# Listening Genres: The Circulation of Psychoanalysis in Everyday Interactions in Buenos Aires, Argentina

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Anthropology
in the
Graduate Division
of the
University of California, Berkeley

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Fall 2014

Abstract

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This dissertation proposes the concept of *listening genres* as frameworks of relevance that surface at the moment of reception and orient the apprehension of sound. At the intersection of linguistic and psychological anthropology, sound studies, and Argentine cultural history, it argues that sound reception, far from being neutral and automatic, always involves a particular type of ideological and practice intervention. The listener, by focusing through a particular frame, creates a context, or more precisely a contextual configuration of reception that provides a unique interpretative lens. The argument is that through listening, sound images produce different contexts depending on the particular way in which an individual listens. Social actors, thus, listen both pragmatically and intentionally. Hearers listen with a purpose, they look for (directed) meanings, and the outcome of their interpretation transforms various social dimensions.

To exemplify how listening genres are produced and reproduced, this dissertation explores psychoanalytic listening as a genre in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Based on ethnographic work conducted in a variety of social settings, it explains how and why psychoanalysis occupies an important position in Argentina, one that symbolically structures other fields and many discursive arenas. We can find psychoanalysis outside the clinical setting, in newspapers, TV and radio shows, sports, and casual conversations, among other forms. By contributing to the ongoing discussion about why psychoanalysis is so prevalent in Argentina, this dissertation proposes the idea that psychoanalytic listening as a genre has become a social fact. It has gone beyond the clinical setting, creating links to citizenship, civil society, and the state, as well as with national culture in general. This dissertation demonstrates that personal identities, conceptions of citizenship, and constructions of the political in Buenos Aires, are rooted less in the performativity associated with speaking than in particularly forms of listening based on psychoanalysis. This listening is social, produced by a collectivity of individuals, and performed in all sorts of interactions surpassing class, age, and gender classifications.

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# Acknowledgements

This dissertation would not have been possible without the funding support from Mexico's CONACYT program *Becas al Extranjero*, and the bi-national collaboration of UC-MEXUS CONACYT. Thanks to their support, I was able to enroll at UC Berkeley and complete all the requirements in timely manner. Without the support of my advisors Charles L. Briggs and Williams F. Hanks, who guided me through the complex process of elaborating ideas, advising me throughout the writing process, and providing encouragement during difficult moments, this work would have never seen the light. Their firm belief in intellectual and academic rigor set a compass for my development as a scholar. Through their personal engagement with this work over the years, they have helped me to clarify and articulate a number of crucial themes that helped me to develop the main argument of this work. Along with Charles and Bill, I would like to thank the rest of my dissertation committee for their valuable interventions and comments, and their overall generosity: Stefania Pandolfo and Patricia Baquedano-López, who played vital roles in the development of this project.

Along with my advisors, numerous friends and colleagues have offered tremendous critical support and have helped me sharpen and refine my ideas and general outlook. I am special indebted to Eric Plemons, whose detailed reading of my work, and numerous conversations helped me developed the idea of genres of listening. Theresa McPhail, Elizabeth Kelley, Mara Green, Nate Dumas, Saleem Al-Bahloly, Chris Roebuck, Sharon Kaufman, Martin Lappé, and Allison Tillack provided critical reading of various chapters of this dissertation, and their comments and careful editing improved this work immensely.

Through their care and nourishment, my friends and family have been what made all of these years of constant anguish bearable. Marco Jacquemet and Dawn Cunningham fed me throughout grad school. I am forever indebted to them for their nourishment, and sustenance. Mia Fuller's emotional support and advice are invaluable. My sister Tania Marsilli-Vargas, grandma Rosita, and my nephews Santiago and Emiliano made me stronger and more in touch with reality. Thanks to them, I have a place to call home. I want to tank grandma Elvia who is no longer with us for everything she did to help me be a better person. And to my beloved Precious I thank her endless companionship when I was at the beginning stages of writing this work.

Last but not least, I owe a particularly large debt of gratitude to Pablo Palomino. He has been my lifeline as I trudged through this process, from listening to my constant complaints, to copy editing, to helping me have a brighter outlook on life when things were difficult. His companionship and encouragement are very treasured, and this dissertation would have not been possible without his help.

Finally, I want to thank Oskar for bringing so much joy and beauty to this world.

# Introduction

This dissertation examines the idea that listening can be categorized into genres. It argues that just as there are many ways of speaking, there are many possible ways of listening. This is significant because while there have been many studies that identify how certain linguistic practices create contexts (Bakhtin 1986; Duranti & Goodwin 1992; Gumperz and Hymes 1972), the idea that listening has the potential of generating and sustaining social relations and producing contextual configurations has not been similarly explored. This work is the first attempt to demonstrate that what I will call genres of listening differentially tune or guide the ear—and by extension eyes and bodies as well—to attend to some aspects of an utterance or sound while not attending to others; genres of listening thereby create contexts and frameworks of relevance that shape the listener's orientation at the moment of reception, thus shaping context and social identities.

Genres of listening consist of a guiding structure that "tunes" the ear into a particular frequency, which inevitably has inference in the later interpretation of auditory signs, creating contexts and frameworks of relevance that shape the orientation at the moment of reception. Listening genres direct the listener's further conceptualization of a symbolic sound by establishing a hierarchical relationship between the sound reception and the frame, such that certain auditory signs come to have more significance than others. For example, when a doctor listens to my heart with a stethoscope, even though we may be listening to the same sound, the ways we listen to the sound image produced by my heartbeat differ greatly from one another. The doctor apprehends signs that I am unable to decipher, because I do not recognize the meaning behind this specific listening genre: the sounds emitted by the body through auscultation. By listening to particular sounds and no others, the doctor is creating a particular space of interaction by establishing contextual relations between the sounds and the organs responsible for them. These different postionings in relationship to what would seem to be the same act of listening generate not only a particular social space but also a specific social relationship.

Throughout this work, we will see that there are many classifications of genres of listening as well as many levels of engaging with sound. Some listening genres are specially cultivated while others are more spontaneous, some are more structured than others, and some are unintelligible unless there has been a previous learning process. For example, practices designated as compassionate or ethical listening do not entail the pedagogical process that an expert listener needs to master when decoding the semantic meaning of the sounds coming from a machine (e.g. a mechanic) or a human body (e.g. a physician). In the later cases there is a learning process that endows the listener (once she has mastered the genre) with a social position that is created simply by being able to listen in a particular way. No matter how specific or ephemeral the genre, listening genres are created during moments of reception, where the listener embodies a particular auditory framework.

