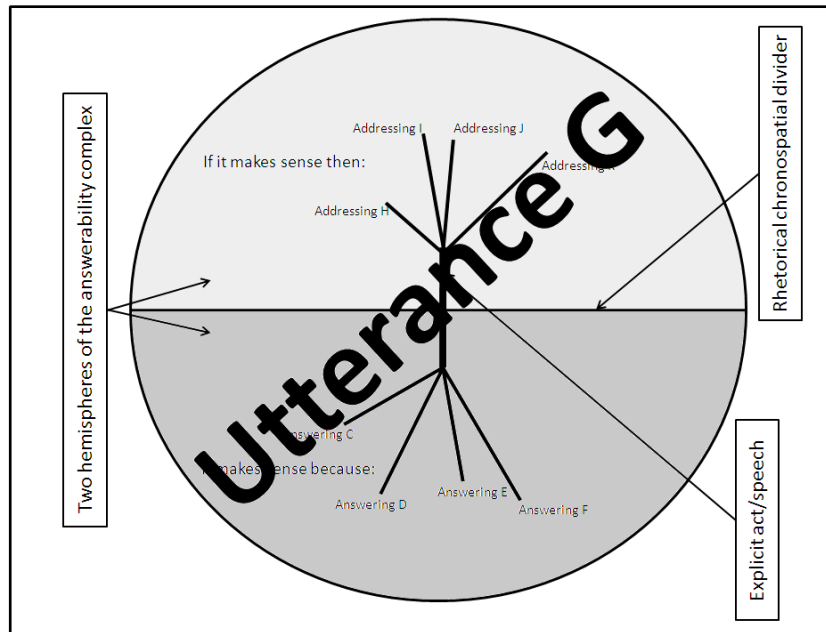


Figure 8. An utterance.

When Shweder (1990) and Shweder and Sullivan (1993) talk of ‘intentional worlds’ they are talking of human worlds where meaning imposition is *the* act of *be-ing*. The utterance is the unit in which acts of *be-ing* occur, not explicit speech-acts. An utterance is like a particular time-dimensional part of music, while an explicit speech-act is just a note. The note has a sound, but it is un-interesting. What is interesting is the piece of music, with its melody, harmonies and overtones. The length of this ‘part of music’ is determined by how long it is listened to.

So that is an utterance, a unit of meaning-creating, but the analysis of a single utterance is not always the most interesting to the social scientist. Rather, social science is often interested in how multiple utterances relate (or not). To continue the music analogy, multiple utterances, combined, is a song. But, the song has multiple possible renditions/renderings of intelligibility. How does the social scientist legitimately construct a particular set of utterances as both relating and whole – the creation of *narratives*?

Firstly, one person's answering/addressing is another person's utterance. What was 'Addressing H' in Figures 7 and 8, above, can easily be 'Utterance H' if it is made explicit and rendered intelligible through prosaic intertexting as shown in Figure 9. Furthermore, the

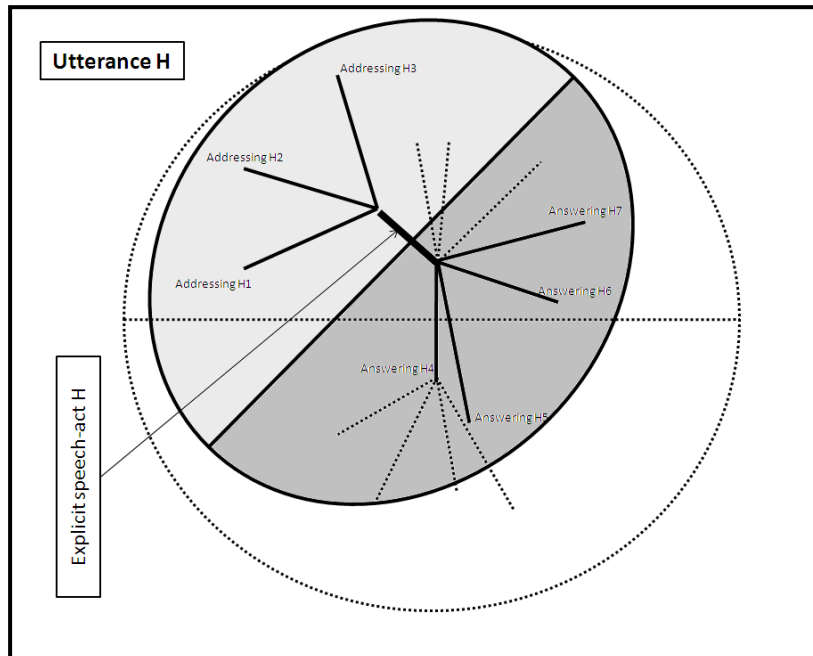


Figure 9. Another utterance.

answerings and addressings rhetorically created by the social scientist in the process of rendering an explicit speech-act as an intelligible utterance are *not the only* possible answerings and addressings. Both hemispheres of the a/a complex are spaces of contestation where innumerable possible answerings and addressings are suppressed by the centripetal forces of speech genres and language (see chapter 3). Indeed, each of the possible (suppressed or expressed) answerings/addressings in an a/a complex can be rendered as an utterance. By introducing something new, and if enough rhetorical force is applied, the focus of the a/a complex may be shifted (or rather: Re-created in a different place) to allow for what was an answering/addressing to be rendered as an utterance. For example, an extremist apartheid adherent has feelings of love-attraction for a member of another race. These feelings are un-utterable with the a/a complex of 'divine-destined racial separation'. But the feelings persist, grow stronger. The person converts to a different religion and 'discovers'

that the expression of inter-racial love *is* intelligible. The suppressed addressing becomes an utterance. This utterance is intelligible only insofar as it is complete with its own answerability complex, as well as new answerings and addressings for it.

Secondly, the construction of a narrative is an active process of rendering a set of utterances as intelligible *in serial*. Figure 10 illustrates a facile example of the multiple narrative lines that *may be* strung together out of explicated utterances. ‘4’ is the original explicit speech-act. Follow any line from thinnest to thickest and back to thinnest (for example from ‘1’ to ‘2’ to ‘3’ to ‘4’ to ‘5’ to ‘6’ to ‘7’ in Figure 10) and a ‘narrative’ of seven explicit speech-acts is created.

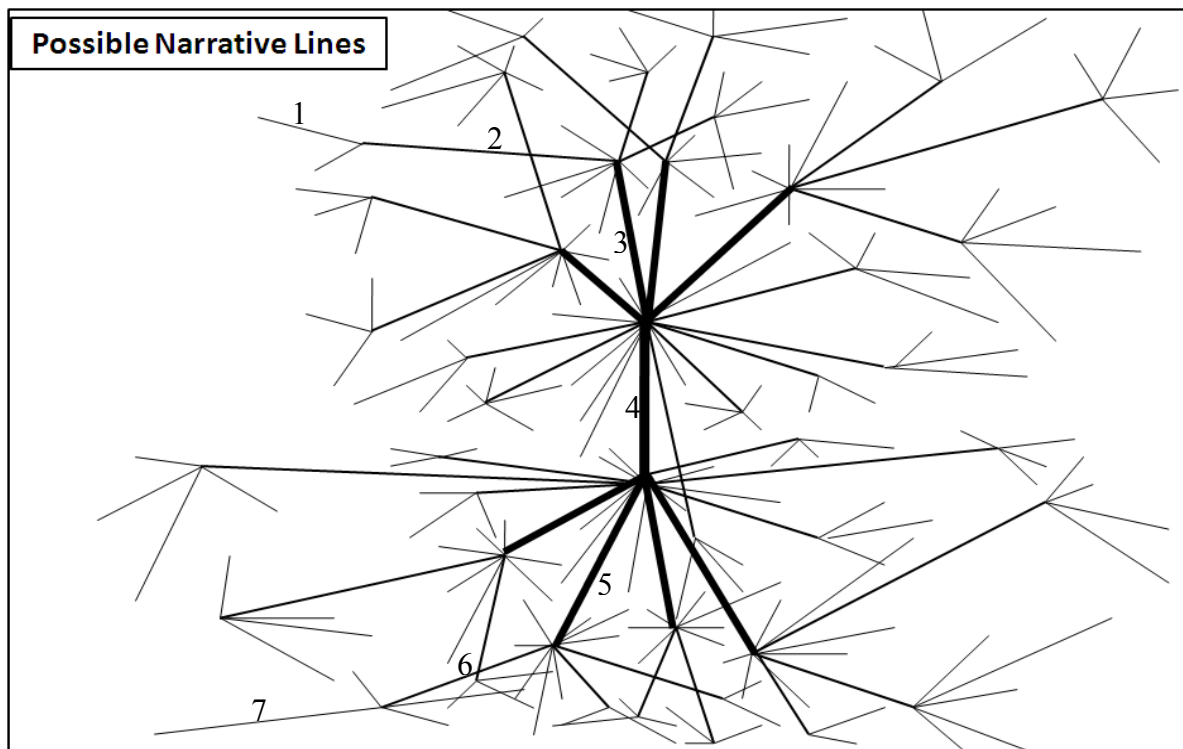


Figure 10. The infinity of meaning and human *be-ing*.

Narratives are rarely this simple by virtue of natural ‘language’ processes – centripetal and centrifugal forces. Rather, the narrative must be created as simple/self-evident/sensible in order for its intelligibility rendering to be valid. There are 183 possible starting points for 7-

utterance long narratives in Figure 10. Consider that for each of these 183 start points there are at least 91 end points. 16653 possible 7-utterance long narratives. And that is only because I only created-as-explicit an average number of 7 answerings plus addressings per explicit speech-act. There are billions; actually, there are an infinite number as no utterances could ever be exactly the same as another. There are also innumerable potential narratives of a different length than 7 utterances. There are three things prosaic intertexting social scientists should be very grateful for: (1) the centripetal forces of language, (2) the lack of true discernment exercised by audiences in accepting examples as representative of huge numbers of answerings and addressings, and (3) that prosaic intertexting is how persons *be* and thus every audience is good at it. All three of these points diminish the actual number of narratives that the social scientist must engage with/in our rhetorical creation of truths through intelligibility renderings/utterance creation. The generative capacity of prosaic intertexting is also neatly illustrated in Figure 10 in that, for each explicit speech-act there are multiple ‘next’ points in narrative creation. All explicit speech-acts can be re-rendered as new utterances and a narrative can be equivocated by a presumably archetypal utterances.

Chapter 2 has been an illustration of what prosaic intertexting as a social scientific methodology is. Chapter 2 is only an explicit speech-act, it is not an utterance. While, if read independently from the dissertation, you (as a human *be-ing*) will be able to render it intelligible, *you* will impose an *a/a* complex on it. You will therefore not render it intelligible as I have intended it to be. Please do not do this. Rather, accept that chapter 2 is unintelligible for now. To do some more rhetorical work with you (after that pleading): The analogy of a meaning tree is stretched at best, it is not worthwhile you trying to squeeze meaning out of *it* when I have provided meaning elsewhere. Cajoling? Irritating? Maybe, but that is what we do, up to now we have hidden behind the ‘science’.



### Chapter 3: Intertextual voices to the meaning proposition of the thesis

Where am I getting this model from? What is its earth? The essays in this chapter (3) are the dialogic threads upon which dangle my utterances. The essays are answerings to the explicit speech-act of chapter 2, they are addressive of the thesis, and chapter 2 is in answer to these essays. The essays are attempts to achieve something for the thesis: validity. The essays are six origin points such that prosaic intertexting can be created as a sensible meeting point to them, together. The essays are best read as if in parallel, not in sequence (though we are limited by the medium of a dissertation in this regard). What links the essays is not a traditional narrative, with a beginning and end, but rather that they all flow into chapter 2 (with different *foci*). The purpose of the essays is, always, to create prosaic intertexting as valid, sensible and valuable.

#### *What is new with prosaic intertexting?*

Prosaic intertexting is not the first model of human *be-ing*, though (in my definition) many other models are not explicitly called this. We all have a sense of what it means to be a person – and in that sense an informal model of human *be-ing*. This essay will sketch and critique three existing models of human *be-ing*: the ‘Cartesian thinker’, the ‘self in society’, and the ‘African staged process’. Prosaic intertexting is argued to draw on each of these models in creating a new and better one. The two purposes of this essay are (1) to demonstrate prosaic intertexting as a revolution and a refinement, and (2) to give readers an intellectual ‘in’ into what prosaic intertexting is and how it relates to already established ideas.

‘The conciliatory and reasonable intellectual guide’: I cannot explicate all models of human *be-ing* in this thesis. Rather, I am creating three ‘statements’ of human *be-ing* to represent three prominent conceptual trends. The primary purpose of these creations is to illustrate how prosaic intertexting is novel, not to summarise intellectual trends.

Model 1 – *Cogito ergo sum* (c.f. Descartes, 1644), I think therefore I am. What I am is a thinking being. A human being is a thing that perceives, cognates and acts on this rationality. A person is one thing, a whole and, at essence, unchanging except for its natural development toward actualization. The person is bounded by its unique position that it occupies in space and relative to others. A person is a thing in and of itself. The essence of a person is disguised under layers of confounding factors – for example Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ‘ecological’ model of self. This model of human *be-ing* is pervasive in many forms of rationalism (see Leibniz, 1764; c.f. Wolff, 1734), cognitivism (see American Psychological Association, 2000; Broadbent, 1958; Koffka, 1924; Kohler, 1967) and often religious thinking in the form of a ‘soul’ or ‘divine essence’ (see Johnson, Kundakunda & Kundakunda, 1995; Pope John Paul II, 1997; Taherzadeh, 1976). The purpose of the person is often defined by shrugging off of confounding variables and being as ‘true’ to the ‘real’ person they are ‘underneath it all’ (see self-actualization in Maslow, 1943; 1962). With this model the purposes of social science are (a) to understand the relationship between the ‘true’ self and the ‘self as it appears’, and (b) to find ways to ‘condition’ true selves to act in ways we want them to. The self is finalized, it is individual and we must define it.

Prosaic intertexting differs fundamentally from this model of human *be-ing*. A person has to be *created as one* thing, it can only be whole if its proposition is consummated by other persons and has no ‘natural’ development as its ‘meaning’ is rhetoric specific. A person is

unbounded and full of potential ‘persons’ until it is actively bounded in a rhetorical invocation. The person has no ‘purpose’ – purposes are also rhetorical invocations – but creating it with purpose is necessary to its continuance to be an active social meaning creator. The purpose for social science is to define ways for persons to *be* in ways that social scientists wish them to.

Model 2 – A person *is* by virtue of their implications (Dewey, 1922; James, 1911; Pierce, 1897). All persons’ implications are inevitably social. So, a person *is* by virtue of *social* implications. But, society exists on a higher plane than the persons in it (Durkheim, 1950). Persons are arbiters of social categories/stereotypes. Persons act as social arbiters by accessing social scripts, playing the socially defined game of norms (see Bicchieri, Jeffrey & Skyrms, 1999). A person is real, but completely dependent on the social context that they are in to interact with other people. Persons learn to be social beings by internalizing interactions from the inter-personal to the intra-personal plane (Vygotsky, 1964; 1978; Wertsch, 1985; 1986; 1991; 1998; 2002; Wertsch, del Rio & Alvarez, 1995). Shotter (1993) argues that in the process of internalization something new must be created and that this something is of the self. This model of human *be-ing* is pervasive in cultural psychology (see Bruner, 1990; Shweder, 1991; Triandis, 1989), sociology (see Nisbet, 1967; Willis, 1996) and positioning theory (see Harre, 1979; Harre & van Langenhove, 1999). The purpose of the self is to fulfill their function as an instantiation of the society they belong to. The purposes of social science are (a) to understand how society creates persons as it does, and (b) to discover how to modify society to serve a particular interest. The self exists only as a rhetorical concept that characterizes an underlying structure, it is dependent and we must control it.

Prosaic intertexting differs in degree from this model of human *be-ing*. A person is indebted to the social to consummate meanings-created, but society is only a tool in the rhetorical creation of meaning. Social scientists create persons as instantiations of social categories not because they *are* so, but because *doing* so enables the social scientist to say something about how *groups of people* inter-relate. A person has no ‘purpose’, but neither does a social category – except insofar it is created as having particular purpose by the social scientist. The purpose of social science is to create new ways for persons to talk about social arrangements.

Model 3 – A person travels through the cosmos on a staged journey of self-becoming. Personhood is a cycle of moving from one life stage to another. The person is a special being, born into this plane and on a journey of transcending to the next. A person’s life-stage is independent of their chronological age. A person on one life-stage is qualitatively different, but in unity with, the person they are when in another life-stage. Death is a transcending of this plane but a continuation of the person into another. Persons *become* by undergoing certain social rituals and trials. Moving to a subsequent life-stage is dependent on social process and sanction. A person is defined by the life journey they have been born into and how well they are able to follow that journey in the social group they are in and the social group is dependent on its members for definition (for the ethical implications of this see Mutowo, 2001; Ramose, 1999). This model of human *be-ing* is pervasive in many *Nguni*-culture groups in sub-Saharan Africa (Mkhize, 2004). The purpose of human *be-ing* is to fulfil the function of the person’s current life-stage as well as possible in the eyes of their social group so that the person may progress to a subsequent life-stage. The purposes of social science are (a) to understand the particular demands of each life-stage relative to the

journey as a whole, and (b) to facilitate the specific objectives of human *be-ing*. *Be-ing* is active and it is a process. The self exists as it is currently embodied.

Prosaic intertexting differs in focus from this model of human *be-ing*. The person *is* fundamentally social and individual at the same time. The person is unique in their position among others, but only others can consummate their meaning. Personhood is not a stage-like process though; stages are rhetorical and heuristic tools for social scientists. In prosaic intertexting a person is to be considered in the living-moment of their *be-ing*. The purpose of social science is to create new ways for the person to be relative to the social context by re-creating acts as instantiations of the process of personhood.

This essay illustrates the space prosaic intertexting occupies relative to three other models of *be-ing*. The purpose of the essay is for you to see prosaic intertexting as a development on earlier, established social scientific ideas, but also as a creative and necessary departure. The task for the reader is to explicate and consider the model of human *be-ing* that you hold to. How is prosaic intertexting different from that? What assumptions of yours does it challenge? And what potentials does it hold for creating human *be-ing* in ways you have not yet thought possible?

*What is the point of prosaic intertexting?*

Why do prosaic intertexting, it sounds all conceptually complicated and intellectually sophisticated, but at the end of the day, what do we use it for? The purpose of this essay is to outline three of the potential practical uses for prosaic intertexting – identity creation/enactment/maintenance and trauma resolution, reconciliation and stereotype

dissolution. All three of these uses stem from the prosaic intertexting argument that meaning is not fixed but must be created. Prosaic intertexting gives social scientists a tool to re-create meaning so that it is better for the parties concerned. This re-creation is not an instant-fix medical cure, but rather a potent weapon in the social scientist's rhetorical armament. The purpose of this essay is to illustrate prosaic intertexting not as simply the brainchild of a masters student trying to demonstrate cleverness. Rather, prosaic intertexting is an applied, 'prosaic' tool that is practical to everyday meaning creating.

The do-gooder looking for ways to change the world: As persons, we would benefit greatly from an ability to change our realities. 'Reality' (as it is self/socially imposed as true) is often not a very nice or constructive chronospace. 'Reality' is an everyday, personal wrestling partner for persons. 'Reality' is an ideological battleground of 'truth' and 'right' between persons. 'Reality' is an uninformed, default-state legitimator of taken-for-granted positions toward other persons. 'Reality' is where identities are enacted and maintained. 'Reality' gives us footing in conflicting with others. 'Reality' is where stereotype consequences are inevitable. But 'reality' is not real, is not inevitable, is not essential; rather it is created.

In the first instance, the ontology of prosaic intertexting is beneficial for identity creation/enactment/maintenance and personal trauma resolution. Philosophical self-awareness/sentience is a defining feature of humanity. Psychologically it is self-differentiation from others that marks the development of an infant into a person (see Erikson, 1968; Inhelder & Piaget, 1958). Human *be-ing* is a *process* of self-utterances and the self-utterances that are possible at any moment of *be-ing* are socially negotiated. All cultures are defined by the potential-utterances that are coherent to members of that culture. Cultures

change over time through changes in this pool of coherent-utterance-potential. All persons, as selves-in-utterances in a culture, are Foucauldian (see Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982) operatives in both sustaining these cultures and in regulating their acts in accordance with it. Persons may feel guilty when the self they have enacted is in discordance with the ‘morals/mores’ of ‘their’ culture, or, indignant at a transgression of these ‘morals/mores’ by an outsider self. Prosaic intertexting is a tool to give persons (a) greater scope to create new identity-acts for themselves and others within their culture, and (b) to give new meaning to self-acts by re-appraising its culture-utterance.