Listening, as any other mode of perception (i.e. seeing, smelling) is historically contingent and reflects different schemes of interpretation, depending on the context and how individuals apprehend sound under particular historical/contextual circumstances. Social actors listen differently depending on who are they listening to and where and why the act of listening occurs, beyond all the different layers of contextual information at

hand. In this work, I focus on one particular context, *psychoanalytic listening*, as cultivated in what has come to be globally recognized as a city in which psychoanalysis is most pervasively woven into the social fabric, Buenos Aires, Argentina. I conducted more than eighteen months of fieldwork among psychoanalysts, analysands, schools of psychoanalysis, multi-family analytic sessions, and everyday interactions. In Buenos Aires, psychoanalysis has become not just a private practice for the educated upper classes—as is primarily the case in other modern cities like New York or Paris—but a therapeutic form and a language that are generalized across society. The fact that psychoanalysis has infiltrated different social domains is due to the specificities of this practice in the Argentine context. I trace how this therapeutic tradition has developed into an interpretative framework, one capable of imbuing particular forms of signification into many aspects of social interactions that are completely detached from the clinical setting that symbolically structures other social fields and many discursive arenas, such as news coverage, casual conversations, and television programs.

There are many possible explanations that aim to illuminate the pervasive nature of psychoanalysis in Argentina. At the same time, the "legitimate" use of the term *psychoanalysis* is debated in relation to other types of therapeutic models that deal with mental health issues, as developed by psychology and psychiatry. Indeed, in Buenos Aires the scope of and boundaries between these mental health specialties is actively discussed. This dissertation contributes to this discussion at the same time that it transposes it into a different analytic register by suggesting that psychoanalysis has permeated different spheres of social interaction at the same time that it has surpassed the clinical setting by becoming a *social way of listening*. In other words, in Buenos Aires psychoanalytic listening as a *listening genre* is so prevalent, it has become a social fact. By this I mean that psychoanalytic listening is social, not accidental or individual, it is produced by a collectivity of individuals, and it is recognizable even in its absence. The most significant part is that there is normativity to it, therefore, it has value, meaning that there is attendancy to a particular valiance. Accordingly, throughout this dissertation, the claim is that psychoanalytic pervasiveness in Buenos Aires is in part due to the learning, reproduction, and circulation of psychoanalytic listening as a genre.

Listening is clearly central to the practice of psychotherapy; it is quite extraordinary how little thought has been given to the nature of therapeutic listening in the social sciences. It has not been until recently that some scholars and therapists are beginning to conceptualize the importance of listening in the therapeutic encounter (Connor 2003; Wilberg 2004; Akhtar 2013). In the case of psychoanalysis, which was famously defined as the talking cure, the emphasis placed on the verbal utterances produced by the analysand (a person who is undergoing psychoanalysis); this prominence diverted attention from how the two parties listen inside the clinical setting. My analysis points to a reconceptualization of psychoanalysis as a listening practice, demonstrating how the practice of listening defines the psychoanalytic encounter. What this means is that the only way to become an analyst is by being able to listen to "that that is not said." Typically, this means that analysts go far beyond what a patient says to infer which is meant but unsaid. Spoken words are placed in a relation of relevance to unspoken (perhaps unrecognized) motives and feelings. A signature statement of the genre is: "when you say x, I hear y." It is the regularities of this listening genre what allows the

analyst to get from what is said to what is inferentially heard. The mastery of this listening genre, I argue, is what endows the aspiring analysts with the trope of expertise.

In Buenos Aires, as this dissertation demonstrates, listening psychoanalytically is not only something that belongs to a few expert listeners, but a social way of listening. *Porteños*, as the inhabitants of Buenos Aires are called, are constantly making analytic interpretations by disregarding the referential meaning of utterances and providing their own analyses. Consequently, personal identities, conceptions of citizenship, and constructions of the political are rooted less in the performativity associated with speaking; rather, they are based on particular forms of listening practices. Listening in genres is to take a position in the world. Thus, by analyzing both the reception of psychoanalytic listening and the discourses and institutions that describe it, this work contributes to the understanding of what listening does in the human world. Genres of listening are accordingly a great point of departure to understand many different aspects of social phenomena.

One can witness how listening practices shape and direct behavior by focusing on how bodily expressions, such as gestures, corporal dispositions, and physical emotions, come into being at the moment of reception of sound. For example, when a musical piece brings tears or goose bumps to the listener or when worshippers listen to a sermon or a prayer, it prompts the listener to throw away the cigarette he was smoking as a sign of respect to demonstrate "ethical living" (See Hirchkind 2007). These corporal expressions point to the framework in which the listener is apprehending sound, thereby indexing specific genres of listening. Another way to grasp the emergence of listening genres is to focus on how social actors talk about listening, using particular linguistic forms that signal a specific contextual configuration. In Buenos Aires, for example, the enunciation of the phrase "what you really mean is…," expressed after an utterance has been made, directly points to the way the listener is listening, thus creating a particular context. Throughout this work most of the analysis is based on how people talk about listening, specifically in regards to psychoanalysis.

Another feature that is developed in this work is the relationship between listening and modern subjectivity. Western philosophy has been largely conceptualized as being grounded in linguistic and visual practices in which the power of spoken and graphical discourses is deployed while the strength of listening is ignored. The idea is that people classified as modern subjects inhabit a culture centered on how to speak and how to see but not on how to listen (Corradi Fiumara 1990; Jay 1993). Communication theorist Marshall McLuhan (1967) believed that phonetic alphabet and mass literacy has privileged the visual sense at the expense of other senses. Likewise, many studies have illustrated that the ability to speak and control speech has become a source of power (Purdy & Borisoff 1997; Barker et.al. 1991), generating the idea that in Western societies we are trained to listen to the voice of authority (such as a medical or legal practitioner, an officer of the law, or a religious leader) resulting in the association of listening with passivity (e.g. following orders). As a result, the idea that has pervaded is that when westerners finally listen, they are transformed in docile subjects bereft of active participation (Foucault 1988).

My dissertation argues against these conceptualizations. I stress that listening genres create and generate contexts and social positions, where listeners are intentionally and pragmatically positioning vis-à-vis sound. Moreover, psychoanalytic listening in

particular posts a particular way of conceptualizing the subject that is intrinsically modern. The argument is that psychoanalysis represents what many scholars have conceptualized as the emergence of a modern subjectivity: having an internal life that is unique, irreplaceable, personal and not transferable (Chakrabarty 2000; Inoue 2003; Deleuze 1988). So, contrary to conceptualizations that place the visual and the textual as the fore of modernity, listening psychoanalytically enables *porteños* to perform a modern subjectivity by "tuning" the ear into a psychoanalytic listening genre. This dissertation contributes to many efforts (Bull and Back 2003; Erlmann 2004; Sterne 2012) that postulate modernity and listening as being intrinsically tied. The majority of these studies place the relationship between modernity and listening in its connection to mediated forms, such as new media, radio, and headphones, thus creating modern sonic spaces (Crawford 2012; Mills 2010; Hirschkind 2006; Larkin 2008, 2013; Spitulnik 1996). My research proposes a new way of looking at this connection by focusing on the very act of listening as a modern form, one that is not intrinsically tied to forms of technological mediation, thus advancing even further this idea.