The very component parts of our identity-created are malleable. To ask a person who they are, is to ask for them to recall the special set of event-memories that has brought them to *be* as they are now. Whether it is a teen explaining to their parents how their friends were ‘egging-on’ as they hung-around at home and how this led to them being the driver of the, recently dented, family car, or a presidential hopeful narrating the challenges of their early life that prepared them to make the tough decisions associated with the post. What ties these two examples is a reliance on memory to construct a plausible story that legitimates the utterer’s current self-act. This is equally true when we make sense of another’s acts; the other is couched as a particular ‘self’ that makes a singular contemporary act by that self intelligible to us. This particular version of self is substantiated and made plausible by recalling – or inventing (see below) – prior self-acts. For example, when your parent scolds you it is done as an act of constructive criticism and love by contextualizing it in instances of them supporting your development, including recent praise. Even when couching the ‘self’ as motivated to future aims these aims are rendered intelligible to us by inserting them in a history of self-acts that is plausible to us in our cultural semantic-complex of what it means to be a person – a person that is whole, it has beliefs and desires, and acts for most part

coherently. “As Neisser (1967) argued decades ago, memory is not so much a matter of ‘reappearance’ as it is a matter of active construction based on traces from earlier experiences” (Wertsch, 2002, p. 8). Memory, the tool used to contextualize ‘self’ in a history of self-acts, is *constructive*, not reality-reflective. Even when we can have no memory of a person, in the case of a stranger, we are still be able to invent histories for their self-acts. As soon as new characters appear in our favourite TV drama we begin to construct stories that make sense of their acts, or rather, make their acts sensible to us.

Memory is also an act-of-the-self-in-others, and this is a vital constituent of *be-ing*. As Wertsch (2002, p. 6) argues, “Memory... is viewed as ‘distributed’ between agent and texts, and the task becomes one of listening for the texts and the voices behind them as well as the voices of the particular individuals using these texts in particular settings... we are asking about the general perspective, or ‘speaking consciousness’ that Bakhtin (1981) defined as ‘voice’”. The ‘voice’ is a heuristic used to bind a string of utterances in the same way ‘self’ binds a string of event-acts, making them coherent, causative and intelligible as legitimate addressees. What is key is the integral value of others-other-than self in rendering all acts intelligible. This is expressed in the *isiZulu* maxim of ‘*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*’ or, a person is a person through persons. Harré (1979) furthermore highlights the positional nature of personal meaning making. ‘Who’, which ‘voice’, an act/utterance is addressed toward changes the meaning of the act/utterance. Having a book published under your name is less glorious and more taken-for-granted when meaning-addressed to your peers in academia than when meaning-addressed to your family of shoemakers. Fundamentally then, identity is an act of social-construction – not just in the loose sense of the post-modern *zeitgeist* where ‘all things are constructed’ – but rather in the strong sense that meaning is *created* iteratively, instant-by-instant, prosaically.



Prosaic intertexting is this process of meaning creating, evaluating and re-addressing each act/utterance in the context of social texts. By interrogating the meaning-assumed, and by changing the social text into which the act/utterances is interred, persons have flexibility in constructing self-identities. This is the aim of narrative therapy (Payne, 2000; Shawver & Docecki, 1970; White, 1990); to have the story told by the person (not a patient as the meanings associated with patient are not necessarily helpful to the 'person') re-told, facilitating their re-telling of it in a 'health-positive' way. Payne (2000) includes 'using externalizing language', 'relative influence questioning', 'deconstruction of unique outcomes', 'inviting the person to take a position' and 're-membering' as therapeutic methods to re-tell a problem-saturated self-narrative as self-positive. Cognitive behavioural therapy operates through a similar mechanism of procedurally testing the 'faulty' thinking of persons with regard to other versions of 'reality' (see Beck & Haaga, 1992; Beck & Weishaar, 1995; Curwen, Palmer & Ruddell, 2000; Wilson, 1995). Cognitive-behavioural therapy though is *realist*, this rigid search for the singular truth is limiting to self-construction in a complex intentional world. Narrative therapy on the other hand has foundations in post-modern/non-realist philosophy (Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995; Hoyt, 1996; Hoyt, 1998; Shawer, 2000). What it lacks is an adequate model of how relativist meaning creating operates on a prosaic level to sustain the intentional worlds of human *be-ing*. Narrative therapy (and a re-phrased, post-modern cognitive-behavioural therapy) highlight how prosaic intertexting may be harnessed to improve life for persons; persons are better able to cope with, and capitalize on, the unpredictability of life by reframing what things mean. For example young white South Africans who are not offered immediate employment in a labour market of affirmative action may frame this as an opportunity to use the privilege that being white often entails (such as access to better education) to extend themselves and make a greater contribution to their country. This escapes a dominant discourse in their social circle

that affirmative action is reverse racism. Similarly a person who is abused as a child may frame this as message from God that they should use their strength in overcoming this trial as fuel to end child abuse. What is important is that ‘prosaic intertexting’ gives people increased language with which to make alternative meanings, rather than being trapped in non-productive dictions.

Prosaic intertexting is both a model of how humans *be* and a tool to interfere in that *be-ing*. At the level of the person it is useful both as a means for personal trauma resolution and for non-traumatic positive personal growth (see therapeutic uses above). In the second instance though it is beneficial for mediating and regulating inter-personal acts. Three ways of thinking about inter-personal acts are as (a) ideology, (b) conflict and (c) a reconciliatory society. I discuss these below with the aim of broadening the scope of prosaic intertexting’s appeal beyond the personal.

To be in conflict one has to have a ‘legitimate’ – or legitimate enough – reason, a pretext; whether this be an established blood feud, suspected possession of weapons of mass destruction or ‘premenstrual stress’. The examples show that the pretext need not be universally valid, rather it is an excuse to placate the conscience of the person. To test the universality of my ‘necessary pretext’ allegation slap the next person you encounter, without provocation. Even reading this you can see the expression in their face being ‘why?’ and feel the ‘urge to explain your action as a social experiment’ welling up in your mouth. Justice is the apportionment of blame and appropriate punishment, as culturally and contemporarily established (see Nozick, 1974; Rawls, 1971; Waltzer, 1983). There is a need in rendering acts intelligible to attribute both narrative cohesiveness and causal relationships to them. Moreover, there is a social-regulatory, order-maintenance imperative to attribute *the*

(real/true) narrative and causal relationships to the acts; the imperative to be correct, for my version of events to be believed. By *be-ing* we lay the foundations of ideological strife because *be-ing* is (as demonstrated in prosaic intertextings model of it) inherently *multiple* and rhetorical. We each create a version of reality that is coloured and substantiated by the unique chronospatial position from which we utter – actualized in the selection of utterances that *our* utterance answers and addresses. Our constructions cannot be the same as others. We are doomed to conflict. Well, no, not really, but ideological reconciliation is a non-intuitive process.

Prosaic intertexting offers the starting proposition that agreement is not congruence of *be-ing* in thought, but rather a concurrent act of parallel meaning-acceptance by two utterers.

Reconciliation is not about finding *the*, true, version of events, whether science or spirituality, Christianity or Hinduism. Rather it is about finding a way for each version (separately) not to preclude or be punitive of others. Reconciliation is about making *be-ing* possible for ‘I’ that believes in the capital punishment as an effective crime deterrent but that other persons hold it to be unjustifiable murder. Reconciliation has no essential value in and of itself though. I use it as an example here though to illustrate the helpful properties of prosaic intertexting.

Prosaic intertexting helps in over-coming of default-operational ideological strife of life by (a) il-legitimizing the necessity of the default position, and (b) modeling how new (strife-less) positions may be created.

Prosaic intertexting may be equally used deliberately and hegemonically to render particular versions of reality as abhorrent or even unintelligible, unthinkable. Prosaic intertexting provides the process by which acts are legitimated and therefore offers the opportunity both to cement an ideology and to create a new idea in which ‘my truth’ is real and ‘your truth’ is

as real. Pragmatically there is an interpersonal therapeutic process that more than one person can create less problem-saturated narratives of co-existence. Mediators and arbitrators currently fulfil this role in legal disputes. Communication between people can be facilitated by the acknowledgement that 'I' have an important role to play in the possible meanings other people can make. Treating meanings as unfinalized and acknowledging the prevalence of 'misunderstandings' allows people to re-negotiate, to forgive, and to seek to reconcile through engagement with others.

The potential benefits of prosaic intertexting as an ideological conflict resolution mechanism need not only be applied on an inter-individual level. Nussbaum (1998) has argued for the 'cultivation of humanity' as an imperative of education, a bastion of society. Society exists by virtue of our continued process of *be-ing* as meaning creating, inter-relating persons, and our *be-ing* is completely circumscribed by the meaning-created society in which we are *be-ing*. Nussbaum (2001) is arguing that, in this society that is made by us and gives the necessary context for us to *be* meaningful, we should create self-stories and act-possibilities that transcend ideological conflict. Indeed, she argues, it is the socially constructed and legitimate function of 'education' as a social bastion and system to perform this function. By arguing that we should strengthen this commitment to education she is arguing for the generative capacity of prosaic intertexting to imagine new possibilities of *be-ing* in the world.

One of the most pervasive effects of modern *be-ing* are stereotypes. Stereotypes are an outcome of everyday categorizing (Ramsey, Langlois, Hoss, Rubenstein & Griffin, 2004) and 'voice-seeking' (see Wertsch, 2002) as we render the world intelligible. When faced with a paucity of memory events with which to construct a self-narrative for a person, we use stereotypes in our heuristic construction of a coherent, intelligible other-act. Indeed, even if

there is a surfeit of actual memory events we still use stereotypes. We are lazy, or rather we are frugal in our expenditure of mental effort. When we see a person stopping in a supermarket to ruffle the hair of a stranger's child we may draw on the stereotype that 'women are caregivers', or that 'men are sexual predators', and legitimize our act of judging the behaviour as 'safe and moving on' or 'intervening' – as appropriate. Stereotypes are part of the diction with which we create semantic-complexes around act-occurrences. Stereotypes are an archetypal centripetal force – by maintaining a generalized, un-interrogated 'truth' about a 'real' category. Their logical counterpart is uttering the act as singular and non-repeatable – uniqueness through specificity. Stereotypes are maintained by essentializing and finalizing persons as instances of a category of people. Often such stereotypes are supported through the distorted ventriloque of knowledge. For example, science, logic and rationality is ventriloqued in narratives such as this 'you know these Africans (read blacks) didn't have great civilizations like Rome where people could just sit around and think and make art and society so it's no wonder that they are backward, they just didn't get the opportunity to develop'. Such a reality-narrative legitimates holding Roman-derived/non-African civilization-members as superior due to the inevitability of social advancement when that society produces a non-working class elite who have the opportunity to 'promulgate laws, create art and advance science/philosophy'. The utterer is also excused of continentalism/racism toward Africans, as their accused lack of development is both 'true' and 'inevitable' as an outcome of the 'natural' process of social advancement. Prosaic intertexting is, in the third instance, an interrogative mechanism and process by which to de-construct stereotypes.

The ontology of prosaic intertexting is to treat meaning creating as a centrifugal, generative act. Furthermore, since each person contributing to meaning creating is unique by virtue of

their chronospatial position, they are themselves unique meaning-making *be*-ings, no person is only an instance of a category. Rather the category that they are uttered as part of is sustained by this utterance, and their membership of the category is insofar as it serves the rhetorical, sense-of-the-world making aim of the utterer. Stereotypes are not ‘real’, essentially. Except they *are* ‘real’ by virtue of their value in calcifying meaning *in the intentional meaning created complex that allows persons to be together*. To say stereotypes are not real is not revolutionary though. And while we may be satisfied that stereotypes are much more difficult to maintain when one engages with the unique humanity of another person, prosaic intertexting offers more; by plotting the pathway of active stereotype negotiation and dissolution. Ending the effect of a stereotype *is not* about showing its falsehood, lack of value or evilness. Rather, ending the effect of a stereotype is about forging a new utterance in which (a) the experiential reality of the past stereotype is acknowledged but (b) that in the present the stereotypes are not true. This is similar to the argument against post-racialism put forward by Erasmus (2004) and by Goldberg (2004). Prosaic intertexting is the process by which new meanings are made by (a) focusing on prosaic, iterative change and (b) creating utterances into different social texts. Stereotypes are not so much ‘dissolved-to-disappear’ as ‘resolved-to-have-new-meaning’.

The effect of stereotypes on everyday life is pervasive. Steele, Aronson and Spencer’s ‘stereotype threat/reward theory’ illustrates how stereotypes affect people’s behaviour quantitatively (see Aronson, Wilson, & Akert, 2005; Steele & Aronson, 1995; Steele, Spencer, & Aronson, 2002). There will be no definitive trends in how a particular person acts in the answerability to a particular uttered stereotype. However, trends are emerging which speak to the calcified act-expectancies that persons experience when *be*-ing in the narrational context of a given stereotype. For example, women, often stereotyped to be weak

in mathematics perform worse on examinations of this subject when their *be*-ing a woman is highlighted prior to writing (Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1998). Women who are of Asian descent performed better (*Ceteris Paribus*) on similar mathematics examinations when their ‘Asianness’, and therefore the stereotype that Asians are good at mathematics, was highlighted prior to writing (Shih, Pittinsky, & Ambady, 1999). In the strictest sense though stereotypes are merely special cases of ‘voices-behind’ that Wertsch (2002) urges us to search for when meaning creating. The effect of stereotype threat/reward should therefore be extrapolated to all *be*-ing such that a given behaviour is possible as an intelligible act insofar as the ‘voices-behind’ give it context. Decalcifying the meaning of stereotypes is, therefore, a positive act of creating new voice-possibilities; it is generative, like everyday *be*-ing. Stereotypes with positive effects are valuable resources in this creation. To continue the earlier example, Asian women, when faced with a challenging mathematics examination should make their act of writing an act of ‘Asianness’, not womanhood. Alternatively the stereotype may be subverted by making the self-act an utterance of defiant uniqueness, by saying ‘I am a woman and I will not be cowed by the prevailing sentiment that women are weak at mathematics, I am special, and I am going to show them’. Stereotypes are a heuristic, a meaning creating device, and a strong thread around which to weave creative *be*-ing.

The aim of this essay has been to illustrate the potential value of prosaic intertexting for social science. It is by no means a definitive statement that prosaic intertexting is good in and of itself. The benefit of prosaic intertexting is that it is illustrative of *how* to bring about change, of personal narratives, of inter-personal conflicts and of social discord. Prosaic intertexting is a tool for solving everyday problems of meaning; this does not mean that it is a cure-all though. Meanings are central to persons’ lives, messing with them could be

interpreted as messing with the person. This is something that requires a very privileged social sanction and space to accomplish.

*Is prosaic intertexting more than 'lay' work?*

Is it fair to claim social science is not about understanding 'TRUTHS' – independently real – but about creating 'truths' – person dependent? Can the social scientist legitimately be an active agent in meaning creation? Is this not contrary to the logic of science? In this essay I argue that it *is* philosophically valid for social science to engage in active meaning creation. Indeed, I argue that it is philosophically impossible for social science not to engage in active meaning creation. I hope that this essay will leave the reader with the sense that generating answerings and addressings is inevitable as a social scientist, and that it is far better to acknowledge this and consciously engage in the process. I also hope to create an alternative yard-stick for social science to the independent 'validity' of results. This alternative is explicitness in positioning and rhetorical purpose for the science – that is: judging social science by what it does and what it attempts to do, not how well the text book process is followed.

Relativist philosopher looking for a way to keep my philosophy but still have purpose: This essay will begin by contrasting two epistemologies (rationalism or meaning is *comprehended*, and empiricism or meaning is *observed*) according to their conception of meaning-description. This is followed by a questioning of the validity, feasibility and usefulness of pursuing either of these epistemologies. An alternative, that meanings cannot be rationally derived or observed, but must be created – rendered intelligible – in a continued space of rhetorical negotiation between active human persons (including social scientists and their



addressees), is posited. With this alternative established, it is used to render the two earlier epistemologies intelligible, thus evidencing the durability, functionality and evaluative framework of the proposed epistemology.

But first, a mediatory tool to facilitate the shaping of the essay. One thing may be many things according to the level at which it is enunciated. In this way a personal computer can be a being with will, motives and emotions (usually obstinacy, sabotage of the user and glee at their irritation). It can also be a dead canvas upon which to transcribe the brilliant thoughts of a thesis-writer. Else, it could be a particular flow of electrons through a circuit. And so on. It is not *described* as this, it *is* this. Dennett (1981) has argued, convincingly, that this is not an exercise in describing different, partial facets of the whole thing that is a personal computer. Rather the computer is best conceived as each of these things, and each one, is in and of itself, a complete personal computer. This logic is transferable from personal computers to anything of persons. In one sense this paragraph is a disclaimer for the essay, to say that even if either of the two initial epistemological stances seem correct or appealing to the reader (as indeed they could, considering their prevalence in both lay and professional thinking), keep reading, do not dismiss my critique, according to Dennett (1981) they may both be correct. In another sense this paragraph lays the foundation for the final assertion of the essay; that both epistemologies are mistaken in veracity, though they remain useful descriptive tools for people creating – not revealing – meaning.

One way to describe: Rationalism. What is knowable is that which can be critically reflected upon and cognitively deduced. The task for social science is to elucidate that which is rationally sound and reasonable. This extends to the consideration of ‘qualia’ (see Jackson, 1977; 1982) both as a unique topic for social/human science (as a unique feature of human

*be-ing*), and as descriptive term for the extra-observational sensing that social scientists use to achieve understanding. Descartes' (1644) classic method of doubting to deduce the essence of personhood is an extreme example of the privileging of rational knowing.

The most persistent challenge to rationalism is the problem of knowing other people, or of the knowing *of* other people (see Churchland, 1984; Smith & Jones, 1997). How can one person *know* (if knowing is an act of self-reflective doubting of non-experienced or reasonable things) another person *as a knower*? What justification is there for knowing that another person *knows* as I do? Their knowing is inaccessible to me except for their reporting of it, and they could be lying or mistaken. The simplest solution to this is to add a further qualifier to rationalism that assumes that all people are rational beings, and that they do think, feel and experience. Although this undermines strict rationalism it, pragmatically, allows for engagement with other people as active agents. An unlooked for consequence of this allowance is that the importance ascribed to the knowing of the thinking subject leads to the consequent importance of the thought, felt or experienced, itself (either phenomenological or existential).

A reasonable example of lenient rationalism describing social scientifically: 'I experience medical crises of loved ones as traumatic. If I had an emergency visit to a state-run hospital in post-Apartheid South Africa I would be acutely aware of my whiteness. This awareness of my whiteness would compound my experience of nervousness and cloud my rational decision-making. Person X is also white, they would therefore also have their rational decision-making faculty clouded. My whiteness is experienced as a threatening social category in post-apartheid South Africa. So, whiteness *is* a threatened social category in post-Apartheid South Africa. Person Y tells me that, though they are white, when entering a

state-run hospital in post-Apartheid South Africa they did not experience a clouding of their decision-making faculty. From this three alternatives can be deduced; (a) the language we are using to describe our experience is inconsistent, (b) person Y is lying or is mistaken, (c) the *ceteris paribus* assumption is violated and something else has influenced person Y's experience of whiteness. Social science is the study of the person and the person is most closely known through my person.

Another way to describe: Empiricism. What is knowable is that which can be evidentially supported and observationally derived. The task for social science is to determine that which is likely to continue to be sense-able as it is now and that which is to change and in what direction. This extends also to logically derived things that can – theoretically, but not as yet – be ‘observed’, but only insofar they are supported by the continued veracity of their logical precepts. Hume's (1737) classic deduction that causality cannot be positively proven – as a future, counter-causal event may yet occur – but rather must be assumed when (a) event A always precedes ‘effect’ A, and (b) there is a necessary connection between the two events – is an extreme example of the privileging of observational deduction in knowing.

The most consistent challenge to empiricism is that much of humanness is unobservable. How can seemingly intangible, varied and organic (always growing and changing) parts of human life, such as love, class or health, be known? What use is a social science that cannot know these things? Are they to be reduced to what is actually observable about them (brain-chemical reactions/social signifiers, income quintile/consensus rating or lack of diagnosed disease/chromosomal mutation) through accurate, strictly applied operationalization? Where is the line between in-category and out-category and who decides this? And is something uniquely human not lost in the process – qualia. The simplest solution is to deny the

existence of qualia and claim that errors or lack of contemporary progress is founded in a failure of rigor in the method, not in the method itself. Much of modern science is answering to this view, but there remains a definitive lack of observable proofs and reliance on tools of logic (Ockham's razor et cetera) among advocates.

A tangible example of strict empiricism describing social scientifically: *People* (mentally well-functioning adults, probably from the west) with *loved ones* (those observed to affect the daily and life-span functioning of the subject through interpersonal interactions) are observed, on average, to experience *trauma* (an increased heart-beat, palm-sweating and heightened nervous activity) when their loved one has a *medical crisis* (an illness or injury for which emergency assistance is required). *White* (of Caucasian decent) people are observed to *rarely* (less than a particular % of patient admissions) visit state-run Post-Apartheid hospitals. People are observed to experience *heightened self-awareness* (an increase in both frequency and degree of self-descriptive adjectives/adverbs in the thought chain) when in *unfamiliar* (non-routine or experiential outlier) situations. Heightened self-awareness impedes non-self thought by definition. Therefore a white person with a loved one with a health crisis will be observed to have *impeded cognition* (lack of logical flow) in their decision-making when entering a state-run hospital in post-Apartheid South Africa. Social science treats the person as an instantiation of observed truths about the nature of personhood by clearly defined measure.