The way we think about the world is in no small way influenced by the senses we engage to appreciate this world; in turn these senses have always already an ideological as well as cultural function prior to us employing them (Foucault 1988). The forms of judgment and understanding that reach us are inadvertently directed by the ideological functioning of the sense employed. This is true for listening; my analysis conceptualizes the emergence of listening ideologies and how, as much as linguistic ideologies, they establish semi-stable hierarchies of value that assess and categorize social behavior. This is most clearly expressed when expert listeners deploy their mastery; nevertheless, listening ideologies are present every time listeners assign social meaning to particular sounds, establishing hierarchies of sound and evaluations. By establishing particular boundaries, genres of listening centralize some ideas, people, places, and ideologies while others are marginalized, pointing to particular ideological constructs. Another contribution of this dissertation is that it provides an explanation of how listening ideologies are formed and circulated.

In Buenos Aires, listening practices that began inside the clinical setting have circulated outside the clinical space, thereby conquering various social arenas as well as infiltrating different media outlets. Through the analysis of cartographies of communicability (Briggs 2006), this work examines how communicable chains are not unidirectional but involve several bidirectional relations between different social spheres. In the case of psychoanalysis, there is back-and-forth movement between both private and public analytic institutions, between everyday speech and psychoanalysis, and between expert analysts and lay audiences. The analysis of how these chains of communication get constituted and circulated provides a solid examination for the understanding of how psychoanalytic listeners replicate and circulate these forms, generating national ideas, and personal and social identities.

It is important to mention that this dissertation relies on a larger group of scholarly studies that have opened the door to new conceptualizations of listening practices as an important and necessary mean for accessing and understanding the world. The idea that listening is able to produce a transformative force inside the social world has been explored by various scholars, who have begun to inquire into other sensorial forms as a way of approaching culture, intending to limit the famous "textual paradigm"

prevalent in anthropological studies (Earlmann 2004; Bull and Back 2003). These scholars propose a need for the cultural and historical contextualization of auditory perception, paying attention to interaction through the sense of hearing in all its different capacities. These studies postulate that hearing and listening are not passive modes of reception but rather that the listener/hearer as an individual agent, an embodied listener able to position his/herself in particular ways in relation to symbolic sounds (Connor 2003, 2010; Hirschkind 2004, 2007; Carter 2004).

The contribution of this work to new ways of conceptualizing listening practices is the creation of a framework that attempts to systematize listening. As the ethnographic examples provided this dissertation illustrate, listening creates contextual configurations that surpass the conscious realm, giving birth to a variety of forms of engagement that not only direct behavior but also incite profound transformations for the listening subject. Focusing on psychoanalytic listening as a generic type exemplifies how listening, like any other mode of perception (i.e. seeing, smelling), is historically contingent and reflects different schemes of interpretation. Social actors are always performing particular listening genres. Listening genres, like spoken discourses, establish relevance structures that are a critical part of what makes signs intelligible, due to their selectivity and the distinctive types of actions they subserve. These relevance structures emerge at conscious and unconscious levels. The auditory field is saturated with preconceptions, ideas, epistemologies, etc.and the like that are as important in creating contexts, identities, and social reality as language ideologies. By paying close attention to the constitution of listening genres and their metapragmatic (language that characterizes or describes the pragmatic function of some speech) ability, we can begin to understand how listening practices directs behavior, and create social relationships, thus more fully appreciating their performative dimensions.

Bauman and Briggs (1992) argue that in order to connect discourses with lived experience it is essential to look at the "regimentation of metapragmatic frameworks" (1990:207). I make the case that it is also imperative to focus on the meta-dimensions of listening. Listening practices provide a powerful tool for representing and characterizing the world. In Buenos Aires, listeners (speakers) characterize and comment regularly on patterns of listening practices through the mediation of reflexive listening, interactions that otherwise would not emerge can be established between participants. There is a direct relationship between listening and its metalinguistic correlation, one that furthers the argument that there are a variety of listening genres. In the case of psychoanalytic listening, everyone—expert listeners, analysand and lay audiences—recognize psychoanalytic listening as a category. They have a vocabulary to make reference to it, and they are able to recognize its different components, realize when a listener is failing to perform the basic components of this genre. Therefore, it makes sense to talk about the constitution of a listening genre as much as it does to talk about speech genres.

This work is divided in five chapters, each one responsible of answering some of the questions posted above:

**Chapter One**, "On Listening," stands as a conceptual unit that presents an examination of the concept of listening. It begins by explaining the basic distinction between listening—which entails attention and intention—and hearing, defined as receiving vibration (sound) without codification. It continues by carefully examining the

different steps that occur in order for attention to emerge when sound has been perceived. Here I lean on the analysis of French music composer Pierre Schaffer, who separates the reception of sound in four different categories: *ouïr*, *écouter*, *entendre*, *comprendre*. I also draw on Michel Chion's distinctions between casual listening, semantic listening, and reduced listening. Moving from these historic conceptualizations between the relationship of sound and attention, I present my own categories of differentiating sound reception: what I call listening *for*, which entails attending to particular aspects of sound and is intentional, and listening *to*, the ephemeral and spontaneous reception of sound. The second section of this chapter is concerned with the analysis of sonic semiotics to understand that listening is a meaning-*generating* mechanism. It discusses in more detail Schaffer's acoustomatic exercise and the so-called *Mondegreens* or mishearings to understand that each acoustic event can be perceived as a sign carrier through which information about the world is communicated. The third part explores the idea of listening as performative, one of the most important conceptual foundations of this dissertation. The idea is that listening creates social positions that are generated through particular ways of listening, of turning the ear into a specific frequency, that endows the listener with social and personal identities (such as auscultation, architectonic, and synoptic listening). This means that there are different ways of listening that create distinct contextual configurations, thereby generating genres of listening. The fourth part of this chapter focuses on defining genres of listening as a framework of relevance that surfaces at the moment of reception and orients the apprehension of sound. It describes in detail how this process takes place through the embedding of a social situation. Here I go deeper into the question of why genres, and not other forms of analytic inquiry, are used for this analysis, and the intentionality that is present every time a structure of relevance appears through the emergence of a listening genre. The fifth and final part of this chapter centers on the specific example I use to develop a theory of listening genres through ethnographic research: psychoanalytic listening. The main argument is that psychoanalysis has developed its own systematicity of listening: "when you say x, I hear y." Here I review key psychoanalytic texts in order to reconstruct this particular form of listening. It closes with a review of subgenres of listening: objective listening, subjective, listening, emphatic listening, and intersubjective listening. This chapter is thus a conceptual framework that situates listening in the broader spectrum of social interaction and outlines a theoretical contribution to the analysis of genres of listening.