This way to create as meaningful: Interpretationism. Nothing is knowable in and of itself, but rather is made intelligible through a positive act of interpretation. The task for social science is both to render human acts intelligible and to advance the interpretative capacity of people in the everyday. This extends to generating new language in which human acts and meanings

can be understandable. A classic proof for the inescapability of meaning creating is Wittgenstein's (see Wittgenstein & Anscombe, 1958) question of a beetle in a box: Person G holds their hands out to you, holding a closed box. Person G says that the box contains a beetle, but how are you to know what a beetle is? Only by opening the box to both of you, and reaching consensus between you that what I am holding is a box with a beetle in it, can it actually be *known* that there is a beetle in the box. Before the box is opened and shared the thing in the box is un-intelligible and has, for all intents and purposes, no meaning except as 'thing that I am trying to convince you is a beetle'. Similarly, all human acts are intrinsically meaningless except insofar as their meaning is made intelligible, in an intentional world, between people.

The most consistent challenge to interpretationism is escaping the meaninglessness of relativity. How can social science be sure of its subject if there is no fixed meaning to the subject? How can human things be described if description itself changes how it is understood and therefore what it means, and, post-description, the meaning of the things continues to change with future iterations of consensing? How is social science any more than lay philosophizing, how can it be rigorously pursued? The simple solution is to shrug one's shoulders and accept that, though this may not be what we wanted for social science, this does not alter the reality that this is what social science is. A more difficult solution is attempted in this thesis; to actually answer the questions of how things become meaningful and how social science can create future meanings in accordance with its interpretationist objectives.

A meaning-advancing example of making rationalism and empiricist stories intelligible: see above. Intelligibility is the act of creating an interpretative context for a thing such that it

may be used to fulfil the rhetorical aims of the utterance. The rhetorical aims of this essay are to create rationalism and empiricism as rich and cohesive, but ultimately erroneous, epistemologies for social science. The legitimacy of an intelligibility rendering is established in partnership with the ‘hearer’ and so is idiosyncratic. Certain elements have become normative in legitimacy establishment. (1) Providing a narrative genesis/heritage story: ‘Rationalism and empiricism are thought traditions derived and evolved from classical Greek musings on the nature of what people may know’. (2) Providing relative examples: ‘Rationalism and empiricism are opposites ends of a polar continuum of the two ways that people can know’. And (3) Supplying the thing as an answer to a problem: ‘How can people know things that cannot be observed?’ – rationalism, and ‘How can people verify that something exists and therefore what it is?’ – empiricism. This is not an exhaustive list of intelligibility strategies, it is a look at the common process that intelligibility renderings follow. This is not an act of *definition*, it is an *act* of definition. Social science is the person as a rhetorically positioned subject to be created in aim-motivated terms.

What is human life about? Or rather, what level(s) of description should social science give in creating understanding to this question? Does social science follow natural science? Does social science follow art? Or is/should social science be something surprisingly different – concerned not at all with description? This essay argues that understanding, knowledge and the specific answer social science should be giving to the meaning of human *be-ing*, exists only in a special space between people. It is the task of social science to privilege that space as the river through which intelligibility flows. I argue that intelligibility is the result of propositioning the edges of language that people use to negotiate meaning, and it is impressed that the process of meaning negotiation is at once the subject, mechanism and aim of social science – or rather, that it should be. Human things and life are special subjects,

their study therefore requires special ways of knowing. Because human things are propositional and intentional, their meaning is not fixed to them, therefore any epistemology of knowing a subject for what it – intrinsically – is, is doomed to failure. The reality of what is knowable about human things is different from the reality of what we may know of natural things. Knowing human things is *using* them to interact and co-create meaning with other people. Social science is *using* human things to interact with and create-in-potential the social. Human *be-ing* may be about anything, social science is about *how* life comes to be about the particular things it does and the meanings that they are given.

*How can prosaic intertexting be developmentally definitive of persons?*

If prosaic intertexting is the definitive capacity of persons, then how do persons come to have this capacity? The purpose of this essay is to demonstrate how prosaic intertexting is a phylogenetically and ontogenetically adaptive ability. First, I present a brief overview of what both apes and babies are able to do in relation to another. Then, I argue that what both apes and babies lack is effective use of prosaic intertexting. Finally, I present scenarios whereby prosaic intertexting is evolutionarily and developmentally adaptive. This essay establishes prosaic intertexting as a distinctly human capacity that explains how persons can exist in an intentional world of meaning-negotiations. I would like the reader to acknowledge that the model of prosaic intertexting has validity for social science as a social act.

The narrative historian: If an ape's/baby's eyes were focusing on this sentence, giving correctly sequential attention to each word, still, reading (meaning creating) would not be going on here. Why not? People share many of the biological bits that enable reading (perceptual and processing matter in our brains) with apes and babies, yet they are unable to

do so. As intriguingly, babies ‘grow-up’, their brains develop, and they become able to read, and apes do not (at least not without significant training and then only to a very limited degree). More than just reading texts, babies become meaning creating and rhetorically sharing people, able to *be* in a complex, humanly-intentional world, and apes do not. How? If we are the pinnacle of social meaning creation development, then are apes and babies simply poorer developmental models, or is there a qualitative difference between what they can do, and what we do? In developmental psychology (see Bjorklund & Pellegrini, 2000; Bornstein & Lamb, 2005; Lerner, 2002) and evolutionary psychology (see Buss, 1995; Durrant & Ellis, 2003; Tooby & Cosmides, 2005) an idea is that by determining if and what babies or apes are ‘thinking’ we will be more able to say something about our thoughts.

So, what can apes and babies do? And what model of human think/*be*-ing does this reveal? The general frame for rendering apes and babies ‘thinkings’ intelligible is called “mind-reading”. Mind-reading refers to the ability to act upon an anticipation of another beings ‘intentions’. These intentions are what are supposed, by the mind-reader, to be motivating the other beings’ likely future acts. There is some debate (see Whiten, 1991) whether or not the mind-reader needs to have a formal mental model of the other persons ‘mind’ or if they can mind-read sub-consciously. For the purposes of this essay having a formal model of the other’s mind is treated as the pinnacle of the mind-reading scale. Indeed, with a strict definition developmental and evolutionary psychology would have little to talk about. But again, what can apes and babies do? Or rather, what acts are illustrative of ‘mind-reading’ in apes and babies?

Apes – Dawkins and Krebs (1978) argue that some apes are able to experience ‘righteous indignation’; they become upset when a human handler plays a trick on them. The apes do



not get upset if the human handler's 'trick' is judged to be accidental. Confirmation of the experience of righteous indignation among apes would confirm that these apes act as if people/others are beings that try to do things and can fail; they have intentions. If others (and possibly myself) have intentions, then their 'mind' can be read as the seat of intentions and their acts read/anticipated by ascribing intentions to them. Unfortunately the evidence for the 'experience of righteous indignation is only anecdotal.

Menzel (1974) and Nishida (1987) have argued that certain apes can counter deception with deceptive acts of their own in response to being tricked or deceived. Again, the other can be represented as having a 'mind' that is a deceptive tool and their acts predicted on the basis of an intent to deceive. One of the most positive (as opposed to reactive) demonstrations of deception is documented in Byrne and Whiten (1987). Labelled 'telling tales', certain apes have been observed to 'rat', 'nark', or tell-on members of their social group to the tittle-tattle's advantage. For example, in a sexual hierarchy that is a 'troop' a junior level member may alert the dominant male to a tryst between two intermediate level members. The dominant male would move to reprimand the two culprits, and the junior member now has access to the food that the dominant male had been enjoying. If it can be confirmed that the junior member had the intention to gain access to the food then it is an act of mind-reading genius, predicting the dominant male's acts based on their 'attitude' to behind-the-bush parleys. Observation is yet to prove this though.

Goodall (1986) documented how certain apes, in specific settings, would modify the behaviour of others according to the demands of this setting. For example, 'hushing' or holding a front paw/hand over a baby's mouth when there is a need to for silence. Similarly, de Waal (1982) notes that certain apes will attempt to modify their own outward appearance,

supposedly in fear of giving too much away to others. For example, an ape that is scared of another may put their front paws/hands in front of their face and ‘hide’ their fear response from others. Suppressing another’s behaviour indicates an ‘awareness’, a mind-reading, of what the other is likely to do. Altering one’s own appearance indicates an ‘awareness’ that others are likely to ‘read-my-mind’ from what I do and look like.

Certain apes have been taught to use ‘language’, in a diversity of forms (see Gardner & Gardner, 1979; Patterson & Linden, 1981; Rumbaugh & Gill, 1977). The results of these studies all illustrate that while most apes can learn to use some elements of language, with differing limits on the number of words, they lack a ‘natural grammar’ to use the diction (see Savage-Rumbaugh & Lewin, 1994; Simon, 1993). Furthermore Boysen and Berntson (1995) demonstrate that learning an abstract symbol system – in this case for numbers – can extend apes’ ability to act, refusing temptation where they had previously been unable to. Language seems to be an imposed rigour on the conceptualizing ape. The mind-reading is likely to be in the form of a sense or feeling and not an abstract, ‘narrative’ formulation thereof. No language using ape has yet been able to answer the holy grail question: ‘What are you thinking’?

Babies – Babies are more usually part of human interactions than apes and we are thus blessed with a much richer trove of observed interactions. Still, what are we seeing in our babies who cannot yet talk? Reddy (1991) argues that the key to understanding early mind-reading in babies is in their ‘mucking about’. Babies are observed to perform a variety of acts inviting others to appreciate them, to play with them, or to interact with them. These acts include ‘smiling’, vocalizing or waving of appendages. This all involves a sensing that others will act in response to my acts. Also, babies will repeatedly perform acts which amuse

another, implying a ‘sense’ of appreciating how the other will re-act to the baby’s acts. Babies also repeat acts that are semi-annoying within an established game, thus demonstrating an appreciation that others can have different intentions depending on the setting they are in (game-setting as opposed to normal life). Babies will also employ pretend, the non-serious use of affect, to invoke reactions (usually humour but always attention) in others. The baby must thus ‘read’ how the other is likely to react to ‘their own’ act/affect.

The importance of understanding, playing-along-with and generating falsehoods is illustrative of an ability to ‘mind-read’. Deceptive jokes/lies are intentional falsehoods. In order for them to be acted on as a joke or lie the baby must understand the intention of the joker/lie-er. Leekam (1991) argues that babies are capable of acting on different degrees of intentional falsehoods as they grow. This argument implies that babies become progressively better mind-readers. Classic experiments – such as the ‘Sally doll test’ (see Baron-Cohen, Leslie & Frith, 1985), the false-belief task (see Wimmer & Perner, 1983), the appearance-reality task (see Gopnik & Astington, 1988) and the false-photo task (see Sabbagh & Moses, 2006) – have demonstrated that age is a definite factor in whether a baby is likely or unlikely to understand a joke or not to be fooled by a lie. This ability is noticeably retarded in children with autism and not in children with other mental difficulties (Leslie, 1991). This leads Muratori and Maestro (2007) to argue that the poor social affect and interactions that characterize autism is due to a difficulty in mind-reading of others (see also Barresi, 2007; Colle & Grandi, 2007). Mind-reading is treated as definitive of human *be-ing*; we are the ‘Machiavellian ape’ (see Shreeve, 1991).

An important difference between apes and babies is that almost all babies grow to be persons. This prompts Carrithers (1991) to argue that human *be-ings* have a special mental ability to

mind-read, and this develops as we grow. Carrithers (1991) calls this ability ‘narrativity’ and defines it as the uniquely human ability to create meaning of acts by placing them in a historic-narrative context. Bruner (1986) echoes this when he argues that there are two ‘modes of thought’, the paradigmatic – to do with logic and computing – and the narrative – concerning the human condition. To people an act is not an individual unit. Rather, an act is always made part of a story, a narrative. For example, when we see another walking down the street, they are not just ‘walking down the street’, they are ‘walking to go buy bread and milk as their partner asked them to and they forgot and now they trying to make up for this error in judgement’. Carrithers (1991) argues that what is definitive of human *be-ing* is being able to locate the meaning of an act in a narrative. I argue that what is definitive of human *be-ing* is being able to create a narrative in which the act has meaning.

Reading is not an act of interpretation. A reader does not identify the location of the words in the narrative they are trying to convey. A reader must place the meaning/s of words in a ‘narrative’. This ‘narrative’ must be constructed as significant to the reader and it must legitimate the reader’s answering act of reading. Apes/Babies fail to read not because they cannot read the mind of the author and other readers. Rather, they fail to read because they are unable to make proactive meaning statements about what they have read, in a self-coherent ‘narrative’, to their own and to others’ ears. Persons must ‘*read* what is’, not ‘read what *is*’. This is not done with self-awareness, rather it is the definitive condition of *be-ing*. When it is done with awareness it is considered ‘art’. Apes’/Babies’ brains do not capture the complexity of this creation. Rather, their brains are concerned with identifying what *is* there. Apes and Babies lack effective use of prosaic intertexting.

So, if prosaic intertexting, creating meaning by placing the act in the context of social ‘texts’, is definitive of human *be*-ing, then how do we come to *be* in this way? For prosaic intertexting to be philogenetically developmental it must be evolutionarily adaptive. For prosaic intertexting to be ontogenetically developmental it must be socially adaptive. I now present two stories – narratives if you like – by which prosaic intertexting may evolve and be socially demanded:

Philogenesis – prosaic intertexting evolves as a response to increased pressure to keep resources in an intelligence-competitive environment. Those with the greatest capacity to create meaning of acts and events are more likely to (a) cooperate, (b) remember and (c) transfer competitive advantages to their group/gene pool. Deacon (1998) argues that evolved language capacity is definitive of human genetic advantage; I argue that it is the specific generative capacity to create meaning that language affords us that is the real advantage. The following paragraph I have invented as illustrative of how creating alternative (goal-oriented) meaning for an event – in this case proto-human A being the recipient of an aggressive display from the hunt-leader – can be competitively advantageous.

A proto-human hunt:

Proto-human A: Is attacked in an aggressive display by the hunt-leader. Normal reaction is fear and self-defense. Why did the hunt-leader attack me? We are on a hunt. The hunt is not a normal situation. We must help each other in order for the hunt to be successful. The hunt-leader’s actions need to be understood as part of a non-normal situation. The hunt-leader is not chasing me away, she wants me to participate. I must react by being enthused. The hunt is successful.

Proto-humans who were more likely to create alternative meanings for the acts of their fellows and the events that affect them have greater capacity for generating novel or alternative acts themselves. In times of crisis or change, the ability to generate new meanings and acts is imperative to survival. Cooperating with fellows, in spite of affective relations between group members, is particularly adaptive in times of crises where affect is likely to be strained. In this sense, while cooperation is in itself valuable it is the ability to cooperate (a) toward a super-ordinate, time-independent goal and (b) doing so regardless of immediate group affective dynamics that is most adaptive in times of change. Prosaic intertexting makes this type of cooperation all the more possible through the generative capacity of meaning creation. Proto-humans cooperate not because they like each other at that moment, but because they want the same outcome. The paragraph below is invented to illustrate how a suspension of a son's belief to subordinate them to the trusted experiences of an 'elder' – the father – can be competitively advantageous as the 'son' learns from generations of experience.

A proto-human boy and father:

Father: There are many different types of poisonous vegetables. Never eat any that are red, except these ones. These ones are good to eat. But do not eat too many of them, only two handfuls, otherwise your stomach will hurt. Red is the colour of fire, if you eat red vegetables there will be a fire in your stomach and you will not be able to put it out, it will consume you from the inside.

Son: Why do these ones' fire not burn you?

Father: These ones grow close the ground and as they grow their fire leeches into the earth and grows weaker, but the fire is there, but it is only a spark.

Son (years later to his own son): The earth leaches the fire out of these vegetables my son, that is why you may eat some of them.

While the example may seem mundane, the ability for proto-humans to create meanings explaining their world enabled them to remember complex things. It is easier to remember the message of a story than to remember an isolated ‘fact’ and we as humans are driven to create facts-within-stories to this end (see Dennett, 1988; Ricouer, 1985; Schacter, 1996). This ability is tied to the linguistic capacity to tell stories in words, but it is the ability to generate alternative, contingent and exceptional stories that confers the evolutionary advantage. The paragraph below is invented to illustrate how being able to generate alternative ‘interpretations’/meanings of experiences and knowledge is competitively advantageous to proto-humans as (in this case) disadvantageous conclusions – those of the ‘apprentice’ – can be re-invented to prevent undesirable conflict.

A proto-human elder and apprentice:

Apprentice: Where do we come from elder?

Elder: We are the children of the sky, our father is the sun and our mother is the earth.

Apprentice: So the sun and the earth lay together?

Elder: No, I am telling you that we are here, this is who we are and where we come from.

The sun is our energy, the earth feeds us and the sky gives us a home.

Apprentice: So we have no home, we wander.

Elder: No, I am telling you that all that is under the sky is ours as long as the sun and earth remain.

Apprentice: So the people from the mountains, they have no home, they live in ours?

Elder: And we live in theirs.

Apprentice: They are our brothers and sisters. We need not fight them.

Meaning creation is not merely facilitative of, it *is*, meaning transference. Prosaic intertexting is the creation of meaning between persons. The ability to create multiple answerings with the same meaning proposition means that two (or more) people can persist in a dialogue until a common meaning is created. The adaptive advantage of meaning transference is that one person benefits not just from the experiences they have personally. This compounded by the adaptive advantage beings transferred most effectively to people closest (in terms of shared social space) to the person and thus most likely to share familial genes. This capacity to create multiple meanings also lays the foundation for deceiving and misleading competitors. Prosaic intertexting evolves because those who have it are more likely to work together, remember and transfer meanings and thereby preserve both themselves and members of their group (who most likely share at least some of their genes).

Ontogenesis – prosaic intertexting is nurtured in a growing baby as a response to social pressure to relate to others. Babies must get attention and sustenance from caregivers for long periods in early life. Persons must cooperate with others in order for their acts to fit-in and be supported by the social structure. I argue that prosaic intertexting enables babies, children and adults to access social resources necessary to their survival. One thing necessary to survival, when you have a mind as socially-oriented and intelligent as ours, is to have meaning. A lack of personal meaning is “anomie” (see Durkheim, 1951; 1960), a suicidal malaise. The paragraph below is invented to illustrate the complexity of nameless stimuli a newborn must experience and to discriminate between a baby’s experiences and a persons’ experiences.



A baby in a birth canal:

Warm-wet, aaaaaarrrr. The baby enters the world: Cool-empty, RRRRGGGHHHHH,  
bright-shadow-lines, blood-metal-disinfectant. She is clean and swaddled by a nurse: Dry-  
soft-cool, babble-sigh-babble, roundconstantshape-colour, disinfectant. Her lungs are tested:  
Pain, WAAAHHHH-sigh-laugh, roundconstantshapewithupturnedlineonit-colour;  
disinfectant. She is carried to her parents: rocking-moving, hush,  
roundconstantshapewithupturnedlineonit-changinglinesandcolour, disinfectant. And she is  
cuddled by her mother: warm-soft-pressure, cooing,  
tworoundsimilarshapeswithupturnedlinesonthem-colour, disinfectant-sweat.

How does a baby make sense of their sensory input? The above paragraph is a jumble of words in an attempt to simulate the input the neonate's brain receives, but it is a poor approximation. Only some of the heard-sense can be written without words, and words will be unavailable to the neonate. Even the division of sensory input into touch, hearing, sight, smell/taste is an answering of language. So how can a baby make sense of their senses? This thesis contests that they do not, at least not in the sense that persons make things sensible. Rather, the process of becoming sense-makers follows step-wise development of shared learning. As a start, the baby must discriminate between what is *it*, and what is *not-it*. There are three mechanisms by which this differentiation can occur – proprioception (see Sacks, 1985), conterminousness or dual-touch (having two points of the body touch each other), and differentiation by associations of contiguous multi-sensory inputs. These mechanisms function independently but complementarily. Through them the baby may differentiate what is *it*; and the *it* is differentiated as an acting, self-perceptive and spatially-defined thing respectively. But for now, with this level of processing sensory inputs, the baby only has a 'sense of self', inarticulate and unarticulated. The paragraph below is invented to illustrate

the intensely categorizing and labeling environment a baby enters as their caregivers talk to them, and this environment includes their selves.

Mother and baby at the zoo:

‘Such a *cute baby boy*, aren’t you *Jack*? Yes you are, yes you are. Look, what is that over there? That is an *elephant*, can you see how *big* and *grey* and *tall* it is. One day you will be *big* and *tall* and *strong* too *my boy*. What is that there *next to* the elephant *Jack*? That is a *tortoise*, can you see it? A *tortoise* has a *hard shell* all around its *body*; can you see the *hard shell*? It is *yellow* and *brown* and *bumpy*. And what is this over *here* in the pram? This is *Jack*; he is *small* and *soft* and *has brown hair*. He is ‘*smells nice*’ and is ‘*happy*’ and I love him very much’.

How does the ‘sense of self’ become articulated, a description of self? The above paragraph illustrates a particular kind of sensory input. What is sensed is directed and framed.