**Chapter Two**, "The Psychoanalytic Field in Buenos Aires," presents the specificities that make Buenos Aires a remarkable place to study how psychoanalysis as a listening genre gets constituted. It provides a historical account that helps to situate the reader in the events that allowed for the proliferation of the psychoanalytic field in Argentina. It focuses on the great influence that France and England have had in Argentina, both culturally and academically, facilitating the entrance of analytic ideas through both British but mainly French readings of psychoanalytic theory. It also explicates the process that has creates a semantic overlap between different mental health disciplines (psychoanalysis, psychiatry, psychology) under the rubric: *psy-world*. This semantic overlap makes the traveling of psychoanalytic concepts easier, thereby embracing such institutions as public hospitals, public universities, and analytic schools. The role that female analysts had in the diffusion of psychoanalysis is also reviewed. The third part of the chapter focuses on the steps that any aspiring psychoanalyst must take in

order to become an analyst. It presents the different opportunities that are available and the outcomes and possible employment options that each path entails. It explores the institutional affiliations of *concurrentes* (unpaid internships) and hospital residents and the symbolic capital that each position bequeaths. Through this analysis, we begin to observe how listening becomes a focal point in the training of the aspiring analyst, such that an overt description of listening practices is the ultimate defining aspect of being an analyst. This chapter closes with an examination of the pedagogies of listening provided at the University of Buenos Aires (UBA) and two analytical institutions: the School of the Lacanian Orientation (EOL) and the Argentine Psychoanalytic Association (APA). These institutions underline the idea of "learned ignorance" as structural informative in analysis, where listening without paying attention to referential meaning is crucial for becoming an analyst. Overall, this chapter provides the necessary historical context to understand Buenos Aires and its relationship to psychoanalysis. It also explains the importance that listening plays in the constitution of analytic expertise and gives us a glimpse on the ubiquity of psychoanalysis inside public institutions.

**Chapter Three**, "Psychoanalytic Listening as a Genre: An Example from the Multi-Family Structured Psychoanalytical Therapeutic Communities (MFSPT)," is an ethnographic analysis of an unorthodox form of psychoanalysis, one which includes the participation of a multiplicity of social actors. These meetings, which are housed at the Argentine Psychoanalytic Association, host between fifteen to twenty analysts and up to eighty analysands together in a conference-type room, where particular kind of analytic sessions take place. These sessions are open to the public; the premise is that the people in attendance bring family members to the sessions. Inside this therapeutic setting, a communal form of analysis, where any participant can contribute and participate, takes place. In tracing the historical development of this setting and its modus operandi,, I place on its originator, Jorge García Badaracco, and the reasoning behind this analytic form. The second part of the chapter is dedicated to the analysis of ethnographic data on psychoanalytic listening as a genre, taken from these sessions, exploring three aspects: The first one is that it posses a particular temporality, defying the here-and-now of sound production. It is cumulative, and sound images will find a concept (or not) through the resonance that echo inside one's self that will be triggered by something that surpasses the conscious dimension, thereby defying linear temporalities. The second quality of analytic listening is that it needs to be cultivated in order to emerge. Through the concept of "legitimate peripheral participation" proposed by Lave and Wegner, there is an analysis of how communities of knowledge and practice get formed inside the MFSPT. This chapter also applies Peirce's categories of Firstnes, Secondness, and Thirdness to analyze the rationalization of the suspension of interpretation in psychoanalytic listening. The chapter closes with a reflection on Bakhtin's concept of *voice* as a point of departure to understand Lacan's conceptualization of "radical Other," where there is a polyphony of voices inside each analytic subject.

**Chapter Four**, "'What you Really mean is …' Listening Ideologies," begins with a thorough description of how lay analytic interpretation are reproduced in everyday conversations. The focus is on the addressivity form "what you really mean is…," frequently voiced in casual conversations. This particular linguistic form acts as a shifter pointing to many different ideologies that are present throughout the exchange. First, it indexes the person who articulates this phrase as listening psychoanalytically, implying

that he/she believes in unconscious practices and showing a clear disregard of denotational accuracy in favor of a particular form of hermeneutic interpretation. Second, it signals the person to whom this address form is directed as lacking the skills to understand his/herself, thus being in need of interpretation; this process points to ideologies of who have access to knowledge. This example helps to go deeper into the generic structure of psychoanalytic listening. The second part of this chapter conceptualizes auditory ideologies through a bibliographic analysis of texts that discuss the relationship between sound, listening, and the creation of aural ideologies. This analysis sheds light in how listening practices not only create contexts of reception but also construct certain "kinds of people" (for example, how being able to endure city noises characterizes the individual as brute and lacking contemplative skills). The third part examines a crucial element of the circulation of psychoanalysis in Buenos Aires: the fact that by listening psychoanalytically, there is a performance of a modern subjectivity. The main idea is based on studies that conceptualize modernity as having an internal life that is unique, that is not the expression of a social or public position. Representing the self as irreplaceable, personal, and intimate that is not transferable. My analysis thus, concludes that listening analytically creates modern subjectivities. This point is interesting because it stands in direct opposition to Enlightenment epistemologies that place the modern self in the visual realm rather than in the auditory sphere. To support this claim, the chapter ends with two examples in which psychoanalysis represents alterity: through two particular forms of reported speech. One is concerned with the addressivity form "what you really mean…" and the other through the reporting of one's own speech by listening to one's self.

**Chapter Five**, "The Circulation of Psychoanalysis Outside the Clinic," focuses on how mediated representations of psychoanalysis travel across different social spaces. It begins by defining the clinical setting as the central feature of psychoanalytic practices. Hence, what travels outside the clinic is an entextualized (the process of removing texts from their original context) form of psychoanalytic discourse that has been lifted from its interactional and institutional origin. To facilitate the understanding of how psychoanalysis has gained so much cultural presence in Buenos Aires, the chapter analyzes the historical relationship between psychoanalysis and the national university system. This relationship created a hybrid subject—the analyst as a public intellectual—which bestowing analysts with the right to talk about almost any cultural phenomenon. To exemplify this relationship, I present a review of the place that analysts occupied during the economic crisis of 2001. Analysts were solicited to provide their expert opinion about the origins of the crisis. True to their epistemic roots, they volunteered psychoanalytic explanation to understand the geneses of the crisis. The third part of the chapter analyzes another form of hybridization, the celebrity status of psychoanalysts, focusing on the figure of media personality Gabriel Rolón, arguably the most famous analyst of the country. Through the examination of his participation on the show *Pure Chemistry*, a sports TV show where different TV personalities are interviewed, the center of analysis is on how Rolón establishes expertise through different linguistic strategies: citationality, enregisterment, and metapragmatics. By analyzing these linguistic strategies, we can elucidate on the difference between lay and expert analytic interpretations, and how the boundaries between these two social groups are negotiated. We then move to the analysis of an advertisement where the figure of the analyst is

stereotyped, but at the same time, through the analysis of fractal recursivity, we can observe that the roles between the expert analyst and the "lay analyst" cross boundaries. Focusing on the reproduction of analytic stereotypes through commercials, allows for the understanding of how these discourses circulate. The last part of the chapter centers on everyday expressions that help to construct an imaginary ethos including "all Argentines" as part of a psychoanalytic world. Deitic forms such as "we," and "them," help to enforce this imagine space in everyday interactions.

This dissertation is, thus, an ethnography of psychoanalytic listening practices in Buenos Aires, Argentina. It begins with a thorough examination of the concept of listening in order to ground the course of the investigation, followed by a close look at psychoanalytic listening as conceptualized in the clinical setting. It then provides a historical account of the specificities of the Argentine context that make possible the reproduction and dissemination of psychoanalytic practices outside the clinic. The ethnographic work engages then with multi-family psychoanalytic sessions, everyday interactions, and medical and pedagogic institutions. Finally, it illuminates the circulation of psychoanalytic listening in the media. The overall purpose of this work is to understand the emergence of genres of listening that emerge at the moment of reception of sound. It also examines the development of listening ideologies that accompany their generic form, and the circulation and recontextualization of psychoanalysis beyond the clinic.

Chapter One

# Genres of Listening

*"The regression of the masses today is their inability to hear the unheard-of with their own ears."*
(Horkheimer and Adorno, 1944:36)

"*Everything comes down to the ear you are able to hear me with*."
(Derrida, 1985:4)

## 1. Introduction

One of the challenges of analyzing listening practices is defining what we mean by listening. Assuming that our auditory system has fully developed, we are exposed to sounds all the time, and no matter how hard our efforts, there is a physical impossibility of being in complete silence. This revolutionary discovery, that we cannot attain complete silence, was first exposed through the experiment conducted by composer and artist John Cage (best known to the general public as the creator of the piece *4.33* that comprises four minutes thirty-three seconds of silence) who after being inside an anechoic chamber at Harvard University stated in 1948: "I found out by experiment that silence is not acoustic" (2002:14). The anechoic chamber is a room designed to completely absorb reflections of either sound or electromagnetic waves and they are also insulated from exterior sources of noise. What Cage noted while being inside the chamber is that if you take away all sources of external auditory stimulus, you begin to listen to the sound of your own bodily processes – the taps and gnashes of your teeth, the clicking and crackling that accompanies your swallows, your heartbeat, your breath, etc. There is an impossibility of attaining complete silence. Hence, his statement that silence is not acoustic. In his view, silence is a mental exercise; it implies not paying attention to sounds through a conscious intellectual effort (2002, 2002a).

But the fact that we are constantly receiving (and producing) sound does not necessarily imply that we are always *listening to it*. If there is no such thing as silence, and we are constantly immersed in and affected by sound and vibration, how do we recognize each sound independently? How do we maintain our sanity by listening at the same time to the sounds of our body, the sound of printers, refrigerators, cars, birds, etc.? The answer to these questions have been the research agenda of scholars interested in sound (Schafer 1993; Chion 1994; Ihde 2007; Born 2013), and they have come to the conclusion that we are able to do so (as other living creatures) because we have the capacity to *choose* what to listen (see Horowitz, 2012).

At any given moment, we are surrounded by sound that generally contains more than just one auditory event. The physical signal that hits our ears does not contain any information on the individual parts that have contributed to it, but still we are able to distinguish and separate between sound events. For example, a student can listen to a

professor speak inside a classroom with a lot of background noise that comes from a construction next to the classroom, or an individual at a party can listen to a conversation that is surrounded by many other sounds. The listener is able to focus on a particular source of sound while purposely ignoring others. Listening can be compartmentalized, separated and structured. We have the ability to focus on particular sounds and not pay attention to others. Most of the times this happens below the level of awareness, but other times, as when a violent or loud sound emerges, or a repetitive sound (e.g. a drop of water) invades our attention, the sound emerges from the background and becomes a focal point. *Attention*,[1] then, is the main characteristic of listening (see Levy 1916; Cohen 2014; Prinz 2012; Kramer & Kirlik 2007).

This idea, that listening implies attention is not new and has become a standard definition when distinguishing between listening and hearing. Hearing belongs to the senses, it is just something that happens, while listening is a skill that implies attention (Sterne 2012; Horowitz 2012). For Plato, for example, listening does not simply involve auditory reception, listening involves reasoning; listening to an argument necessarily entailed reflection and inference (Haroutunian-Gordon, 2011). In *Phaedrus*, Plato--quoting Socrates-- while expressing concern that the emerging technology of writing would destroy oral literacy, mentions the need of "attentive listening" and memory as two of the qualities that should prevail (Phaedrus 2005). Listening is seen as involving different cognitive modalities, while hearing—defined as the collection of vibrations with no meaning—is conceptualized as automatic since anywhere there is matter and energy, there is vibration, and any vibration can transfer energy and information to a receiver. And this happens without any intention from the part of the listener. Any detectable vibration represents information, to be used or ignored (Horowitz 2012). "To listen is an effort," Igor Stravinsky once said, "and just to hear is no merit. A duck hears also" (Walsh 2010:22). In that simple concept lies the difference between listening and hearing: if you pay attention to the vibration you are listening, if you do not, you are hearing (just like any other living creature).[2]

Pierre Schaeffer, the famous French composer, musicologists, and acoustician dismembered this process (listening and hearing) to understand when exactly attention emerges (1952). The dichotomy of listening versus hearing entails different levels of engagement that he divided in four categories: 1) *Ouïr*, which refers to the pure physiological process of apprehending sound and is not intentional and will not be interpreted: the vibrations that enter into the receiver's ear canal before they are codified (only some of which will be selected for codification). *Ouïr* is the equivalent to hearing, where there are vibrations that the individual would pick up for interpretation or not. 2)

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1 *Attention*, in this dissertation, is characterized by its being willfully directed at a particular object (either something in the outside world or an internal thought or feeling), by the act of directedness occurring not just once but repeatedly, and by directedness at one thing necessarily excluding unattended aspects of the field of awareness (see Schachtel, E. [1954], "The development of focal attention and the emergence of reality." In: *Pioneers of Interpersonal Psychoanalysis,* ed. D. B. Stem, C. Mann, S. Kantor, & G. Schlesinger. Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press, 1995, p. 88-110.