Attention is drawn to particular stimuli (the visible about the animals and the visible, scent and relational about Jack), and these stimuli are viewed in a particular way (size and colour of the elephant and colour and texture of the tortoise). It furthermore has a particular *modus operandi* for rendering sensory input intelligible. A next step in the process of becoming a sense-maker is to learn that things have meaning. This meaning is concrete; it *is* the thing, it is not a description of it. Piaget (1928; 1952; 1953) described the thinking of children in this stage as ‘concrete operational’, explaining that cognitive tasks, such as conservation and reversibility, are dependent on knowing the character of a thing, regardless of how it is currently perceived. But what enables this change? While the will to describe and categorize is probably genetically hard-coded, language is a key mediator of both the learning and the expression of this ability. All words are categorical or descriptive, regardless of the word’s

‘part-of-speech’; either of things, events or relationships. But language is more than words, using language is a positive act of meaning-finding/fixing/making/use. This is categorical of language. “Aaahh” is not language, ““Aaaahh’ yelped Thami” is language. There is a pay-off: As soon as language is used to describe this description supplants the sense of the world of the baby. Similarly the self becomes a self as described, not a ‘sense of self’. It is no longer possible for the brain to make non-linguistic sense of stimuli. The paragraph below is invented to illustrate the social mediatory process by which children are guided to put a perspective of self forward, the child is taught to hold an opinion.

Father and child building a tree-house:

Child: Dad, what do you call that thing you are using?

Father: Which thing do you mean my boy?

Child: That thing in your hands.

Father: Oh, this tool is called a spirit level. Can you tell what I should use it for?

Child: No.

Father: Well look what happens when I put it down on the floor. Do you see the bubbles?

Child: Yes, there are three of them.

Father: That is right, there are three of them. Do you know what I use the tool for yet?

Child: No. The bubbles. I don’t know.

Father: Now look what happens when I put the spirit level on this branch.

Child: The bubbles moved.

Father: Yes they did. Why do you think they moved?

Child: I dunno.

Father: Tell me, would you like your tree-house to be skew?

Child: No, that would be silly.

Father: Yes it would be silly if your tree-house was as skew as this branch.

Child: Yes. Dad?

Father: Yes my boy?

Child: Does that tool tell you if something is skew or not?

Father: That's right! You see, if the bubble is not in the middle of those lines then it is skew.

Child: Cool. Dad, can I use the skew-machine-tool to measure mom's head?

How does the self as something described become the self as a describer? The cognitive shift is from object to subject, from described as a fact and description as an act. The above paragraph is an illustrative example of a particular social arrangement in which one person calls on the other to create something as meaningful and supports this process. *What is sensed* is no longer directed and framed; rather, the *process* of discovering/defining *what is* is now directed, framed and scaffolded. The child is inducted and assisted into a world in which their 'self' is agentic, a describer, a meaning-creator, by sharing their meaning-created with other persons. This final step in the personhood is necessarily dialogic. Meaning-made is necessarily meaning-shared. Vygotsky (1964; 1978; 2004) illustrates how interpersonal interactions form the blue-print for intrapersonal reasoning. Luria (1961; 1976; 1982), Luria and Yudovich (1959) and Vygotsky (1964; 1978; 2004) also illustrate how important social meanings are for individual 'understandings' of the world. Finally, Cole (1996; 1998) and Cole, Gay, Glick and Sharp (1971) illustrate how people, social arrangements and social artefacts mediate the meaning-individually-made of human things. While the importance of other people is consistent on all these accounts, what is unquestioned is the individual agency of people to make meaning of, with and through social (human) things. Such agency is inherent to dialogic, interpersonal, inter-agentic interactions. To dialogue with a person is to call them to create meaning from what you have

uttered. And, what you have uttered must be sensible, be answerable to, within existing social meanings. Creating meaning is interpolation into meanings-made (socially). The self is defined by its discreteness, by things (and it as a thing) capacity to hold meaning, and by its ability to create meaning as shared by people.

So prosaic intertexting is a distinctively human capacity, making persons distinct from apes and babies. This distinction is made on the basis of creative meaning generation capacity. The essay has shown that human beings can do several things that apes and babies cannot, and in the essay argue that the culmination of these abilities is what is most definitive of personhood. Firstly, human beings can cooperate toward a super-ordinate goal regardless of immediate stimuli. Secondly, human beings can suspend the inferences of personal experiences and learn from others. Thirdly, human beings can create alternatives to meanings such that these new meanings best support adaptive actions. The essay also shows the process by which a baby can become into this cooperative, trusting and creative person. Firstly, the baby experiences stimuli directly and some stimuli come to be accepted as familiar or novel. Familiar stimuli are freely associated with other familiar, auditory stimuli, and subsequent novel stimuli are associated with novel auditory stimuli. Secondly, the world, and the self in the world becomes a thing to be categorized. Thirdly, the self becomes the categorizer. Prosaic intertexting is about the creative generation of meaning. It evolved in response to pressure to compete among intelligent proto-humans in climates of resource pressure. Prosaic intertexting develops as humans grow in answer to social pressure to be meaningful participants in inter-personal interactions. We think we are more intelligent than apes and babies because we are able to relate to each other, especially in the context of novelty. We are able to solve problems in the world, and share this knowledge with others who we want to.

*What do we have to let go of if we are to believe prosaic intertexting?*

Embracing a new idea requires you to give up others. Prosaic intertexting aims at a revolution in the social sciences. There are thus likely idea-costs of embracing the revolution. Indeed, prosaic intertexting is only intelligible in terms of a questioning and supplanting of certain commonly held assumptions. The purpose of this essay is to explicate ideas/assumptions that are untenable to prosaic intertexting. This essay defines prosaic intertexting by its claim to revolution. While the previous essay called prosaic intertexting as an answer to problems of the ontogenetic and phylogenetic development of human *be-ings*, this essay will call the prosaic intertexting model as an answer to six social scientific conceptual problems. The essay is a collection, not a list, of the conceptual problems of social science. Prosaic intertexting is argued to be the a way in which all the problems can be solved, *together*, by giving us new diction with which to talk about these problems.

The dissatisfied cynic of social science's contemporary value: Social science will only continue to be valuable if social scientists can create social science in new ways. One of the ways to create in new ways is to question old assumptions. This essay is (a) an explication of five assumptions of life that are untenable to prosaic intertexting and (b) illustrative of the type of assumption questioning that prosaic intertexting encourages.

Point One. Persons are not their bodies. Consider a person's body. It can be your body, my body or any others' body as long as it is a person's body. Why is this body necessarily a person's body? Is it coherent to think of a single body being more than one person's body? Not really, even conjoined twins are thought of as having their (two) *bodies* joined. Similarly, people diagnosed with multiple personality disorder are not thought to be more

than one person in a single body but rather *a* person who (mistakenly) believes that they are multiple selves (see W.H.O., 2007). As people we consider ourselves as contiguous and synonymous with ‘our’ body. It is difficult, without some Cartesian doubting, to consider a person without a body. I contend though that this does not mean that a person *is* ‘their’ body, or rather, a person is not *because* of their body. Consider that the molecules that make up a body vibrate among themselves, yet we do not think of persons as vibrating particle collections. Consider also that the skin that covers a living body is made up of ‘dead’ cells, yet we do not think of a person as a thing wrapped in a dead casing. Consider ‘body’ odour. On particularly hot days this may waft in irregular patterns around a person. Is the smell part of the body? Is it part of the person? I contend that smell is of the body, but is a transient characteristic of the person. To employ the language of logic: a body is a necessary but insufficient condition for a person. Does this mean that we need a meta-physical ‘soul’/homunculus – as contended in Smith and Jones (1997) – containing who we really are? No, never, preposterous (see Armstrong, 1993; Rosenthal, 1971). Consider rather what is meant by a ‘body’. A body is a physical thing, composed of, on the smallest scale people have imagined, sub-atomic particles, combined in ways recognizable to us as atoms, chemicals, proteins and, most importantly, genetic code. Dennett (1981) describes what I just did as merely changing the level at which something is described, this does not mean that the thing – in my example a ‘body’ – actually exists at this level. Rather the thing exists at that level at which it is rendered intelligible. My claim is that we should agree to leave the term ‘body’ to levels of description closer than or equal to biology. Persons should not be confused with ‘their’ body. The term ‘embodied’ signifies the experiential, felt ‘reality’ of *be-ing*. In line with the above reasoning this term should really be called ‘empersoned’; the meaningful impact that the dialogic complex in which a person utters themselves has on their

experience. Utterances are not verbal things, they are ‘empersoned’ interjections into an intentional world.

Point two. Persons do not exist. At least in any manner other than there being meaning ‘of them’ present in an intentional world. Persons only exist if their propositional utterings are consummated by other persons; a person is not the sole author of their being (Bakhtin, 1993). The *isiZulu* (a language predominantly spoken in large parts of eastern South Africa) proverb of *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* sums my reasoning completely. Literally translated it means ‘a person becomes/is a person through/by means of people’. In order for the person’s *be*-ing utterances to have meaning they must be answered by utterances from other people. A body whose actions have no consequence in any intentional world of other people *is not a person*. In a village in ancient times the shunned ‘sinner’ who is not spoken to, who is actively ignored, almost ceases to be a person. They only continue to exist insofar as the people in the village have to think to ignore them, to think ‘this person is shunned, I must ignore them’. The shunned-one’s *be*-ing as a person is totally defined by this reality, they *are* a thing to be shunned and ignored in other people’s thinking and that is all they are as a person. The memory of who they were before the shunning merely adds coherence to how their now-shunned person is what it is in the thinking of the others. The shunned-one cannot *be* anything but shunned; their only chance in defining their personhood is in legitimating new actions as recognizable as the actions of a shunned one. This point illustrates the power of the textual embodiment of *be*-ing to define the parameters, the diction of *be*-ing. Similarly children cannot *be* as persons (partly) because they are defined by their ‘child’ status (which may or may not be dependent on their chronological age), their actions, their utterances of *be*-ing is parametered by the imaginations of their others. A child, regardless of age, cannot



romantically love as a sexually mature person; this is *unthinkable* and therefore cannot be consummated.

Point three. Actually though, people really do not exist. Or rather, a person does not exist as a person for any longer than the split second in which their utterance of *be-ing* is consummated. A person utters (in an embodied meaning-creating sense, not just in the verbal sense), this utterance is answered, the person exists as this person – the *be-ing* that holds the meaning that makes the answered utterance intelligible – only for the split second that it happens. There is no reason to hold identity between the person who utters once and the person that utters again, in spite in their bodies being identical. Hume (1737) recognized that such identity (a thing is the same thing through time and space) is based on assumption. I contend that identity is a rhetorical tool for making utterances intelligible in an intentional human world. If we did not assume that the Graeme who wrote *Essay A* is the same Graeme who wrote *Essay B* this thesis would be less intelligible. This does not mean that Graeme *is* the same person on September 28 as on September 29. ‘I’ am today more tired than ‘I’ was yesterday. Rather, it means, that for the purposes of rendering this thesis intelligible and answering to it, *you need* Graeme to be the same person. Tiredness is inconsequential to the intelligibility of this utterance. Similarly I used ‘I’ to describe a continuous entity under change, it would not have held the same meaning to say ‘Graeme A’ is more tired than ‘Graeme B’ was yesterday. Here it seems that the two Graemes are different, and that is not the point of the utterance. Identity is a meaning-creating mechanic. If ‘a person’ can be considered as different ‘persons’ at different times we are not then burdened – as we are in everyday life – by describing persons as a consequence of the history of ‘their person’. Indeed they have many possible histories of ‘their persons’, all of which are rhetorical tools for the proactive, instant-by-instant uttering of *be-ing*. Bakhtin (1993) wrote that people have

no alibi for living. Persons are accountable to who they are *be-ing* now, and now, and now. The history of their ‘identity’ (always assumed to be singular) that they invoke to legitimate each instance of *be-ing* is both the fertile rhetorical field of diction and the sum of their *be-ing* at that instant. If ‘I’ say I am a person who completed a PhD. degree in psychology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal I do so to make a point *now*, to legitimate my *current be-ing*, not to arbitrarily reflect a truth about ‘my’ existence. Even if, for example, I am autobiographing my academic achievements to a prospective employer I still only mention the PhD. in answer to their prospective utterance by creating an identity for myself that I am suitably qualified. Persons are rhetorically positioned – how they are positioned is part of their identity. Each time they utter in a new position the ‘person’ is a new person.

Point four. Things do not have meaning ‘because they do’, of and in themselves, but rather they have meaning because we say they do. Following on from *point three*, things have a particular meaning only in that instance in which this meaning is made theirs. This thought is central to the understanding of intentionality (see Shweder, 1990; 1991). It goes further that meaning can only be made in the intentional world. This world mediates meaning through its necessary internal coherence that has built up over eons of intentional human uttering.

Mediation in this sense is defined by the changing of an acts’ outcomes by scaffolding or funneling its possibilities (see Vygotsky, 1964; 1978; 2004 for discussions on the operations of mediation). Meaning is bound to being made in particular, consensually assumed, ways. Meaning is mediated by the centripetal force of maintaining meaning; not breaking the coherence of past utterances by imaging new ways of *be-ing* now that would invalidate earlier assumptions. This thesis is challenged by such centripetal forces directly. I cannot wholly define a new way of understanding *be-ing* without first acknowledging past conceptions of *be-ing*. Simply stating a new definition would make it non-intelligible as

accepting it would seem to invalidate all other conceptions of *be-ing* and leave all meaning-created with these conceptions suspicious. Such suspicion is more dangerous to accept than an apparently wild claim about *be-ing*; hence this thesis would be non-intelligible. This is partly the reason why I am at so much pains to create a logical geneses stories for my rhetoric. Of course, I employ other mediatory tools to legitimate this thesis, such as examples, ‘the revolution in thought story’ and ‘showing by doing’. I am arguing for a living realism of consequence, though not of necessity. By which I mean that things *mean* things, but that they do *have to* mean anything.

Point five. Personhood and meaning is prosaic. Prosaics “is a form of thinking that presumes the importance of the everyday, the ordinary, the ‘prosaic’” (Bakhtin, 1990b, p. 15). Prosaics is based on both a belief in the efficacy of the ordinary and a suspicion of systems. It is a philosophy that life is incrementally created in each momentary and everyday event (Bakhtin (1990b, refers to this as the architectonics of life), rather than through the power of ‘critical moments’. A belief in critical moments is “like assuming that it may harm a watch to be struck against a stone, but that a little dirt introduced into it cannot be harmful” (Tolstoy, 1875, in Bakhtin, 1990b, p. 23). Every moment is thus held ethically accountable for the influence it has. Every assumption and meaning that is created and permitted is important in constructing life. The particular position in the temporal, spatial envelope that an utterance occupies is essential toward the narrative that is formed, and to what particular interactions between persons that are possible. What is most defining of a person at a particular utterance is of no necessity the most sensational, biography-book moment, but rather that which greatest serves the intelligibility and rhetorical import of that utterance. Indeed, the biography-book moments only become so through their popular invocation, not for their inherent endowment with import – see *point four*. Prosaics is an understanding of meaning-

creating. The mundane placement of sentence before. Or after a pause, fundamentally changes its meaning. Intentional worlds are *utterly* responsive to the consensus/non-challenged meanings of utterances. Intentional worlds are built upon incremental calcifications of meanings, compressed and hardened by centripetal pressures, affecting functioning like Tolstoy's grains of dirt. Prosaics is also a method of expanding on these possible narratives through acknowledging the unfinalizability and multiplicity of every meaning. To realise that the final word is yet to be spoken (see Bakhtin, 1984a), and to give primacy to the importance of little utterances, now, is to discover the generative capacity of *be-ing*. It also affirms the accountability an utterer has: No other will ever occupy their particular space in life so they have no alibi for *be-ing* (Bakhtin, 1993). Prosaics is not only knowing that what has been done can be changed – see *point four* – but that what is to be done is of utter, incremental importance and that *be-ing* begins *now*. Prosaics is a study of *be-ing* in/as becoming. For these reasons I contend that prosaics is an answering tool in studying meaning creating.

Not all of these points convince me every time I read them. This does not mean I am not convinced that they are essential to the progression of social science. Prosaic intertexting is a tool to achieve this progression. Prosaic intertexting allows social scientists the opportunity to create the meaning of social science in new ways. Persons and meaning (the ambit of social science) have no essential truths. But, social scientists have no excuse for the meanings they create for persons.

*What is the influence of Bakhtin in the diction of 'be-ing'?*

To create social science alternatively, as with all things, it is necessary to speak of it in a new language. The words of this new language cannot be abstract from existing diction, but must be novel such that the utterances must at once seem familiar and new. One intellectual who provides possible new diction for this purpose is Mikhail Bakhtin. This essay expounds on Bakhtin's most useful words-to-create-meaning, as well as reviewing some of the social scientific uses this diction is being put to. Much of Bakhtin's words, as instantiated and re-invented in this thesis, are the diction that legitimates prosaic intertexting as a social scientific language. The rhetorical aim of this is to convince the reader that this language for describing the world is valid, even if it is not to the exclusion of other, existing social scientific languages. The essay is a compilation, not a list, of Bakhtin's most useful words. The reader is provided with an 'in' into the genesis of words such as 'answerability' and 'ventriloque of super-addressees'. It is also an opportunity to pay necessary homage to an intellectual to whom I am much indebted.

The humble appropriator of ideas: Bakhtin's words are available to western academia in different epochs of exposé. This is due to the particular social setting in which and for which he wrote, and due to the particular social setting in which and for which his works have been 'discovered' and translated. Several marked influences on his life and works (see Clark & Holquist, 1984) include early 1920s revolutionary Russia, Marxism, ill health, the so-called Bakhtin circle of diverse scholars and their regular meetings, academic stigmatization, orthodox Christianity in socialist Russia, internal exile, German neo-Kantian philosophy, and Dostoevskian writing. Indeed, Bakhtin's earliest words are those of a literary critic, and he is

true to this genesis, though he both draws on, and is applied to, a broad range of modern ‘disciplines’.

This disciplinary eclecticism, the way Bakhtin proudly wrote the same idea using different words, and the reality that much of his words are written and translated with chronospatially different academic histories, has led to differing, even opposing, use (appropriation) of Bakhtinian ideas. The modern rubric of Bakhtinian-related work is captured by the terms ‘Dialogism’ (see Grillo, 2005; Holquist, 1990), ‘Dialogical’ (see Mkhize, 2003; Saville, 2001) and ‘Narrative’ (see McAdams, 2006). Hermans and Dimaggio (2004) use Bakhtinian words to describe and construct a hermeneutics of the self as a conflux of inner voices. This appropriation has gained academic prominence and has been linked with pragmatism (see Colapietro, 2006; Leary, 2006; Lysaker, 2006; Wiley, 2006), developmental psychology (see Bertau, 2007; Garvey & Fogel, 2007; Gratier & Trevarthen, 2007; Linell, 2007; Lyra, 2007) and models of self (see Cunha; 2007; Ruck & Slunecko, 2008; Valsiner, 2007).

Alternatively, Bernard-Donals (1994) illustrates how Bakhtinian words can be used to advance Marxist theory of society in need of, but opposing, revolution. In a different context Mkhize (2003; 2004) uses Bakhtinian words to expound upon ‘African psychology’ and render it intelligible to western academia and Chaudhary (2008) and Choi and Han (2008) perform similar cultural appropriations. Hirschkop and Shepherd (2001) and Valsiner and Han (2008) appropriate Bakhtin as a cultural theorist. Each appropriation privileges that which is rhetorically most useful to their utterances. This essay is a further appropriation – the chosen label evidences its alternateness from the others (prosaic intertexting) – and as such will privilege different words of Bakhtin, or rather, different ventriloques thereof.

In this essay it is argued that the initial idea that motivates Bakhtin's work is arguing against formalism (see Erlich, 1980; Ladislav & Pomorska, 1978; Pomorska, 1968; Steiner, 1984), firstly in literature (see Bakhtin, 1984a; 1987; 1990a), but secondly, in life (see Bakhtin, 1981; 1990b; 1993). This seed sprouts both roots (necessary precepts without which his claims would be un-grounded) and branches (applications into new spaces). It is these roots and branches that are Bakhtin's diction, distinct, but inseparable from each other. The words-to-create-meaning he invented were invented as he pushed his arguing against formalism into the earthen sod of uttered utterances, and the deafening openness of possible utterances:

Utterance A: 'The *distinction* of life is *be-ing*, and it is beautiful'. Huh? What does this mean? This essay contends that this utterance gives a guide to rendering Bakhtin's words intelligible as useful, indeed critical, to social science. The utterance is intelligible only as a part of the answering and the calls to answer (the roots and branches) that are presented below.

A root: Beauty and truth are better enunciated in prosaics than in poetics. The Russian formalists (see Ladislav & Pomorska, 1978; Pomorska, 1968) and Saussurian linguists (see Koerner, 1973) privileged form, underlying structures, above what they viewed as imperfect, everyday instantiations of the true. Furthermore, 'form' is held to be the truest arbiter of meaning. Bakhtin (1990b) labeled this view 'Poetics' as he denounced the sentiment that the rhyming couplets of a sonnet are more beautiful by this virtue than an inarticulate stammer of love professed by a bumbling teen-ager. In contrast to poetics, Bakhtin advances the importance and aesthetic virtue of 'prosaics'. Prosaics is a word that facilitates utterances on *be-ing* – that everyday, incrementally experienced process – as opposed to a life – a narrative of critical moments. Bakhtin extends what is initially a counter-idea to formalism to begin to

exalt the base elements of human living in his works on Rebelais (1984b; 1990b). Modern theorists (Freeman, 2006; Hermans, 2004; 2006; Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995) have appropriated prosaics as a hermeneutic legitimization, focusing on the experiential (and unmediated by social/structural/linguistic norms) ‘truths’ of living. This thesis appropriates prosaics as giving grounds to study all human *be*-ing as act-utterances and that each of these act-utterances is equal in potential meaning.