2 In his recent book *The Universal Sense: How Hearing Shapes the Mind* (2012), Seth Horowitz explains that there are animals and organisms that lack some of the five senses, but hearing is the only sense that is universal and all creatures, no matter how simple, hear.

*Écouter*, which focuses on the objective qualities of sound and is therefore intentional: "*Je écoute ce qui m'interesse"* (I listen to that which interests me) (1952:13). This category places attention in the center of the listening activity. 3) *Entendre* describes the process of attending to particular aspects of sound "*J'entends, comme une fonction de ce qui m'intéresse, de ce que je sais déjà et que je cherche à comprendre*" (I hear, as a function of what interests me, from what I already know and what I seek to understand) (Ibid): identifying the different characteristics and specific properties of the particular sound. And 4) *Comprendre*, which constitutes an engagement with sound and its external references: interpretation. *Comprendre* is the equivalent of reasoning, what Plato envisioned as one of the main characteristics of listening. (Schaeffer 1952; Demers 2010).

Chion (2012) also developed a taxonomy of listening involving three different qualities. The first one he calls *casual listening*, which resembles *écouter* in that it gathers information about the cause of a sound, but lacks the interpretation needed to codify it. The second one, *semantic listening*, refers to using "a code or a language to interpret a message" (2012:50). This will be a combination of *entendre* and *comprendre* since it involves looking for a specific sound and interpret it; it involves reasoning. And finally *reduced listening*, another Schaeffer conceptualization that implies the artificial separation from sound and interpretation, focusing on sound itself independent of the source[3] (Ibid:50-51).

Schaeffer's and Chion's categorizations serve to highlight the different cognitive processes that listening entails. They are useful for thinking about different modes of engagement with sounds. In particular, how intentional is the listener's "tuning" of his/her ear with respect to the production of a sound. This analytic question helps us to recognize the attentiveness (or the lack of) that listening involves, through either a consciously positioned active disposition, or as an unconscious and unintentional accident.

Listening, thus, entails different degrees of attention and cognitive processes. In order to establish a consistent pattern when speaking about listening, I would like to introduce a basic analytic distinction between what I call listening *for*, which entails attending to particular aspects of sound and is, thus, intentional, and requires reasoning and interpretation; and listening *to*, an ephemeral and spontaneous reception of sound that is not intentional and does not require conscious interpretation. I found this distinction more useful than the listening/hearing distinction. One of the main reasons for making this distinction is that I am working with data in Spanish. The words listening and hearing in Spanish (*escuchar* and *oir*) are interchangeable, having to a large extent the same semantic meaning. In English, hearing and listening have clearer boundaries and are used to mean different positions vis-à-vis sounds (though sometimes the boundaries cross). Hence, listening *to* is equivalent to hearing (something that just happens with various levels of attention) whereas listening *for* is closer to listening in the English language since it entails attention and reasoning.[4] This basic distinction is based on the idea of

3 Reduced listening takes sound as itself the object to be observed instead of as a vehicle for something else (Schaeffer 1966).

4 In a conversation with Steve Feld, when discussing my proposed dichotomy of listening *for* and *to*, he mentioned that there are many other prepositions that can be paired with listening. For example, listening about, listening with, and listening as. It would be

intention, which I find is one of the most important aspects of listening: there are sounds that we intentionally pursue for interpretation, while there are others that we ignore. By pursuing certain sounds (listening *for)* there is a performative act that provides the listener with social attributes that emerge at the moment of listening, for example, a mechanic listening to the sounds of a car, and recognizing what the sounds stand for, the act of listening is what gives the mechanic a professional social identity. Thus, throughout this chapter, listening *for* and *to* will be used to refer to listening and hearing respectively.

It is important to mention that separating the different cognitive moments between listening and hearing, or the intention that the listener is engaged in is useful for some analysis (specially on performativity), but there are some limitations to these analytic separations. These divisions do not take into consideration some expressions of listening that surpass the mere technicality of listening. For example, compassionate, empathic, or ethical listening are instances of the embodiment of listening practices since they require not only the attunement of the ear to a specific frequency, but a general disposition that involves other sensorial and affective practices: a bodily attitude, a pace of breathing, a specific state of mind, etc. None of the aforementioned classificatory systems can help to understand why, when listening to a sermon or a prayer, a listener feels compelled to throw away the cigarette she was smoking as a sign of respect to demonstrate ‘‘ethical living’’ (Hirschkind, 2006). By paying attention to listening beyond its technicalities and as a social practice, we can discover many social relationships that are negotiated by *tuning the ear* into a particular frequency, and perceive the emergence of what I call *listening genres*.

Consequently, this chapter focuses on understanding listening practices broadly. It starts by analyzing a basic, yet very important question: how listening assigns meanings to sounds determining acoustic features that convey information? This question is important since listening, as any mode of communication, is always context bounded. Understanding the semiotic processes of listening opens the door to a better conceptualization of listening as a social fact. Following this question I review some instances of the performativity of listening, the relationship between listening an emotion, to finally arrive to my conceptualization of listening genres.

## 2. The semiotics of listening

Sounds carry information about the world. When listening to sounds, communication takes place. These are well-known facts for speech sounds, but it is also true for other types of sounds such as music or sounds that are produced by nature or machines. In principle, each acoustic event can be perceived as a sign carrier through which information about the world is communicated.

When trying to codify a sound some interpretation and context are key to its understanding. When listening to the same sound, different listeners might focus on different information carried by the sound. Conversely, some information can be gathered by only a few listeners, for example, when listening to a voice through the telephone, a

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interesting to go deeper into these analytic separations but, for the purposes of this research, I think it is useful to focus only on listening *for* and *to*, since the focus in on intentionality.

subject may be able to detect different moods if he/she is familiar with the speaker or not. This poses a problem to a Saussurian semiotic approach, since in his framework, the information conveyed by sound studied should be as independent of listeners' "history" as possible. But sound (as language) carries information through contextual configurations that emerge at the moment of reception.