Another root: To *be* is to struggle with two opposing forces, to lack agency or to have no meaning-creating boundaries is to have lost the struggle. Bakhtin (1990b) argues that an utterance must negotiate both centripetal and centrifugal forces of language. The two oppositional forces are similar to essentialism and relativism respectively. Imagine the meaning of an utterance as existing in a whirlpool. Centripetal forces draw the meaning of the utterance down to the centre, depositing it as a finalized, indisputable reality in the mud of the meaning bed. Centrifugal forces push the meaning of the utterance out of the flow, excising it as part of the whirlpool as an incoherent in-essence. For example, what does ‘today is cold’ mean? Centripetally it may be analyzed as a statement about the objective temperature to the exclusion of another analysis that the day is emotionally foreboding. In the future ‘today is cold’ can only be a statement of atmospheric temperature and any other meaning is *wrong*. Centrifugally though it may be a mechanism for a speaker to stimulate conversation, or a statement of relative (not objective) temperature, or an excuse for not doing chores in the garden, or or or. Bakhtin (1990b) considered that centripetal forces dominated Russian formalist thinking and that the quest for specifying the meaning of an utterance calcifies the utterance and inhibits its creative use. Conversely Bakhtin (1990b) championed centrifugal force in uttering, advocating the generative power of language to facilitate new utterances. For Bakhtin centripetal and centrifugal forces impose structure in



an essential lack of order. This thesis appropriates the diction by emphasizing that the utterance is only comprehensible as the whole of the whirlpool. Each utterance is both centripetal and centrifugal. *Be-ing* is beautiful *in answering* and as defined. Indeed, *be-ing* is at once defined and open.

Another root: The final word is yet unspoken. Meaning can never be fixed. All utterances can yet *be* differently through future differential intelligibility renderings. While Bakhtin (1990b) writes about centripetal forces operating in language and *be-ing* to speak the final word, he remains adamant that the final word will not be spoken (1990b; 1993). In this rendering an utterance may be finalized each time it is *used*, but it always remains open and unfinal *in answering*. For example, ‘a library’ is a place full of books, though in the future ‘a library’ may be a place devoid of books and full of computers. The unfinality of an utterance is easily *mistaken* to be perspectival. In Bakhtin’s (1990b; 1993) use it is the *utterance* itself that is unfinal, not a person’s perspective of it. Indeed, the utterance does not exist except insofar as it is perspective, and it is only an uttered perspective that any two utterances are ever ‘really’ the same. In this thesis finalization is appropriated to argue that the aim of social science should not be to reduce everyday prose-utterances to an instantiation of a super-class of utterances except insofar as doing so is facilitative to the explanative utterance of the social science. For example, a person hitting another person is not an act of violence in social science, rather it is described by social science as an act of violence so that the social scientist can legitimately inform the social regulation of particular acts. While this thesis has ontologically relativist precepts, unfinality is the mechanism by which the ‘X means anything therefore X means nothing’ trap can be escaped, for “though an entire life cannot be consummated, individual moments can, and the cognitive-ethical understanding of these moments is subordinated to the aesthetic consummation *at that moment*” (Bernard-Donals,

1994). This principle is captured by the model of prosaic intertexting insofar as the purposed of prosaic intertexting is to generate new meanings. The mechanism for achieving this creation is the generation of alternative and positioned a/a complexes, answerings and addressings.

Another root: An utterance speaks in many voices. Bakhtin (1990b) argues that characters speak into many voices and that in uttering the character embodies many voices (see Bamberg & Zielke, 2007; Cunha, 2007). The words Bakhtin uses for this are, alternatively, polyphony (1981; 1990a) or heteroglossia (1990b). The utterance is no single thing, but is inexorably tied to the utterances that precede it, and the utterances that may yet *be*. For example, a white boy greeting a black man in South Africa ‘*Sawubona*’ does not just carry the child’s voice. The voices of contemporary social etiquette, of the child’s mother advocating racial tolerance in post-apartheid South Africa, of the child seeking to be praised as out-going, and so on, are also uttered. One of the ways an utterance is unfinal is that a different voice may always yet speak through it. Sakellaroupoulo and Baldwin (2006a) have appropriated heteroglossia/polyphony as a model of self in internal conversation. This is extended to include discussions on how one voice achieves primacy and is actually uttered (see Sakellaroupoulo & Baldwin, 2006b; Stemplewska-Zakowicz, Walecka & Gabinska, 2006), whether and how inter-conversations precede or are learnt from interpersonal conversations (see Susswein, Bibok & Carpendale, 2007), and of the value of this model for psychotherapy (see Marioka, 2008). Mkhize (2004) has used this aspect of the dialogic rubric to extrapolate traditional African psychologies of self. In this thesis heteroglossia/polyphony is appropriated as an element of the ‘a/a complex’. It is argued that giving written space to the ‘other voices’ of an utterance is key to any rendering of its

intelligibility. Indeed, the utterance *is* only insofar as the voices that it answers and calls upon for answering.

A branch: An utterance cannot *be* without that which precedes it and that which it precedes. An utterance has no meaning except insofar as it is part of a process, except its process is really its substantiation. “Being is not something static, set over against the activity of thought; it exists only in a process of becoming which is intrinsically related to its activity” (Bakhtin, 1984a, p. 304). For example, ‘I do’ is unintelligible except insofar as it is a change from ‘I don’t’ and it is beholden to ‘I will’. All utterances are siblings, children and parents, as well as parents and children. Bakhtin (1990a; 1993) invents ‘process’ as a consequent intelligibility necessity to ‘Utterance A’, just as ‘Utterance A’ is a consequent intelligibility necessity to the utterance as prosaic, force-filled, unfinal and multi-voiced. But, in rendering ‘Utterance A’ intelligible this consequent word is as important as the historical ‘antecedents’ above. The tree has both roots and branches in order for it to be a tree. Mkhize (2004) has appropriated process as similar to the process of self-development embodied in many African spiritualist beliefs. For example, the belief that persons continue to exist after their death among us is supported by the idea that these persons have continued their journey of personhood to another plane. This open-ended nature of *be-ing* is supported by other factors, including the cosmology and the language (*isiZulu*) itself. This is supported by ceremonies of coming-of-age at various ‘stages of personhood’, from before birth to after death. In this thesis ‘process’ is appropriated less as a stage-like progression of *be-ing* (as this implies continuity existing beyond the *be-ing* being uttered as continuous) and more as an answer to how continuity can be imposed in a multi-voiced, essentially-without-structure-or-meaning utterance. While the roots create questions toward which ‘Utterance A’ is the answer, the branches provide the answers to how ‘Utterance A’s’ answer can be thinkable and useful.

Another branch: All utterances are both answers and entreaties to answer. When an utterance is uttered it is in answer to other utterances and it calls forth other utterances to answer it; the uttered is both addressed and addressive. Answerability and addressivity are key to rendering an utterance intelligible relative to other utterances. Inasmuch as process is a descriptive word of the manner *in* which utterances are all related, answerability is a descriptive word of the mechanism *by* which they relate. All utterances are linked in a process-of-*be*-ing pattern, answerability and addressivity describe how persons create, sustain and recognise the patterns. The utterances that a particular utterance is answerable to or addressive of do not need to be explicitly voiced by a person-act/utterance. Rather, each utterance exists in a tacit, *in potentia*, 'a/a complex'. The explicit voicing of particular elements of this a/a complex is a rhetorical act of positioned intelligibility rendering by the subsequent utterer. For example, a person says: 'Ag, my day was fine, I'm quite tired', what does this mean, or rather, how does one respond? Some utterances invoked in the a/a complex are oppositional: 'I don't really want to talk about our day, I want to talk about that money you spent on the car' and 'I really need you to support me right now by showing you care and are really interested in what I do'. The answer is a choice, but a choice is invoked. An 'utterance' without an a/a complex is unintelligible. Bakhtin (1990a) creates answerability and addressivity in conjunction with process and in answer to the perceived threat to 'Utterance A' that accepting 'Utterance A' leaves us no way of understanding *be*-ing is either distinctive or beautiful. This thesis uses answerability and addressivity as a the blue-print for a methodological tool for unpacking meaning creating.

Another branch: A person has no alibi for *be*-ing. There is no *a priori*, intrinsic meaning or reason to *be*-ing, only that which is uttered as meaningful. The "act is truly real (it

participates in once-occurrent Being-as-event) only *in its entirety*. Only this *whole* act is alive, exists fully and inescapably – comes to be, is accomplished” (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 2). The ‘Being-as-event’ of Bakhtin (1990a; 1990b; 1993) is a once-off, unique and ir-replicable moment of *be-ing* that constitutes an instant of personhood. Each utterance of *be-ing* is final and complete in the instant of its utterance. For example, each oscillation of a hand as it waves goodbye is qualitatively different from the previous as each successive iteration carries the history of increasing numbers of earlier oscillations. Each oscillation is equal to the others only insofar as it is uttered as identical, repetitive elements of the wave-whole, each oscillation is unequal to others as an event of *be-ing*. For this reason each utterance has no ‘alibi’, it cannot be excused from the place it occupies and it is the only validity of that instant of ‘Being-as-event’. Hermans and Dimaggio (2004) and Hermans and Hermans-Jansen (1995) have appropriated this as a philosophical argument for phenomenology, in that each phenomenon of ‘Being-as-event’ is only intelligible as a whole and part of that whole is the experience of it as a whole. This experience is taken to be only accessible to the utterer/actor. By supplanting individual experience with inter-personal meaning creating the ‘no alibi’ argument also supports inter-subjectivity (see Bakhtin, 1990b; 1993). This thesis appropriates the ‘no alibi’ argument as an excuse for social science to analyze utterances both as wholes (a/a complex inclusive as it must be) and as instants of ‘Being-as-event’ in patterns. That an event of *be-ing* is only whole in the instant of utterance is problematic to social science description; the event is inaccessible. Bakhtin’s own writing followed phenomenological philosophy, to privilege the *be-er* and this causes much tension in the coherence of his writing. In this thesis Bakhtin’s conclusions are rejected. Rather, ‘no alibi’ is applied as a justification for positioned (rhetorical) research so that while the rendering of an utterance intelligible through science is acknowledged to differ from its ‘Being-as-event’ the direction of the appropriation is explicit. While it is impossible for this thesis to use

Bakhtin's words exactly as he first uttered them, it can explicitly use them to achieve a hopeful revolution in methodology.

Another branch: The multiplicity of voices in and for an utterance are enunciated through language/act norms. No word is without history. By consensus some modes of grouping words are formalized as structured languages, others as linguistic norms or slang and yet others as representative of instantiations of particular ideologies or super-addressees. These formalizations or norm-recognizable 'languages' are uttered as if they have a voice of their own. When an utterance is made that gains rhetorical force from the language/linguistic norms or super-addressee it can be said that the utterance is ventriloque-ing. For example, a girl tells her boy companion that sex before marriage is immoral. This is not merely her opinion, but rather it ventriloques a long tradition of conservative religious prescription. The boy cannot respond by saying 'sex before marriage is not immoral' without also addressing how the faith can say it is so. Bakhtin (1987) groups different 'languages' or 'ventriloque voices' into speech genres. Speech genres mediate what/how things can be said. But, a speech genre is created in the act of ventriloque. In this thesis 'speech genre' is appropriated as 'utterance genre', away from 'only-the-spoken' to act-utterances. A non-verbal utterance can ventriloque as well as a verbal one. For example, getting down on one's knee and extending one's arms upward while holding a diamond and gold ring ventriloques a long tradition of gender roles and 'coupling' as well as speaking 'will you marry me'. Speech genres and ventriloque are the basis for constructing an a/a complex when it is implicit. Speech genres are archetypes for what is answered and what is addressed. And the methodology proposed will ventriloque these archetypes.

Bakhtin has supplied us with works for speaking about persons and our world in a way that relativism may be meaningful, where persons are meaningfully independent and where there is hope of change by using that definitive human characteristic; creativity. This essay has appropriated Bakhtin's words to these rhetorical aims. The words Bakhtin created have been arranged in this essay as if Bakhtin had a single, consistent utterance. I will use Bakhtin's words (in Chapter 4) to create an explication of the model of prosaic intertexting in action. This is not the only way his words are intelligible, however, in claiming to deliver a new social scientific methodology, it is necessary to speak with new but intelligible words as if they are coherent. The words of this thesis are the words of Bakhtin as appropriated here, but in this utterance-a/a-complex comparative, evolutionary and developmental psychology, interpretative philosophy, rhetoric, social critique and African spirituality also voice. Bakhtin's *be-ing* is at once a theory of self, an ethics of value and, here, an analytic model for social science.





## Chapter 4: The research prosaic in action

The conventional role of a ‘literature review’ section in a thesis is to identify the gaps in our knowledge and locate the thesis as plugging one of those gaps. In this thesis I argue that we are not seeing the gaps because it is filled with little disciplinary pieces and our focus is too narrow. Social science has been an act of meaning finding or meaning fixing, but it should be an act of meaning creating, with rhetorical aims. The aim of chapter 3 was to provide ‘roots’ and describe the ‘soil’ in which the prosaic intertexting model grows, such that the explicit speech-act of chapter 2 has historical value. The aim of chapter 4 is to explicate the creation of the model (describing the ‘wood’ of the tree) and how it may be used (testing it in the wind).

### *Section A: Data in theory*

According to the rhetoric of prosaic intertexting anything that is human/personal/social should be analyzable as an utterance. This is regardless of the form, size or content. Prosaic intertexting is a methodology proposed to enable researchers to utter new things about human *be-ing*, not bits of human *be-ing*. The act of rendering something intelligible is accomplished through rhetorical re-creation of the utterance as a thing that is intelligible, changing the utterance itself by changing its a/a complex. A rendering of intelligibility is not an act of *exposition* of meaning; it is an act of *imposition* of meaning.

All human utterances are ‘data in theory’. Traditionally data have been sub-divided by type according to the form it is observed as. For example, naturally observed, textual, visual or clinical. These sub-divisions coincide with the primary sensing of the data, not with the

usefulness of the particular framing to the analyst. This is wrong. An utterance is experientially embodied and whole. For example, ‘naturally occurring talk’ is not just words that may be transcribed, but are words that are spoken and are spatially and in-relationally meaningful. Data should be analyzed in the form(s) that best represent the rhetorical aims of the analyst. Traditional social science has focused on data that is re-viewable – recorded voice, written thoughts and video-taped movement. This thesis argues that the data should be what it serves to do. The acid test for the quality of the data is its illustrative success to the addressed person(s) in achieving rhetorical aims.

In this dissertation, letters to the editor of a KwaZulu-Natal newspaper were chosen as data. They are directly reported, addressed utterances available in the public domain. The utterances are considered as written speech. For the illustrative purposes of chapter 4 these letters are as good data as any other. The collection of this data does not impose any burden on ‘research participants’ (as the data is already in the public domain) and eases the burden of work suitable for a masters-level dissertation.

### *Section B: The ‘data’ sources*

‘The Daily News’ (65 editions) was collected via mail delivery from June till August 2007. The newspaper claims (The Daily News, 2009a) total readership of 309 000 people, all within KwaZulu-Natal province and 81% within Durban. Readership is 52% ‘Indian and Coloured’, 29% ‘White’ and 19% ‘African’ (The Daily News, 2009a). 54% of readership is men and 46% women (The Daily News, 2009a). 55% of readership is over the age of 35 years old and 45% between the ages of 16 and 34 years old (The Daily News, 2009a). Each edition carries a median number of ‘letters to the editor’ of 4 (rounded to a whole number). Each letter to

the editor is an average length (calculated by randomly sampling 15% of letters and counting manually) of 168 words (rounded to a whole number). Letters are posted on a single page and form part of the ‘opinion’ sub-section of the newspaper. The newspaper was selected as it has relatively short letters to the editor, is readily available where the researcher lives, is relatively cheap and is available on a daily basis.

All ‘letters to the editor’ were coded by date published and topic addressed. The extended time period of data collection allows letters that refer to previous articles or letters published in the time period to be seriated as part of the analysis. All data were collected and stored as hard-copies. Replications quoted as ‘utterance-seeds’ are all direct quotes, though the a/a complexes of the utterance-trees are *invented* unless otherwise stated.

The collection and analysis of this data is done with the approval of the UKZN Humanities Ethics Committee and all use of the data is in accordance with the terms and conditions of ‘The Daily News’ (The Daily News, 2009b). ‘Letters to the editor’ are data in the public domain, though all names should be treated as pseudonyms.

### *Section C: A data driven refrain*

Prosaic intertexting, a model of social scientific enquiry – how beautiful. So what does one do with it exactly? Chapter 4 is a presentation of the model as applied in 9 analytics. These analytics are in answering to the model. The purpose of each analytic is to illustrate a potential use for prosaic intertexting in meaning creation. The use of prosaic intertexting is an act of meaning *creation*. Or rather, it is an act of *attempted* meaning creation. The act is un-consummated until it is ‘heard’ by an addressee. In the case of this thesis you are the

addressee. With this qualifier (and as part of the rhetoric of the thesis), I ask you now to read the analytics not as ‘results’ but as a discussion, and not of themselves but as the part of the whole utterance (thesis) they are. The analytics are attempts to achieve something for the thesis, that something is ‘utility’.

*Creating an utterance around all that is voiced.*

The ‘prosaic intertexting 101’ lecturer: How do explicit speech-acts (usually called ‘data’ in conventional social science) fit into the prosaic intertexting model? This analytic introduces the analysis process of prosaic intertexting with an explicit speech-act delimited by the turn-taken by the voicer (Buntu Zuma). The explicit speech-act is an entire ‘letter to the editor’, it is not qualified by an editorial interjection, nor is it explicitly in reply to an article or letter. The rhetorical aim of this analytic is to illustrate the operation and functionality of prosaic intertexting. This analytic does not inform as to *how* the elements of an utterance are generated by the social scientist, rather it illustrates *what* utterance generation looks like. The explicit speech-act is a ‘letter to the editor’, the a/a complex, generative answering and generative addressings are invented by the social scientist (me).

Exemplar 1: An explicit speech-act on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2008

“How could a man be left to die? | What has our country come to when a man lies dying on the pavement of one of our most populated cities in the country – not covered by an oversized overcoat, plastic or blanket – and every passer-by turns a blind eye because they do not recognize the face as one known to them? ‘An injury to one is an injury to all.’ When is this applicable and by who to whom? ‘Love thy neighbour as you love yourself.’ To whom is this commandment directed? ‘Injury to one.’ Who is the one? ‘Love thy neighbour.’ Who is whose neighbour? A stranger is a friend we’ve never met and all mankind is God’s creation. BUNTU ZUMA, KwaMashu”

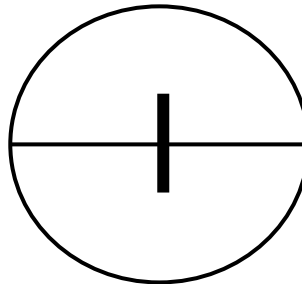
If we treat Exemplar 1 as the explicit speech-act around which we will create an utterance then it can be graphically illustrated as in Figure 11. Around this plain vertical line (see p. 8) we are going to create an utterance.

Figure 11. A piece of data.



In order to place Figure 11 in a context we must create an a/a complex around it. For example, we might define the a/a complex as: ‘What does Buntu Zuma mean in this letter? The analysis is exploratory and ‘neutral’, seeking to provide a definitive answer of Buntu’s meaning (singular), as is typical of thematic or content analysis with a qualitative frame.’ This a/a complex is graphically represented in Figure 12.

Figure 12. Data in scientific context.

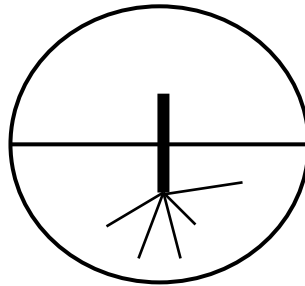


The next step in rendering Exemplar 1 as an utterance is to create things in which it is in answer to (generative answerings). These answerings are illustrate of the open-ended potentiality and multiplicity of the utterance – that one’s position relative to a proposed speech-act influences the likely utterance one will create around it. This can be represented by creating Buntu’s letter as if it is the ‘next-turn’ in multiple conversations between Buntu and distinct ‘others’. I represent this by stating five ‘generative answerings’ (see below), each of which has an ‘author’ assigned to it. These authors are invented by me as genre archetypes (see p. 13), they are invented, not ‘real’ quotes. The addition of the generative answerings is illustrated in Figure 13.

Generative answerings 1:

- Buntu's disgust: I walk down that street and would not want to walk past an exposed body.
- Burke: All that it takes for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing, what are you doing?
- Buntu's fear: Imagine if I were to be knocked over by a car and my body lay on the curb, would anyone stop to cover me?
- Tutu: Be a good citizen, you have fought apartheid to be proudly South African, feel shame at your fellow citizens' actions.
- Buntu's women friends: Fana, you are a modern man and modern men are caring towards the plight of others.