Take for example Edgar Allan Poe's famous story *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, where the hero—Auguste Dupin—a French fallen aristocrat with a remarkable capacity of analytic reasoning, solves the brutal murder of two women (a mother and a daughter) killed by an orangutan. While the murders were taking place, numerous witnesses heard two suspects; one speaking in a gruff tone that everyone agreed it was a French man, and a second one who spoke in a shrill voice that the witnesses could not agree on the language he (or she) was speaking. The witnesses – the listeners – were from five different nationalities an Italian, an Englishman, a Spaniard, a Dutchman, and a Frenchman, and each attempted to describe the language spoken by the shrill voice as that of a foreigner. Each witness was sure that it was not the voice of one of their own countrymen; instead, they described the voice as a different language (Spanish, French, German, English and Russian). This notorious discrepancy on the language that the witnesses heard ultimately led Dupin to conclude that the voice could not be human, and the mystery is then resolved.

Poe's story underlines many interesting dimensions about the act of listening. It helps us understand that sounds that do not correspond to the realm of linguistic utterances, and that are not musical compositions, lack the sytematicity that are core to the constitution of any symbolic system. If a hearer cannot recognize the meaning of particular signs, the meaning can be inferred (most likely) by looking at it contextually (see among others Goodwin and Duranti 1992; Gumperz and Hymes 1972; Schegloff 1987; Cicourel 1992). This means that unintelligible sounds, get their meaning depending on who, where, and when they were produced, facilitating their interpretation. But when there is no systematicity as in the sounds produced by the shrill voice in Poe's story, the hearer most likely will invoke a sound that resembles something familiar. This is because in order to be able to codify a sound, the hearer must have been previously exposed to the sound, either by first hand witnessing the production of it, by reproducing the action that produced the sound, or learning through a convention which agrees that a particular sound is connected to a specific action (e.g. the sound produced when a nail and a hammer are simultaneously crushed together). Sounds, thus, get comprehensible by transforming them into signs. And the interesting part is that they are always interpreted, even in the absence of a referent.

Pierre Schaeffer was very much aware that there is always a referent attached to a sound. He became interested in figuring out if there is a possibility of listening without establishing a referent. In 1955 he began experimenting with listening practices that did not involve any other sensorial perception. He then coined the term acoustomatic, which defines the experience of a listener that has no visual access to the sound source (Schaeffer 1966:91). Schaeffer held that the acoustomatic listening experience was one that reduced sounds to the field of hearing alone. If you are not looking to the source of sound making, subjects move their attention away from the physical object responsible for auditory perception and toward the content of this perception. The purpose of this activity, is to become aware of what it is in the field of perception that can be thought of

as a certainty. This reductive procedure redirects awareness to hearing alone. Schaeffer remarked: "often surprised, often uncertain, we discover that much of what we thought we were hearing, was in reality only seen, and explained, by the context" (Schaeffer 1966: 93). Schaeffer explained that this approach permits to separate auditory and visual information and to make us aware of the fact that the listening changes overtime when we repeatedly listen to a sound.

The acoustomatic exercise, while an artificial experiment, opens the possibility of listening to the quality of sound without reasoning. It is pure sensorial experience that is pre-semiotic, something close to a setting in Goffman's terms, before embedding occurs (Goffman 1964). It also shows how much visual, and other sensorial dimensions are connected when assigning meaning.

In Poe's story we have an example where the source of the sound is unseen. The voices were heard and were the only available material to understand what was happening inside the house at Rue Morgue. Through context—two screaming women in danger, plus two voices discussing—the listeners transformed the unknown sound into signs: different languages. In contrast with reduced listening (focusing only in the qualities of sound) out of the impossibility of recognition, in Poe's example, reasoning was involved. David Toop, a music composer who has studied music listening practices, explains that: "[s]ound must be trusted, cannot be trusted, so has power. When sound that should be present seems to be absent, this is frightening" (2010:8). Poe's tale shows that we create signs (real or imagined) every time we hear something because there seems to be a "frightening" experience, by not being able to recognize the source of a sound. In everyday experience, listeners are always looking for meaning; sounds are always attached to a sound image. There is always a semiotic process whether we are conscious of this or not. There is no sound without meaning, unless artificially experimenting with acoustomatics.

Another form in which there is no connection with a sound and its referent, and where meaning is "forced" are the so-called *Mondegreens*. A mondegreen is the mishearing or misinterpretation of a phrase as a result of a near-homophony, in a way that gives it a new meaning. These misinterpretations are commonly found when listening to the lyrics of music, or verbal poetry, though they can occur in any other context. This mimetic term was proposed by Sylvia Wright in 1954. She recalled the deep effect made on her as a child by hearing one particular verse of the ballad "The Earl of Murray." She heard the following at the end of a verse:

> Ye Highlands and Ye Lowlands
> Oh where *hae* you been?
> They *hae* slain the Earl of Murray,
> And *the Lady Mondegreen*.
>
> The original verse reads:
> Ye Highlands and Ye Lowlands
> Oh where <u>have</u> you been?
> They <u>have</u> slain Earl Murray,

And they've laid him on the green[5]

Mishearings, or Mondegreens, are an interesting phenomenon because they stand in direct opposition to verbal confusion or "slips of the tongue." One could think of slips of the tongue as momentary relaxations of self-monitoring, breaking the circuit of apparently simultaneous self-hearing, that allow unconscious impulses to take control (Connor 2009). But though mishearing may appear subversively to sabotage sense, they are in fact transforming random noise into meaning, hence moving from the direction of nonsense to sense. As the Poe's example shows, mishearing seems to represent the intolerance of pure phenomena (what Shaeffer was after). In contrast, "slips of the tongue" are the disordering of sense by nonsense, thus, being precisely the opposite of mishearings. Mondegreens underline once more the fact that sound is always, no matter the circumstances, attached to a referent. Through listening, there is a process of *ordering*, of putting things into place. As we will see, this idea is critical for the understanding of listening genres as providing frames of reference.

The opposite phenomenon happens when meanings are sought for and when meanings are given to specific sounds. These acoustic signs, even though the hearer is able to recognize through a conventionalized agreement on a specific meaning, are decoded differently when listened by different hearers. Take for example the music, or medical realm, in which each sound (e.g. a particular note or a sound inside the body) is attached to a particular referent that is fixed. In order to understand these sounds, the ear has to be trained in what Chion[6] (2012) called semantic listening. We all as hearers can understand the nature of the sound, but the meaning, is something that only a few master. And in this mastery (as the *porteño* students of psychoanalysis are very much aware of, as next chapter will explain) lies a material reality.