Figure 13. Data with histories.



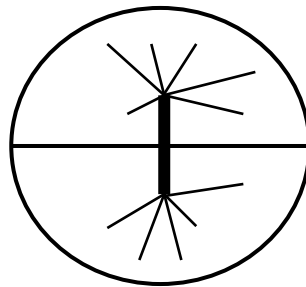
Similarly, an utterance must be addressive of other utterances (and in the model this is represented by 'generative addressings'). Generative addressings can be represented by inventing the 'next-turn' in multiple conversations that are in answer to Buntu's letter, for example the six generative addressings I invented below. The addition of addressings are also illustrated in Figure 14.

Generative addressings 1:

- Buntu's morality: I will cover any bodies I find on the curb, else I am a hypocrite.
- Lazy, scared public member: But if I were to stop I might become involved in something that is dangerous.
- Buntu's rainbow-nation teacher: Race, culture or creed should be overridden by the fundamental unity of humanity.
- Sceptical columnist: We should not wonder at a lack of civil services when civility itself is lacking.

- Emigrant relative: I told you South Africa is a bad place to live in.
- Pastor: Be God-fearing, you never know when you will need His blessing.

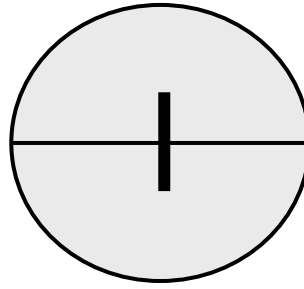
Figure 14. Data with futures.



And that (Figure 14) is the complete utterance, a meaning unit-of-analysis. But what a shallow analysis it is! Rendering an explicit speech-act into an intelligible utterance is an act of choice. The lack of choice in focusing this a/a complex (see p. 78) leaves the analyst the difficult task of imposing meaning without appearing to do so. The list of possible ‘generatives’ would be limitless because of the unfinalizability of the utterance (see pp. 66-67). This is most akin to a lay-person hearing a strangers’ statement and not having any interest in what they are saying beyond not being confronted by sensory gobble-dee-gook. Also, the *prima facie* ‘understanding’ of Buntu’s letter is so strong because he ventriloques religious and moral norms so explicitly (through quotes). This stifles alternative intelligibility renderings and is illustrative of rhetorical force in Buntu’s letter.

However, we can also consider the same explicit speech-act (Exemplar 1) with a specified intelligibility interest in nationalism. Then we can define the a/a complex as: ‘How does Buntu Zuma’s letter instantiate contemporary nationalism in South Africa? The analysis is coloured by an interest in acts of nationalism/dis-nationalism. The validity of the speech-act as nationalist/dis-nationalist is evident in the plausibility of the possible narratives’. This a/a complex is graphically represented in Figure 15.

Figure 15. Alternative scientific context.

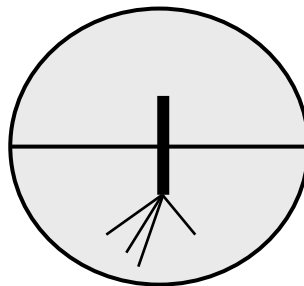


We are also able to generate alternative – and hopefully more informative – answerings (as below). These four alternative answerings are illustrated in Figure 16 (compare with Figure 13). Note too that this dissertation does not address nationalism, this is only an example chosen to illustrate a methodological point. Furthermore, the generatives are in no way representative of any measure of ‘truth’ or ‘goodness’ in and of themselves, rather they serve to create explicit speech-acts as contextual and meaningful.

Generative answerings 2:

- Post-apartheid rhetorician: South Africa is a special nation because of its history of oppression, revolution and conclusion.
- Buntu: I struggle and I vote for the nation we have now.
- Anti-apartheid struggler with communal ideology: ‘An injury to one is an injury to all’.
- Buntu’s mother: South Africa is a Christian nation, following Jesus’s teaching of ‘loving they neighbour’.

Figure 16. Alternative histories.



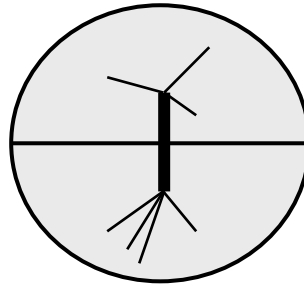
We also generate alternative addressings following the same process (as below). These three alternative addressings are illustrated in Figure 17 (compare with Figure 14).



Generative addressings 2:

- Buntu feeling gratifyingly benevolent: You, who were not part of the struggle against apartheid, you are now a South African.
- Buntu's superego: If you do not help fellow citizens, you betray your worth as a citizen.
- Evasive cynic: But the dead person was probably a foreigner...

Figure 17. Alternative futures.



Is this 'grey' utterance (Figure 17) essentially better than the one created above (Figure 14)? No, what is important is that either option is an equally valid intelligibility rendering or use of prosaic intertexting. The 'real' meaning of Buntu's statement is given by (1) selecting one answering and putting it before the explicit speech-act, and (2) selecting one addressing and putting it after the speech act, thereby creating a coherent narrative in three parts. Rather, the validity of an utterance rendering is not defined by its reality, but rather by its rhetorical use in the narrative construction of the social scientist. Furthermore, the utterance is a whole, the answerings and addressings are both possibilities, not realities, and intelligibility is dependent on the explicit *and* the imposed possibilities, not one to the exclusion of the other.

*Creating an utterance of only part of the voicing.*

The neo-discourse analyst: The analysis of long segments of speech-acts as an utterance is somewhat dry because the utterer has rhetorical space to clarify and impress a particular understanding. Their meaning seems self-evident because of the keen prosaic intertexting

sense that makes *be*-ing meaningful to us all as lay persons. Oftentimes though it is the social scientist's task to elucidate meanings from ambiguous or seemingly incomplete utterances. This analytic is an illustration of the generative power of utterance rendering by creating more/extra narrative possibilities than the lay, 'complete' and finalized 'reality' of a monophonic speech-act. A primary prosaic intertexting mechanism for creating alternative meanings is by assigning 'voices' to the generated answerings and addressings. This analytic illustrates the effect of this voice assignation by creating an utterance of a segment of a 'letter to the editor'.

Exemplar 2: An explicit speech-act on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2008

"Those with better access to education and other resources, the majority of whom are fortunately or unfortunately white"

We may define the *a/a* complex as: 'What racist sentiment remains, sanitized but maintained, in post-apartheid South Africa? The analytic is coloured by an interest in the mechanisms of stereotyping. The speech-act is treated as if it does rhetorical work and that real themes of this rhetorical work can be identified'. How can Exemplar 2 be created as an intelligible speech-act that maintains and sanitizes race-separating rhetoric? If it were intelligible in this way, what explicit speech-acts would precede it to give it this intelligibility? Below I generate 'answerings' and 'addressings' to answer these questions. Why did I create *these* 'generatives' and not others? Not because of a divined/induced reality to the meaning of Exemplar 2, but rather to serve *my* rhetoric, to re-create Exemplar 2 through the 'focus' of *my* *a/a* complex. That I am participant in the creation of the utterance speaks both to the rhetorical philosophy of prosaic intertexting, and to the contested space in which meaning is created and which no-one, not even the social scientist can escape.

### Generative answerings 3:

- Neo-marxist friend: Those with resources are the oppressors of the people.
- Post-apartheid liberalist historian on TV: Whites took most of the resources for themselves.
- Writer's white friend: Why can your parents not read, didn't they go to school?
- Writer: I deserve more than the little I have.
- Leading 'rainbow nation' politician: It is wrong to look with anger at those who did or did not have the equal opportunities we all have now.

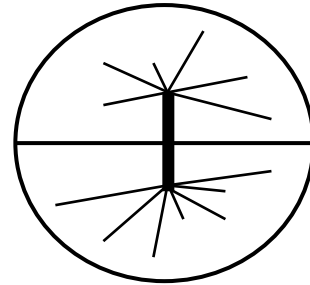
### Generative addressings 3:

- Writer: Since no blame is laid at whites' doorsteps for their 'fortunate or unfortunate' access to particular resources I may now stereotype whites without being racist.
- White reader: This person is a coward, why can't they not just say they think all whites are unjustly better off, this is about money, not race.
- White racist: Typical black person, always simpering, even when crying 'injustice'.
- Writer's friend: Yes, you are correct, it is not right for one person to have much when another has nothing, especially not if they are whites, because of history.
- South African race researcher: Such statements are clear evidence that race and race-politic remain both contentious and bitter issues to South Africans.
- White employer's wife: Yes, they are stupid, but their schools are so bad.

The explicit speech-act has been created as an utterance instantiating sanitized but sustained racism (see Figure 18). How is this done? The *a/a* complex defines how an explicit speech-act is to be appropriated as an utterance? This is true insofar as the *a/a* complex states the outcome through which the explicit speech-act is to be created as an utterance. It does not state 'how' – the process by which – this outcome is to be achieved though. The *work* of utterance creation is best exemplified in the generative answerings and addressings. In 7 of the 11 generatives explicit reference is made to a racial category, while 2 make explicit reference to 'race' or the (racially) 'rainbow nation'. The other 2 generatives both refer to the station of a person in society. In South Africa, the station of the person in society is

centripetally tied to race. By populating the a/a complex with race-referent voices/texts the explicit speech-act itself becomes a race-referent utterance. The creation of the explicit speech-act as an utterance of racist instantiation is akin to coding a theme. However, the act is not one of documenting what is, rather it is an act of rhetoric.

Figure 18. Data in a context of continuing race-relations.



How do we judge whether the construction is ‘good’/‘valid’ or not? One answer would be to find corroborating evidence from the body of the ‘original author’. For example, to see what they said before and after this statement. While this may appear, *prima facie*, to be plausible it is difficult for you as the reader of this thesis to do. Why? You have witnessed the explicit speech-act as an utterance, I have imposed meaning on it. Any re-imposition of meaning on it by you is now answerable to my utterance construction. You must now see the explicit speech as either ‘yes, really a race-related instantiation’ or ‘no, not related to race at all’.

What you cannot do is see the explicit speech-act as it was originally uttered by the ‘original author’. This is the full letter to the editor:

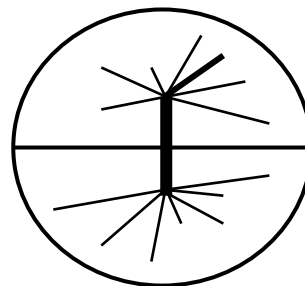
### Exemplar 3: An explicit speech-act on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2008

“Judge issue is about resistance to change | Funny how quickly South Africans come together whenever there is a complaint or a march about animal, women and child protection/rights issues. As a rainbow nation we cry with one voice about crime, xenophobia and other social ills. But whenever we talk about transformation in this country, all sorts of finger-pointing takes place with black and white people. Those with better access to education and other resources, the majority of whom are fortunately or unfortunately white, have in one way or the other, benefited from the inhuman apartheid government. These are the ones who are now most vocal and committed in their course of undermining the government of the day. Unfortunately for them, there is nothing that will stop change and transformation in South Africa. The issues of the judge president of Cape Town, Judge John Hlophe, has nothing to

do with all we are told it has to do with, but it has everything to do with what I have highlighted above – resistance to change. THULANI SISULU, University of Zululand”

What meaning do we impose? Where does this section fit in to the analytic presented here? I argue that it is either (a) a new, un-related explicit speech-act, or (b) an addressing to add to the answerability complex of the race-related utterance constructed above. In option ‘b’ this explicit speech-act *does not* discount any of the invented answerings and addressings posited by me. Rather, it is an additional explication of the multitudinous possible texts that are not made explicit in the answerability complex. This can be graphically illustrated in Figure 19 where the thicker answering line in the top hemisphere represents option ‘b’. The explication/invention of a particular answering/addressing is valid not by virtue of its ‘truth’ to the original explicit speech act. Rather the validity of a particular answering/addressing is a function of its rhetorical utility to create an intelligible utterance as used by the social scientist. The judgement of this utility is always the addressee/answerer of the social scientist (in this case: you).

Figure 19. An additional addressing to Figure 18.



This analytic is illustrative of the process of creating wholeness to an utterance in the face of ambiguity. It also tells a story about how that wholeness is judged. If so much license is given to social scientists to create meaning, do we not run the risk of conveying undue power to the social scientist? I argue that the social scientist already holds such power, but that we are not, in the contemporary, compelled to take responsibility for the power of meaning-creation (see Hood, Mayall & Oliver, 1999). Rather, we are able to hide behind the

ventriloqued voice of science-as-objective. Does it mean that because the social scientist creates meaning that that meaning is not useful to anyone but the social scientist, or to nothing beyond social science? No, social science is the act of creating new diction with which the world can be re-created. In rendering the explicit speech-act as a race-related utterance the social scientist is creating space in which to discuss what is un-voiced. This gives us power to re-create and change. Siyabonga Seme can now talk as a writer motivated by the personal experience of denigration because his parents are illiterate, not only/just through the ‘official line’ of a young black intellectual dissatisfied by the duplicity of whites and their resistance to change.

*Creating meaning by positioning addressees.*

The positioning theorist: In reading the letters to the editor I came across the one below. It does not refer to any previous article published in the *Daily News*, nor could I find one in a cursory search through the newspaper editions collected as part of the ‘data set’. So what does it mean? This analytic will illustrate the function of addressees for rendering an explicit speech-act as an intelligible utterance. The analytic is generative of the multiplicity of possible addressees for the explicit speech-act. This creates the utterance as social scientific model of the power of addressivity to generate multiple meanings, no effort is made to give a specific, non-model related meaning to the explicit speech-act; doing so involves an alternative utterance rendering.

Exemplar 4: An explicit speech-act on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2008

“Vetch’s Pier was for Indian fishermen | Many years ago the purpose of Vetch’s Pier was to provide Indian fishermen who used seine nets with a safe way of launching their boats from the beach to catch fish. A seine is a net which hangs vertically in the water with weights at the bottom edge. The ends are drawn together to catch fish by encircling them. The seine

netters lived in tin shacks above the beach. Two boats were used to take a large net in two halves out beyond the breaking waves. The seine netters would row out in the middle of an opening between Vetch's and North Pier. Each boat would drop the mid-section of their nets into the sea while holding on to the end of their ropes. Vetch's Pier was one of the few places where people could buy fish as the boats were brought in to shore. The fish were literally jumping off the boats. Back then, a normal size fish cost a mere shilling (20 cents) while a larger fish cost only two shillings (40 cents). RA WIID, Durban"

I am interested in illustrating the importance of addressivity in utterance creation, so the a/a complex is defined to meet this end: 'How can I use RA Wiid's letter to illustrate the importance of addressings in utterance creation? The analytic is coloured by an interest in the legitimacy of addressee generation. The explicit speech-act is treated as having no 'real' addressee so that this does not inhibit the validity of the illustrating, invented addressees'.

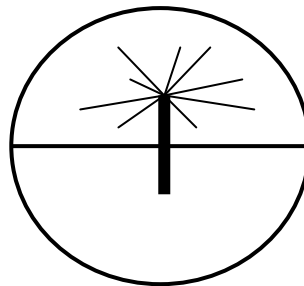
Who is R A Wiid writing to? Rather, how can I impose who is addressed by R A Wiid to best illustrate the potential diversity of utterances that are possible from a singular explicit speech-act? The addressings generated in this analytic are created to illustrate diversity. This is in contrast with the addressings generated in Figure 18 that are created to frame the utterance in a particular substantive context. An alternative way to capture this is to say that Generative addressings 4 is substantively framed by non-specificity, that there is an 'indefinite audience' (see Bakhtin, 1990a; 1990b). Figure 20 is a graphical illustration of this that shows the potential to multitudinously populated the a/a complex.

Generative addressings 4:

- Durban history specialist: Thank-you RA Wiid, we have been wondering what the point of Vetch's was for a while now.
- RA Wiid's child: Really, and what is that thing over there for, the one with the flashing light on top?
- Indian fisherman: Yes, why can we not still use Vetch's Pier, it was ours, why are we prohibited from fishing there now?

- Surfer: Ok, whatever, *now* Vetch's is used to launch surfers, not fishing boats, times change.
- Eco-activist: And now the entire eco-system around the pier is denuded because the seine nets catch indiscriminately between size and species of marine life.
- Old-age pensioner: Times were easier back then, more carefree; I wish I could go back.
- Another old-age pensioner: Democratic South Africa is a new and better world for me and my people, no longer are we forced to live in tin shacks and scratch a meagre living from the sea.
- City and beach developer: Fishermen no longer use Vetch's Pier to stay alive, it is unnecessary and ugly, let us tear it down and re-build it better.
- Pan-africanist fundamentalist: You see, the Indians even had their own piers where they could fish, no, we as true Africans are the only ones who are really oppressed, and we still are.
- Captain of a beach-volleyball team: You see ladies, it takes cooperation to catch the fish, to win the prize, so stop bickering and let's do this thing.

Figure 20. Sprouting many branches.



I stop, arbitrarily, at 10 generative addressings. The explicit speech-act has many possible addressees. In generating addressings I used parts of the text as inspiration. However, the utterance is a whole and not addressive of any one of these parts in and of itself. I have created the utterance as addressive of an example of multiplicity of meaning and unfinalisation. Answering and addressing generation is an act of situating the explicit speech-act in an imaginary dialogue. This analytic has illustrated meaning creating by 'addressing' generation. Answering generation is *congruent* to this. Prosaic intertexting is a method of 'dialoguing' by inserting explicit speech-acts into the prosaic world of contested



possibles such that texts/narratives may be formed. Social science is an act of meaning making and prosaic intertexting is a tool in fulfilling this act. Social science using prosaic intertexting is creative, generative and unfinalizing.

*Creating a singular voice from polyphonic data.*

The minority/majority influence theorist: Polyphony is the property of utterances in that they answer and address a multiplicity of voices. This does not mean that the explicit speech-act ‘author’ is a group of authors. Indeed, even when a group of people are cited as a combined author (even when it is them doing the citing) this is not an instance of polyphony. Only utterances may be polyphonic, explicit speech-acts are un-living and voiceless until they are rendered intelligible as an utterance. This analytic illustrates the process of generating polyphony in utterance rendering. In creating an utterance it feigns ‘de-constructing’ an explicit speech-act into its alleged constituent voices.

Exemplar 4: An explicit speech-act on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008

“Please fix and tar our Suntown road | The residents of Suntown have been promised for more than 10 years an upgrade on dirt roads, street lighting and the cutting of grass. After numerous complaints by the residents about four years ago extensive drainage work was carried out. However the drainage system is now blocked because of a lack of maintenance. The road work has stopped. This potholed dirt road is destroying our cars and houses alongside the road are severely affected by dust. The road is also used as a bypass by hundreds of cars and trucks whenever the N3 freeway is blocked. Mr Sutcliffe, give this road a proper name because it is not on any Metro map and tar it so the ratepayers of Suntown can also applaud the work you do for residents in other areas. CONCERNED RATEPAYERS, Suntown”

The purpose of this analytic is to illustrate polyphony, so the a/a complex must be defined in terms of a polyphonic space: ‘How can I illustrate polyphony in an utterance? The analytic is coloured by an interest in voice-identifiers as illustrating polyphony. The explicit speech-act

is treated as an outcome of dialogue between persons. Furthermore, the generative answerings and addressings must be located as if they are part of a polyphonic dialogue:

Generative answerings 5:

- Ethyl: The biggest problem for us is the sand, the dirt gets all over and breaks things.
- Thando: It devalues our homes.
- Lucy: *Our* homes, not the mayors!
- James: I bet if there was one pot-hole in the street he stayed in it would be fixed just like that.
- Gerald: It has been like this for over ten years, what difference does complaining about it now make?
- Nonhlanhla: If we all complain they will have to listen, there are many of us and we matter.
- Sibusiso: Especially if they are using our street as a bypass, our street!

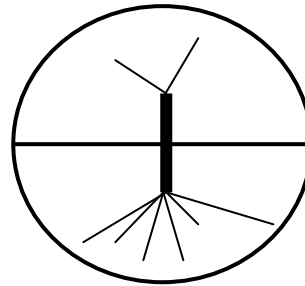
Generative addressings 5:

- Suzanne: I feel better now that we have written to the press, at least something will be done.
- Mike: That mayor had to be held accountable for the poor services we receive.

Can you imagine it, group of rate-payers in a town-hall discussing the short-comings of the town council? If the fact that a group of persons is cited as the author of this explicit speech-act has nothing to do with polyphony, then why chose it to illustrate this analytic? Firstly, to illustrate this distinction between group-author citation and polyphony. Secondly, because persons are more accustomed to working with persons as agents with voices than any other intelligibility focus. Prosaic intertexting argues that the focus could as meaningfully be shifted to a person-level author cited explicit speech-act having the multiple voices of ‘parts of self’ populating the utterance – akin to the ‘internal discourse’ of a person with multiple personality disorder. The utterance rendering would look exactly the same (see Figure 21),

except for changes to (a) authorship in the explicit speech-act and (b) voice-identifiers in the answerings and addressings

Figure 21. Feeling satisfied with ourselves/ourself.



Imaginary exemplar 5: An explicit speech-act by Joe Bloggs

“Please fix and tar our Suntown road | The residents of Suntown have been promised for more than 10 years an upgrade on dirt roads, street lighting and the cutting of grass. After numerous complaints by the residents about four years ago extensive drainage work was carried out. However the drainage system is now blocked because of a lack of maintenance. The road work has stopped. This potholed dirt road is destroying our cars and houses alongside the road are severely affected by dust. The road is also used as a bypass by hundreds of cars and trucks whenever the N3 freeway is blocked. Mr Sutcliffe, give this road a proper name because it is not on any Metro map and tar it so the ratepayers of Suntown can also applaud the work you do for residents in other areas. *JOE BLOGGS – CONCERNED RATEPAYER, Suntown*”

Generative answerings 6 (compare with 5):

- Fussy Joe: The biggest problem for us is the sand, the dirt gets all over and breaks things.
- Avaricious Joe: It devalues our homes.
- Spiteful Joe: Our homes, not the mayors!
- Jealous Joe: I bet if there was one pot-hole in the street he stayed in it would be fixed just like that.
- Morose Joe: It has been like this for over ten years, what difference does complaining about it now make?
- Proud Joe: If we all complain they will have to listen, there are many of us and we matter.
- Indignant Joe: Especially if they are using our street as a bypass, our street!

Generative addressings 6 (compare with 5):

- Nervy Joe: I feel better now that we have written to the press, at least something will be done.
- Just Joe: That mayor had to be held accountable for the poor services we receive.

Again, ‘internal voices’ is just an example of the possible intelligibility focus in polyphonic voicing. In this dissertation academic disciplines and my person-level and interpersonal speaking-actings are given voice beside each other. The choice of who/what to give and not give voice to is rhetorical and related to the author of the explicit speech-act only insofar as this relationship facilitates the rhetorical aims of the intelligibility rendering.

Polyphony is a creative gift to the utterance, not a property of explicit speech-acts. By assigning voice-identifiers (names) to answerings and addressings the utterance creator is given explicit control over the particular intelligibility they are rendering. This is useful for social scientists as it provides a scrutinizable blue-print to consider who and what is included and excluded in the research rhetoric. For example, often excluded voices are those of minority groups. Polyphonic rendering also gives a person explicit control over the particular intelligibility of their self that they are rendering. For example, a person may actively ‘shut out’ the voice of an abusive parent when constructing the worth of their professional achievements. Polyphony is illustrative, not diagnostic.

*Creating alternative intelligibility renderings.*

The spin-doctor: Sometimes there seems only one way for the explicit speech-act to make sense. This is especially so when it is in explicit reply to a single speech-act. This voice drowns out all others as the explicit author creates their interpretation as ‘the truth’. A particularly effective explicit author of this type has been social science and science in general. This analytic is used to illustrate how prosaic intertexting may generate new meanings in a context of meaning-finalization. This process is inherent in all meaning creating, and not limited to explicitly in-response speech-acts. Rather, the model of prosaic

intertexting argues that all speech-acts must be ‘in-response’ as an answering and an addressing; the example of in-response is chosen as illustrative merely because one level of in-responsiveness is already explicit.

To begin, let me re-create the in-response letter as a prosaic intertexting utterance. The letter which is responded to (see Exemplar 6) will be used as source material to create the a/a complex as well as answerings and addressings.

Exemplar 6: An explicit speech-act on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2008

“De Villiers’ critics silenced | We won at Carisbrook! What do the rugby scribes say now? Very few supported De Villiers and his game plan. Some were downright nasty, with only the odd person saying ‘give him a chance’. One reporter even resorted to snide replies to anyone who dared say anything about his opinionated reporting. Now it will probably be Gold and Muir that did it. Or White’s old game plan. They helped, sure. De Villiers, you beauty, may you coach for a long time. ANDREW VISAGIE, e-mail”

Steven Steyn expends an entire article (see Exemplar 7) creating the a/a complex that Andrew Visagie’s article be intelligible as un-related to reality, motivated by an over-eager desire to vindicate De Villiers as a coach and threaded with subversive racist tones. Steven ignores Andrew’s comments on the snide-ness of some reporters’ accusations about De Villiers. Similarly, he brushes over Andrew’s quip that even this ‘vindicative victory’ will probably be put down to De Villier’s assistants and not the man himself. Instead Steven operates on the rhetoric that he is elucidating the ‘real’ undertones to Andrew’s article and showing this to be mis-informed and even malicious. The primary success for Steven is that he is left the ‘final word’ in the exchange. He can dismiss Andrew’s letter and re-create it as a misguided, over-enthusiastic and overly-race-sensitive act of loyalty to the incumbent. How was this explicated?

## Exemplar 7: An explicit speech-act on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2008

“They won because they are Jake’s team | I write in response to Andrew Visagie ‘We won’ (July 15). The following players were Jake White’s players inherited by De Villiers: Percy Montgomery, J P Pietersen, Brian Habana, Jean de Villiers, Franscois Steyn, Ruan Pienaar, Ricky January, Pierre Spies (although sick), Ryan Kankowski, Schalk Burger, Juan Smith, Victor Matfield, Bakkies Botha, CJ van der Linde, Guthro Steenkamp, John Smit, Bismark du Plessis. I might have left out a name, but tell me, with these players and five matches later what has De Villiers personally achieved? This is Jake White’s squad and they played Jake’s game plan this week. Last week when they played De Villiers’s game plan they lost. When Dowd called him a puppet he (Dowd) was called a racist, but people did not mention Dowd is a Moari and therefore regarded as non-white. Oregon Hoskins called De Villiers a political appointment. He is also regarded as non-white so before everybody starts singing his praises, let’s see what he can do. STEVEN STEYN, Durban North”

Is this the final word though? Can Steven’s letter only be intelligible as a response rendered to Andrew’s letter? Steven creates a rhetoric in which his intelligibility rendering of Andrew’s letter is the truth. I will now create a rhetoric in which Steven’s letter is not an act of truth statement, but rather an act of attempted stress-relief and self-affirmation. I start this process by defining the a/a complex as follows: ‘How is Steven’s explicit speech-act an expression of the writer’s job related stress? The a/a complex is coloured by an interest in thematic repetitions of job-failure excusing. The explicit speech-act is treated as an episode in the writer’s recurrent Freudian unconsciousness-struggle’. The resultant, coloured, utterance is graphically illustrated in Figure 22.

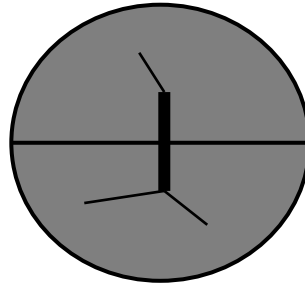
### Generative answerings 7:

- Steven’s id: Life should be enjoyable and creativity unpunished.
- Steven’s superego: You should feel ashamed at having underperformed at work, you are lazy and self-indulgent.

### Generative addressings 7:

- Steven’s ego: Everyone deserves a fair chance, but they should take care to make use of those chances that come their way.

Figure 22. Steven's unconscious rhetorical field.



By shifting the focus from Steven as an instance of race-obsession and overly optimistic about De Villiers as a coach (Steven's letter) to Steven as a person with internal struggles the explicit speech-act is rendered as an utterance with completely different meaning. This analytic illustrates the process by which even seemingly finalized speech-acts can be re-created as a new utterance. This also illustrates the generative capacity of prosaic intertexting as a social science to re-negotiate and resolve both crises of meaning (as in narrative therapy – see pp. 27-28) and meaning disputes (as in mediation – see pp. 28-31).

*Creating meaning cohesion out of multiple voicers' utterances.*

The opinion 'poller': Often social science is intended to inform social policy outcomes. A popular mechanism for weighing policy options is to weigh alternatives according to the level of support or prevalence of opinion or other summative measure of the positions of different persons. However, prosaic intertexting argues that each person is completely unique, and each utterance is a once-off, living event. How then can people share 'the same' support/opinion/position. One answer is that we, as social scientists, set a predefined parameter that creates when 'similar' support/opinion/positions can be considered as 'the same'. Prosaic intertexting argues that there is no inherent similarity even between two events. Rather, this 'similarity' is an act of active and rhetorical construction by the social scientist. This analytic illustrates how prosaic intertexting as a model can be used to create

explicit cohesion out of multiple speech acts. This process is illustrative of the operational mechanism of (1) consensus building, (2) structured surveying and (3) thematic generation.

The social scientist is interested in ‘knowing’ explicit speech-acts through a particular frame. It is expedient to define a single a/a complex and try to squeeze the explicit speech-acts into it. This creates a number of utterances in parallel. If the resultant utterances could be super-imposed upon one another it would create a multi-dimensional utterance that is better reflective of the complexity of meaning creating than the simple illustrations in this thesis.

The work in this analytic is to convince the reader that each explicit speech-act is just a particular instantiation of the created utterance; that the explicit speech-acts are the ‘same’, just with different voicings. This illusion is created by inventing answerings and addressings that are recognizably similar between the utterances created, but that illustrate how the ‘same’ utterance has come to be explicitly spoken-acted in apparently different ways. The first step in the intelligibility rendering is to define a focus through which multiple speech-acts can be created as utterance-siblings. This a/a complex is necessarily broad, but also focussed on ‘categories’: ‘What is the general response to the ANC policy of name changes for Durban streets? The analytic is coloured by an interest in creating a summative and unified set of discreet responses. The explicit speech-acts are treated as examples of public sentiment’.

Exemplar 8: An explicit speech-act on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2008

“Council will reap the harvest it sows | Stubborn and adamant, the ANC-led council has decided to ignore all public opinion and objections and implement its street name changes, no matter how controversial some of these names are for the residents of the city. The once proud, racist Afrikaners did likewise, imposing their will on the people, naming towns and streets after their leaders and heroes. Communist Russia, too, went the same route; but now many of the hateful names of these repressive regimes have been expunged from the maps and political landscape and dumped into oblivion. The same fate awaits the council. Sutcliffe is a learned man and ought to know that ideologies come and go as frequently as fashion trends. And despots who ignore the will of the masses and trample on their rights will invariably meet an ignoble end. It would be a foolish councilor who does not heed the



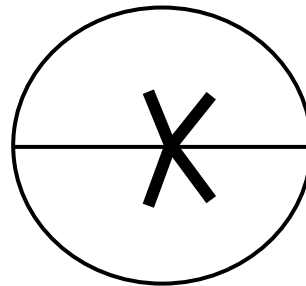
concerns of the people. Andrew Zondo and Yasser Arafat roads will not be here forever; nor will Mike Sutcliffe and the ANC. I see graffiti artists being busy in the dark. T PILLAY, Silverglen”

Exemplar 9: An explicit speech-act on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2008

“Is this how democracy works in SA? | Is this how democracy works? One person writes to the municipality and suggests many street name changes. Thousands write to the municipality objecting to certain of these changes. The municipality ignores all these objections and goes ahead with the changes. Is this democracy ANC style? A STRONG, Durban North”

These two utterances-in-potentia (‘Exemplars 8 and 9) need to be ‘melded’ together. This melding is graphically represented in Figure 23.

Figure 23. An invented, ‘melded’ speech-act.



In order to achieve this melding the social scientist must generate answerings and addressings that could be tacked onto either explicit speech-act. Figure 24 graphically illustrates one way of tacking generative answerings 8 and generative addressings 8 onto the ‘melded’ speech-act.

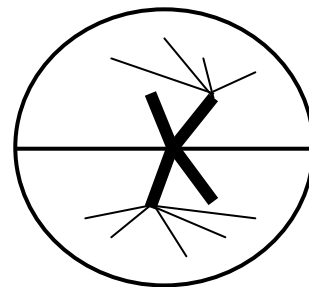
Generative answerings 8:

- Modern rhetorician: People use examples to achieve rhetorical goals.
- Emotions theorist: Explicit objections are representative of tacit concerns.
- Conflict resolution expert: Arguments between two parties are often laden with latent threats against each other.
- Support group coordinator: Exasperation is an expression of fear and lack of hope for a positive resolution.
- Discourse analyst: Perfect exemplars and imperfect archetypes punctuate rhetoric as final arbiters of truth.

Generative addressings 8:

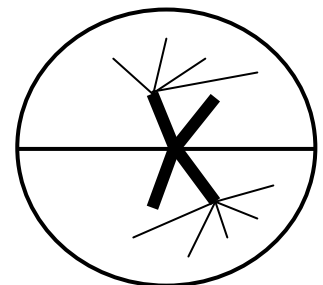
- Policy advisor: People generally object to the proposed name changes, though their reasons differ.
- *Daily News* reader: No matter the number and scope of our objections the ANC simply will not pay attention to our objections.
- Sceptic: Even a majority voice has no impact in this country.
- Opposition politician: The people of Durban are united in opposition to the proposed name changes, their sentiment is unanimous.

Figure 24. Generatives tack onto to a melded speech-act.



Without generating answerings for the explicit speech-act on June 3<sup>rd</sup> or addressings for the explicit speech-act on June 6<sup>th</sup> the invented-as-melded speech-act is created as an utterance. These other answerings and addressings are possible-to-create, but I leave them out to illustrate how two explicit speech-acts can be forced together. The generative answerings (8) and addressings (8) are explicitly stated as inter-changeable between the two original explicit speech-acts. This interchange-ability is illustrated in Figure 25, which is simply a mirror-image of Figure 24.

Figure 25. Generatives tack onto to a melded speech-act alternatively.



Meaning cohesion is an act of the social scientist. The process of generating meaning cohesion is twofold. Firstly, an 'explicit speech-act'-inclusive (through which multiple data

can be created as meaningful) a/a complex must be stated. Secondly, 'explicit speech-act'-interchangeable answerings and addressings must be generated. This process is implicitly followed in summative social science such as opinion surveys. Habermas' 'communicative rationality' (see Habermas, 1984; 1992) and Gadamer's 'intersubjective agreement' (see Gadamer, 1997) are attempts to solve the problem of meaning equivalence between discreet subject positions. Prosaic intertexting offers a tool to explicate (and open to scrutiny) this process. Also explicated in prosaic intertexting is what is 'lost' in summing more than one explicit speech-act as instances of a single utterance. Each tree is inevitably twisted and distorted in the process. There is no space for either/any explicit speech-act to be an utterance or call its own (independent) answerings and addressings. The social scientist has created a new, melded-together explicit speech-act that is qualitatively different from its ostensible 'component parts'. The cost of any nomothetic multi-'explicit speech-act' utterance generation is the idiopathics of the original explicit speech-acts.

*Creating meaning cohesion out of a voicer's seriated utterances.*

The personality theorist: The creation of multiple speech-acts as a single utterance is similar (at least I am constructing it as similar) to the creation of single 'self' for the person. This aspect of prosaic intertexting is fundamental to human *be-ing* as it is equivalent to the time-extended creation of an 'I'-position. We give the 'I'-positions names (Thando, Jessi or Lesley) and label their agency accordingly. In lay speak explicit speech-acts made by the person are created as indicative of their underlying 'self'. Prosaic intertexting argues that there is no necessary link between individual utterance events (including things like 'selves'). Rather, the self must be created as an utterance. This analytic illustrates how the 'self', a continued identity of the person as an explicit speaker-actor, is a rhetorical tool to achieve a

particular intelligibility rendering. Selves are useful rhetorical elements in meaning making. Linking multiple explicit speech-acts is greatly simplified if they are conveniently spoken-acted by the ‘same’ person. The person is a generically whole utterance. Therefore the work of intelligibility rendering is simplified to explicating the idiosyncrasies of this person – who can be taken for granted to be intelligible.

This analytic will illustrate the process of creating the self-as-utterance. In order to do so the a/a complex must be defined by an interest in self-creation: ‘What is Vijay Ismail’s motive to write multiple letters to the editor of the *Daily News*? The analytic is coloured by an interest in elucidating the personality of Vijay Ismail. The explicit speech-acts are treated as imperfect instantiations of this personality’. After stating an interest in the ‘self’ that is responsible for particular speech-acts (or rather in creating a self as if it were coherently responsible for multiple speech-acts) the social scientist then collects data sources in order to substantiate their claim of this ‘self’. In this case I illustrate the process with three data from the persons to be created as a single self (Exemplars 10, 11 and 12).

Exemplar 10: An explicit speech-act on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2008

“Nqakula has failed against crime | The general crime level in South Africa, according to the April 2007-March 2008 crime statistics, is still very high. There is nothing to crow about with this unacceptable level. It is such a shame to see the conviction rate so low, while crime is high. South Africa is a crime-ridden country. This boils down to the fact that safety and security minister Charles Nqakula is a definite failure. He has failed to take effective action to bring down crime, therefore, it should be asked whether it is not time to replace him. VIJAY ISMAIL, Umzinto”

Exemplar 11: An explicit speech-act on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2008

“Logie’s red light farce | I am dismayed and disappointed at deputy mayor Logie Naido and the idea of the eThekweni Municipality creating red light districts where prostitution and other business in the sex industry will operate. He said that the council would make sure the red light districts were established as soon as possible instead of speaking out against them. Would Naidoo and other eThekweni councilors approve of their daughters and wives entering

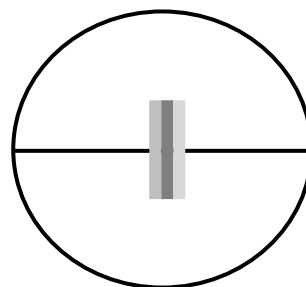
the red light industry? This is my question to them. In the name of morality and strong religious and family values Naidoo should realize it's not a good idea to encourage the sex industry. We already have enough immorality in our country and now the eThekweni council wants to promote the sex industry, thus encouraging promiscuity and opening the way for immorality. Legalising the sex industry should be condemned outright. The council should think wisely as man should not go against what our religions teach us. VIJAY ISMAIL, Umzinto”

Exemplar 12: An explicit speech-act on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2008

“Premier wakes up at last | It is interesting to note that the KwaZulu-Natal Premier S’bu Ndebele expressed concern at the poor service the public was receiving from the Department of Home Affairs in Durban. Why is the premier concerned? What he witnessed is nothing new. The public has been complaining about unacceptably poor service for a long time. The staff appear to be fooling around at many of the home affairs departments, but public complaints have simply been ignored, at least until now that the premier has seen it for himself. Service is poor at many government departments. Staff are busy on cell-phones, talking to their friends or fooling around, while ignoring the public. It is high time the government pulled up its socks in these departments. VIJAY ISMAIL, Umzinto”

How can these three explicit speech-acts be representative of the same self? Imagining that each of the explicit speech-acts can be graphically represented as a different shade of grey for the vertical line (as on p. 2), then they might be illustrated together *as if* they are representative of one self as in Figure 26. One reason for shading in grey to differentiate between the explicit speech-acts. The other reason to illustrate that all of the explicit speech-acts are imperfect approximations of the invented speech-act that the social scientist creates an utterance is created around. The answer to the question at the beginning of this paragraph is: if the social scientist creates an utterance where the three explicit speech-acts are treated *as if* they are representative of one self.

Figure 26. An invented speech-act in parallel.



The subsequent processes of prosaic intertexting continue as if this invented speech-act is not different from any explicit speech-act. In prosaic intertexting theory there *is* no difference between the two. The resultant utterance is represented graphically in Figure 27.

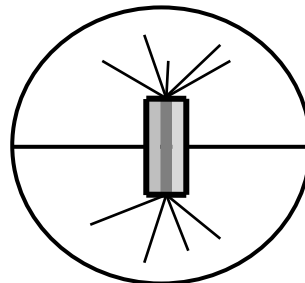
Generative answerings 9:

- Vijay's father: Vijay, a person should never be afraid to voice their opinion.
- Vijay's friend: Who cares Vijay, stop talking!
- Vijay: I am worthy and can help the world.
- Vijay: Don't ignore me.

Generative addressings 9:

- Vijay: My opinion is out there, I am helping the world.
- Vijay's mother: I am proud of you my child.
- Vijay's neighbour: Wow, this Vijay knows what he is talking about.
- Vijay: And that is why, politics 101 class, the ANC is missing the proverbial boat.
- Random lady: Aren't you the guy from the newspaper?

Figure 27. An invented utterance of 'self'.



And there you have it; a person-utterance with childhood memories and ambitions of social recognition and love. The explicit speech-acts are attention-seeking and self-image anxiety motivated pleas for recognition. The explicit speech-acts are one utterance. Their oneness is personal, self-ish. Three explicit speech-acts are squeezed together as if they are one. A new, invented and implicit speech-act is rendered intelligible as an utterance of self.

Prosaic intertexting is what we do when we think of our selves or of other persons. To *be* in an instant is to be created as a living-in-the-moment utterance. This analytic illustrates a tool for persons to re-create their ‘selves’ by examining what they are cramming into the answerability complex. By making what is oft-implicit explicit the person has the rhetorical power to change the way they continue to invent utterances-of-self. Identity is an act of focus/‘perspective’ and deciding what to include and exclude as part of the self. For example, Vijay may exclude the fourth-listed addressing, re-creating his self as not ambitious of academia. Or Vijay may include an extra answering ‘Vijay’s bad primary-school teacher: You need to speak up or no one will notice and you will amount to nothing’, so that he might continue a narrative in which he no longer feels the need to write letters to the editor and has overcome a teacher’s wrongful influence. ‘Self’ creating in prosaic intertexting is a special case of identity/equivalence creating (as illustrated in the analytic above). While the task is more natural (it is the mechanism of *be*-ing), the diction is also more calcified by the strong centripetal pull to be clearly and unambiguously defined as a person.

*Creating meaning in the context of ventriloque.*

The rhetorician: A quote is never pointless, all quotes are rhetorical tools. In prosaic intertexting addressings and answerings are all fictive quotes of imaginary voices. In prosaic intertexting the invented quotes are ventriloques of imaginary speech languages. But, in the rhetoric of an explicit speech-act the ventriloque is not of the quoted ‘author’. Rather, quoting in explicit speech-acts ventriloques that logical maxim that (i) what is explicitly stated by one has a meaning and (ii) that the stater can be held to that meaning. Quoting is an act of finalization. A person cannot repeat the words of another without making rhetorical use of them and re-creating the words as a new utterance. Prosaic intertexting holds that

there is one moment of living for each utterance, and this moment cannot be repeated. This analytic illustrates the power of editing, of adding qualifications or even just answering the addressing of an utterance with another. While no meaning (in the abstract, continued, contested sense) is ever final, ventriloque of logical/social maxims, such as the one stated above, are strong rhetorical tools in finalizing *a* meaning.

Adding qualifications to a quote of an explicit speech-act is equivalent to creating an *a/a* complex through which it is rendered intelligible. The author of the utterance is not the quoted person, but rather the quoting, qualifying person. If Exemplar 13 is rendered as a whole, Enver Mall is completely mute, their voice substituted by the Editor's rhetoric serving caricature.

Exemplar 13: An explicit speech-act on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2008

“Old Daily News not so brave | While the *Daily News*'s ‘brave editors and journalists’ of the 1980s, as they are called in your 130<sup>th</sup> birthday editorial of June 4, were allegedly attempting to be guided by the principles of press freedom to ‘bring to readers as much truth as could be gleaned’, the *Daily News* was guilty of deliberately ignoring, avoiding or minimizing sport coverage of those sporting institutions, such as the South African Council on Sport (Sacos) and its affiliates, that were at the forefront of the anti-apartheid sports struggle. I write from personal experience. From 1980 to 1990, I played more than 40 first-class cricket matches for Natal under the auspices of the Natal Cricket Board (NCB). During this decade, the *Daily News* carried the grand total of one match report of a first-class cricket match played by the NCB team. This was the Natal versus Western Province match at Siripat Road in March 1982. This decade also coincided with the various apartheid government sponsored rebel cricket and rugby tours which enjoyed major unapologetic coverage by the *Daily News*. Other non-racial anti-apartheid sports codes also had similar experiences of being deliberately ignored by the *Daily News* during the 1980s. During this time, however, white sport continued to flourish, thanks in part to the extensive coverage they enjoyed through the white press, of which the *Daily News* in this province was a leading player. COTTONTAIL, Durban

The point made by the reader is not under dispute. It has been accepted in most quarters that coverage of institutions like Sacos in the period in question did not do justice to the courage and commitment of those involved in its cause. To put matters in perspective, the whole issue of media coverage from 1960 to 1993 came under intense scrutiny when editors gave detailed and candid evidence of their experiences in the TRC probe into media in the 1990s. Among



those who volunteered evidence were many ‘brave journalists and editors’ whose contributions are well documented in the final TRC media report. EDITOR”

The Editor creates an a/a complex for Cottontail’s original explicit speech-act. Let me now populate this answerability complex with answerings and addressings. In doing so I will attempt the ventriloque the Editor such that I might hold to the words they have spoken and myself use the rhetorical power of ‘quoting’. In the Editor’s creation of an utterance there is no explicit statement of the a/a complex. Rather, the a/a complex is defined by the addressings and answerings that populate it.

Generative answerings 10:

- *Daily News* policy: All accusations against the *Daily News* must be responded to with clarity and equanimity.
- Freedom of speech legislature: Everyone is entitled to their opinion, but this opinion not necessarily to be adhered to by others.
- TRC probe into media: *Daily News* reporters were very cooperative with our investigations.
- Most quarters: Media did not give enough support and coverage to organizations such as Sacos.

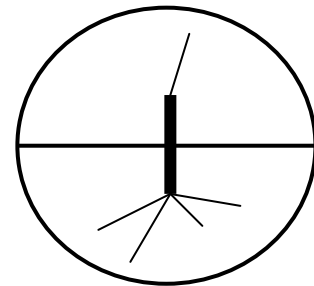
Generative addressing 10:

- The Editor: Credit should be given where credit is due.

In this analytic I have quoted the Editor in generating answerings and an addressing. I ventriloque the maxim that each explicit speech-act has a meaning and its author can be held to this meaning. The utterance created is my utterance, not the Editor’s, just as the letter to the editor is the Editors, not Cottontail’s. My utterance has the following definition of the a/a complex: ‘How can I illustrate the use of quotes as rhetorical devices using direct quotes and ventriloque? The analytic is coloured by an interest in the authorship of (a) explicit speech-

acts, and (b) utterances. The explicit speech-act is treated as an exemplar of quoting and ventriloque in rhetoric. The resultant utterance is graphically illustrated in Figure 28.

Figure 28. My appropriation of the Editor's explicit speech-act.



This analytic has been an explication of the rhetorical use of (1) quoting and (2) ventriloque. In prosaic intertexting the person quoting is considered the utterance-author of the quote. In creating an utterance for social scientific enquiry the social scientist must take authorship – this is in opposition to Hirsch's idea that meaning is hidden in the text (see Hirsch, 1960; 1967; 1976). The use of data to support the social scientific rhetoric is an act of false ventriloque. The data's 'voice' is not being accessed. Rather, the social scientific maxim that data has meaning and that meaning can be validly re-presented by the social scientist.

*Creating a narrative for a hiding author.*

The story-teller: That an utterance is a whole is all well and good, but sometimes what is more interesting is a story or narrative. Prosaic intertexting lays the foundation of unit-pieces through which narratives can be constructed, but how does this work? By choosing an explicit speech-act where the author is consciously anonymous I have lee-way to use a mysterious author-identity to create the narrative. This is not a reflection of when and when not such narratives can be created. Rather, it is an interesting 'in'. What constitutes a narrative is a matter for rhetorical debate, I argue here that in prosaic intertexting any more than one utterance, created as a seriated story, comprises a narrative. For illustrative

purposes I will use three utterances, one derived from an explicit speech act (Exemplar 14) and two derived from invented speech-acts (Exemplars 15 and 16). Each utterance rendering has the same a/a complex in order to facilitate seriating: ‘How can Sad Sack’s story be told? The analytic is coloured by an interest in the precursors and consequences of this letter-written part of Sad Sack’s story. The explicit speech-act is treated as just one part of a continuing narrative’.

Exemplar 14: An explicit speech-act on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2008

“Judge Mbeki by his friends | I must compliment Max du Preez (July 3, 2008) but add one more thing ... a man can be judged by the company he keeps – Jackie Selebi, President Robert Mugabe, President Thabo Mbeki – and a man’s deeds will indeed be the judge of him. Mbeki has brought disgrace to the very notion of democracy in Africa and to all the people of Zimbabwe who tried in March to exercise their right to vote. He is a disgrace to the office of the president as he has no intention to uphold our constitution nor any of its values, which he promised to uphold when sworn in as president. If it were otherwise, he would have dealt with Mugabe differently – he has become a nobody who has forgotten his own roots and what the very struggle that put him in power was for. SAD SACK, e-mail”

Generative answerings 11:

- Hopeful Sad Sack: If I write a letter to the press I can be recognized for having brought real change to the world, people will listen.
- Sagely Sad Sack: We are all our sister/brother’s keepers; it is each of our duty to act when we see another straying from the path of good.
- Bitter Sad Sack: I never got what I hoped for after I voted for the ANC, they owe me, but I do not expect to collect.
- Affable Sad Sack: What do you lot think of this Mbeki character hey, what a joke hey, I bet if I write a letter to the *Daily News* slating him it’ll go unpunished, ought to get a few laughs at least.

Generative addressings 11:

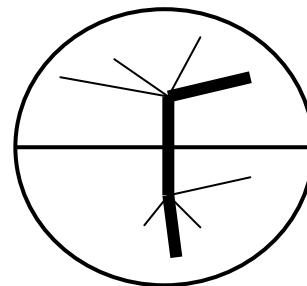
- Dubious Sad Sack: Even deriding him makes no difference, the ANC still carry on as if there is no change.

- Unequivocal Sad Sack: That is why it is said ‘power corrupts’, it takes corruption to get into power in the first place.
- Irritable Sad Sack: Yes, yes we know he is useless, so what, get on with it.
- Dreamer Sad Sack: I’m important, my boss read the letter and she thinks I have some interesting thoughts on politics.

Each answering and each addressing is a speech-act in potential. Figure 29 graphically illustrates my choice of two generatives to show how utterances link to create narratives.

Both of the chosen generatives are thick lines in Figure 29 in order to illustrate their changing status from generatives to speech-acts.

Figure 29. Generatives changing to explicit speech-acts.



Invented Exemplar 15:

“We are all our sister/brother’s keepers, it is each of our duty to act when we see another straying from the path of good. Sagely Sad Sack”

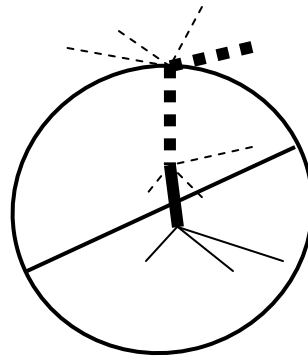
Generative answerings 12:

- Sad Sack’s friend: Have you heard the latest on Mbeki, what a waste of a vote that one.
- Sad Sack’s partner: Don’t knock the guy, it is not our place to judge.
- Angry Sad Sack: I wouldn’t be down where I am if it weren’t for corrupt politicians like Mbeki.

The utterance invented around Exemplar 15 is graphically illustrated in Figure 30. The dotted lines are the lines from Figure 29, showing the new utterance’s relative position to the

utterance created around Exemplar 14. Exemplar 15 and generative answerings 12 are illustrated as solid lines.

Figure 30. An invented sequence of two speech-acts.



Invented Exemplar 16:

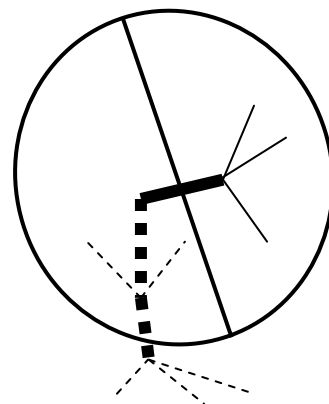
“I’m important, my boss read the letter and she thinks I have some interesting thoughts on politicts. Dreamer Sad Sack”

Generative addressings 13:

- Sad Sack’s partner: You got a raise? That is fantastic, ooh, I love you so much!
- Sad Sack’s colleague: Look who’s moving up in the world?
- Pessimist Sad Sack: Faker.

The utterance invented around Exemplar 16 is graphically illustrated in Figure 31. The dotted lines are the lines from Figures 29 and 30, showing the new utterance’s relative position to the utterance created around Exemplars 14 and 15. Exemplar 16 and generative addressings 13 are illustrated as solid lines.

Figure 31. An invented sequence of three speech-acts.



The creation of one narrative silences the voicing of other possible narratives. Narrative creation is an act of finalization. Utterances can be strung together by imposing one as a member of the other's answerability complex, but this stringing takes rhetorical effort. Prosaic intertexting is a tool for utterance generation and this opens the space for narrative creating. However, narratives, like utterances, are only living in the moment of their *be*-ing as an uttered utterance string. Persons *be* in the moment-by-moment co-authored and co-dependent creation of a seriated story of 'I'.

The nine analytics in this chapter have served as exemplars of the functioning of prosaic intertexting as a model of the utterance. The model substantiates that (1) person acts can be re-created as utterances with this model, (2) person-acts are infinitely divisible and these divisions can also be re-created as utterances using this model, (3) the positioning of addressees (and answerables) is an efficacious means of creating meaning, (4) utterance creation is done in the context of polyphonic and contesting possibilities, (5) meaning is unfinal and can be re-created, (6) data from different voicers can be re-created as if representative of a singular voice, (7) the 'self' is re-created as an utterance by considering disparate speech-acts as self-representative, (8) ventriloque is an effective rhetorical force in utterance finalization, and (9) narratives are created as strings of utterances.

## Chapter 5: A re-cap to invoke answerability in future utterances

This chapter is an opportunity to discuss both the limitations and the implications of my dissertation. I divide this task into three sections (limitations, a reflection on the model itself, and a discussion of possible implications), to follow. At the outset though: no meaning is final, nor can meaning be created by a person alone. Rather, I have proposed meaning in this dissertation and it is up to the reader to consummate this meaning in the most productive way.

The dissertation is clearly limited by the assumptions made at its outset. These assumptions are not, and could not be, justified adequately in the dissertation of limited length. However, it remains an important limitation as the model of prosaic intertexting is only an answer to this particular set of assumptions addressings. If any of the assumptions are invalidated then prosaic intertexting itself is no longer meaningful. Also, even if the assumptions are not invalidated but only questioned by the reader, the dissertation may be unable to talk *with*, not *past*, the reader. Additionally, the assumptions made (and even more so the assumptions made together) could be far from what conventional social science is accustomed to. An attempted remedy to this was the time spent in a section of chapter 3 to explicitly enumerate these assumptions, but they were not substantially proved.

A further limitation of the dissertation is inherent in the philosophy of prosaic intertexting. The creation of an utterance (in this case the dissertation) involves a choice of what is included as a referent (generative answering/addressing). This choice is influenced by an imperative to only present those referents that positively define the utterance. The dissertation may appear (on the whole and in sections) not to include the necessary

referencing that is conventional in social science. I have already included a disclaimer about this (see p. 1), but it is a limitation on the scope and validity of the dissertation. I also argue that while there are rich and diverse intellectual traditions around the ontology and epistemology of social science and the issues raised in this dissertation, there remains a lack of micro-level methodological tools that embody the implications of these traditions. I hope that prosaic intertexting fills this gap and is therefore excused for what is acknowledged to be a contentious implication for social science (that referencing is conventionally too effusive).

The data used to demonstrate the model in chapter 4 is also only data of one type. The grand claim by prosaic intertexting is that it can be used to analyze any person-act; that explicit speech-acts are defined by their variety of possible incarnations. The data in the dissertation does not satisfy this. It remains a task for future research to establish the implementation of prosaic intertexting with other sorts of data. Particularly important in this further research is to concentrate on data forms that conventional social science has less ability to authoritatively analyze, for example non-verbal communication.

A formatting limitation of the dissertation is the trade-off between length and scope in a masters-level work. The dissertation exceeds the conventional page length for a dissertation at this level (though I think that some of this is mitigated by the extensive use of in-text figures that must be included in the body and not as appendixes in order to preserve the flow of the dissertation). At the same time it is rather narrow in scope (concentrating solely on prosaic intertexting as a legitimate and practical research tool and affording only cursory looks at both the multiple genesis and actualization points for the ideas). This is a problem insofar as the dissertation is measured according to conventional social science norms. Such norms are necessary to assess the relative worth of this dissertation over others. So the thesis



is in the double-bind of preaching how social science should be done and actually doing social science (more on how the dissertation structure reflects the thesis' claims for social science below). I believe I have achieved an adequate compromise in this regard.

In Chapter 1 I presented an outline of the dissertation through the prosaic intertexting model (see p. 5). To reiterate, this dissertation is something different, the name changes and changes to the structure of the thesis are not aesthetic. Chapter 1 defines the a/a complex, Chapter 2 is the explicit speech-act that I try to render intelligible, Chapter 3 are generative answerings, Chapter 4 are generative addressings.

Structuring the dissertation in accordance with the ideas of social science is the biggest point of compromise in the dissertation. This must be both accessible and different. The model serves as a platform, it is incompletely conceptualized, unfinal in its possibilities. There are three key elements that define the model (the explicit-speech act, the a/a complex, and the generatives). By way of discussion I reflect on the relative success of each of these points to create a meaning for prosaic intertexting as I wish it to be.

It is necessary to re-conceive the nature of what is available to conventional social science. This is a philosophical assumption of the thesis. But if 'data' is to be re-conceived, then what is it to be conceived as? Explicit speech-acts are an attempt to solve this problem. But explicit speech-acts are a lie. Nothing, not even explicit speech-acts can exist independently of a meaning (and therefore utterance) because the first thing a person does when experiencing something is to try and make sense of it. Indeed personhood can be defined by a stream of experiences. In this way the notion of an explicit speech-act fails miserably. Furthermore, labelling them speech-acts may trigger too many conventional notions of data

being verbal/linguistic and not embodied. The redeeming quality of explicit speech-acts is that they force the social scientist to state what they are drawing conclusions about. The social scientist must be specific in identifying what they wish to re-create as meaningful. This though is not really a new feature of prosaic intertexting, it is a requirement of all rigorous social science.

Explicitly stating the a/a complex is, to a differing degree, also an established part of social science methodology. This though, in conventional social science, has concentrated on the theoretical and research question that the social scientist is using to interrogate the data. Rather, it should be an explicit statement of the social scientist's motive/rhetoric/interest in interrogating the data as they intend to. This is an important addition, though I do not think the model as created in this dissertation adequately captures the necessity of stating the social scientist's agenda. This is balanced by the social scientist not being the sole meaning creator. Rather, the reader too has responsibility to state their intentions in consummating a particular meaning-as-made.

The generatives are possibly the most controversial elements of the prosaic intertexting model. It directly contravenes science logic that in order to 'understand' something we must *add* to that something. However, the generatives afford the social scientist space in which to explicate *how* they are 'understanding' something as they are, not simply *what* the data should be 'understood' as. This adds greater scope for critical social science to interrogate the meaning-creation and in this sense adds to the rigour of social scientific analysis. The method for generating answerings and addressings is poorly outlined in the dissertation though. It is assumed that the social scientist can 'be creative' in doing so. This is a definite area for further research.

A key area for future research into this model of the utterance is exploring its ethical implications. Bakhtin (1990a; 1993) and Brown, Tappan and Gilligan (1995) have provided strong ethical arguments around the inherent responsibility people have toward each other in creating meaning together and the relative power of inter-subjectivity. Prosaic intertexting, as a methodological model for social science, carries concrete implications for the social scientist as responsible for the consummation of a research participant's utterance. Furthermore, it provides a model to investigate the operation of this power on a micro-level by making explicit the process of voice-contestation in the *a/a* complex and its consequences for the meaning outcome.

Related to this it is important to further consider the 'responsibility' implications of self-as-utterance. Since the utterance is unfinal, so is the self. So who is responsible for the self as actualized? Some responsibility must be with the people-who-consummate meanings which has implications for the assignation of blame and guilt. Also in this line is to consider a person's responsibility to re-create their reality and not be a victim of the continued '*stasis quo*'. If people are agents and nothing is definite then there is a profound responsibility on persons to define well. The model of prosaic intertexting presented here offers a mechanism by which persons can undertake this responsibility. Further research should investigate the viability of using this model in a therapeutic or counselling context, as well as in 'peace-building' or mediation efforts.

Future research should also investigate the implications of prosaic intertexting as a model of teaching and learning and group change through inter-personal meaning creating. If it is assumed that any given 'fact' – and this fact is treated as an explicit speech-act – can be created as being sensible, then prosaic intertexting offers a model of *how* this thing can be

created to ‘make sense’ between people. This is useful in both the formal education environment and the informal ‘learning’ of a solution for two reasons. Firstly, it requires that people create a common ground on which they can co-create and is therefore facilitative of communication. Secondly, it encourages participants to think critically about not just the ‘fact’, but also the process by which they create its meaning; this criticalness is important for both the validity and the ethicality of the meaning.

Since this dissertation has posited prosaic intertexting as a social scientific methodology its key implication must be on what this ‘method’ allows social science to do. In this regard the model both inspires further research (see above) and is a working method for conducting analysis. At the heart of this is that this dissertation is a statement of *how*, not of *what* social science *should* do. The dissertation posits prosaic intertexting as an opportunity, the implications that flow from this are in many ways determined by the reader. I outlined three specific research problems for this dissertation in chapter 1. Firstly, can a model of the utterance with ontologically relativist assumptions, have face validity? Secondly, does this model of the utterance also accurately model the self-in-*be*-ing as it should in theory? Thirdly, is this model of self applicable in such a way that it adds value and possibilities to social science? The first two questions are impossible for me to answer, I clearly must assume they are both affirmative. The third question can only be answered with a ‘no’. The model itself cannot add value to social science, it means nothing. Rather, we are faced with the open question of ‘*will* the model add value to social science?’, and we are the addressees in this instance.

This dissertation has not been a neutral discussion, nor a systematic collection of facts, but a *story*. And, it is a story that argues that *all* social science is actually ‘story-telling’. At least

*this* story lays bare its ‘author’s notes’, its doubts and assumptions of faith. Prosaic intertexting is a thinking tool to express rigour and accountability in social science, it models human *be*-ing as necessarily unfinal, in rhetorical context, and open to your consummation.

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