For example, when I hear the beats of my heart, I first recognize them as such because they have been codified not as a random sound that comes from inside my body, but as a particular sound that the heart emits when a human (or animal) is alive. It has been transformed into a sign. But if a doctor listens to my heart with a stethoscope, even though we may be listening to the same sound, the concepts attached to the sound image produced by my heartbeat, differ greatly from one another.[7] The doctor is able to hear signs that I am unable to decipher because I have not learned to decode what I call a specific *listening genre*; in this case, the genre applied to listening to sounds emitted by the body through auscultation. This is because particular sound images, will have different concepts attached to them depending on the individual who *listens* in a particular way. Listening is something that hearers learn to do, and depending on an array of different factors, there is a variety of *pragmatics* attached to it. Social actors listen

5 Wright, Sylvia (1954). 'The Death of Lady Mondegreen.' *Harper's Magazine* 209:1254, 48–51.

6 According to Chion, this mode of listening has been the object of linguistic research. One crucial finding is that is purely differential. A phoneme is listened to not strictly for its acoustical properties but as a part of an entire system of oppositions and differences.

7 For a comprehensive, historical and critical analysis of the stethoscope see Sterne 2001. See also Foucault 1986, 1977.

*pragmatically* as well as *intentionally*.[8] As the doctor with the stethoscope and Poe's tale shows, hearers are listening with a purpose, they are constantly looking for (directed) meanings, and the outcome of their interpretation transforms various social dimensions; as Stravinsky said, "it is an effort." And this "effort" points to the constitution of social positions and identities.

### 3. Listening as performative

The idea that listening is able to produce a transformative force inside the social world has been explored by various scholars who began to inquire into other sensorial forms as a way of approaching culture, intending to limit the famous "textual paradigm" posed by James Clifford (Erlmann 2004; Bull and Back 2003). These scholars propose a need for the cultural and historical contextualization of auditory perception, paying attention to interaction through the sense of hearing in all its different capacities. These studies postulate that hearing and listening are not passive modes of reception, but rather that the listener/hearer as an individual agent, is an embodied listener able to position his/herself in particular ways in relation to symbolic sounds (Connor 2004, Hirschkind 2004, 2006, Carter 2004; Sterne 2012). While sounds are unpredictable (they come and go with no apparent control) listening, as already stated, involves intentional positioning vis-à-vis the sound, and its codification and interpretation is an act of consciousness (See Hirschkind 2004:147). When conscious judgment stops being involved in the act of listening, hallucinatory voices or sounds have the potential to emerge and being codified as pathological—as is the case of schizophrenic auditory delusion (See Connor 2010; Jaynes 1982; Freud Ego and the Id 1927). But if the sounds that surpass the conscious realm are listened by an individual inside a religious ceremony—where listening to the voice of god is the ultimate goal—a pathological dimension would not even be part of the equation, but rather, it would be taken as a successful action (Schmidt 2000). In consequence, particular sound images get constituted differently depending on the location, the social actors involved, and the production of sound itself; they rely on the particular *context t*he action of listening is being conducted, developing specific characteristics that differ greatly from one context to another. Accordingly, listening is an act of interpretation, listening is to occupy a particular social space, a way of being in the world.

An example of this is found in the book "The Opera Fanatic" (2011) where sociologist Claudio Benzecry explains how opera lovers in Buenos Aires can recognize even the most insignificant change in tone, style, or any diminutive mistake produce by the performers. By being able to listen in such detail, the skilled listener is indexing him/her self as inhabiting a particular social persona, a person capable of deciphering a complex formalized group of sounds to the point of finding the slight change inside this specific system of aural signs: a music expert. The opera is being exposed to a large audience, but only a few are able to decode the sounds in a more precise way. As

8 I am referring to intentionality as proposed by Husserl who emphasizes the role of the agent in giving meaning to objects, people, events, etc. through what he calls "intentional acts;" which in turn modifies the agent's perception of the world (i.e. seeing, hearing, smelling, etc.). See Sokolowski 1964:57. I will analyze in more detail intentionality later in this chapter.

Bauman's poetics (1986), the actualization of this social role happens during the performance. This particular listening is creating an entire context that includes everyone involved during the performance, not only the music expert. Listening involves active and intentional listening, which creates and shapes each particular experience, as well as the whole experience.

Listening not only signals the hearers as particular social actors, it also hold the capacity of directing behavior. In his book "Ethical Soundscape" (2006), Charles Hirschkind explains how listening to sermon tapes in Egypt create new practices of listening as a way of acquiring "knowledge and sensibilities that help one to live and act ethically in a rapidly changing social and political world" (2006:56). Listening to these tapes is a social practice, and no matter where they are being played (inside a cab, in somebody's home) the personal disposition—or context— that gets created through the particularities of the sermons is based purely on the act of listening. In contrast with the Opera fanatic, Egyptian inhabitants listen to preachers. The cassettes they listen to are not musical but speech oriented, they contain words that ultimately transform the listener. The words uttered in the cassettes do not dictate behavior because the words are not attached to a particular semantic reference. Rather, it is the anticipation and the disposition that the body establishes in order to make possible to listen "through the heart," where the transformation happens (Ibid:34). The source of this transformation comes through the disposition to acquire ethical behavior. It is as if the Egyptians who listen to these sermon-tapes, turn on a particular ear, getting immersed inside this specific listening genre.[9]

Consequently, listening to music, or listening through the stethoscope through auscultation, or listening to a murderer gorilla, constitute particular ways of apprehending the world, as well as taking a particular position through the performative act of listening. Listening to music and listening to sermons are social practices. They are both *situated listening* with specific characteristics that pertain to each sphere (Becker 2004). Listening in each case is unique with a particular path that can be observed and analyzed. They have a sort of boundaries[10] that can be decomposed in what I call *listening genres*. And just as textual genres through all its distinctive characteristics (contextualization cues, intertextuality, pragmatics, etc.) help to understand the constitution of many social relations; paying attention to the structure of listening genres and its transformative force, is important for the conceptualization of new ways of knowing and gaining a deepen

9 Listening to sermons has yet another capacity, the gift of relaxation, peacefulness, and the enhancing of the listener's competence for the discernment in the face of moral danger (2007:73). This particularity of listening relates to studies about how music is capable to transport the listeners into a different emotional estate (Shwarz 1997; Sloboda and Juslin 2010). Listening thus poses the capacity to constitute social roles, to direct action, and to transform the senses in ways that no other phenomena could perform.

10 I understand that "setting boundaries" to listening practices might be conceived as naïve since many scholars have explained in detail, why extracting and objectivizing a portion of ongoing social action and turn in it in "blocks or atoms of shared culture," and thus creating sharable and transmitable culture, decontextualizes meaning, inserting it in a new context carrying meaning that is independent of the previous situation (See Urban and Silverstein 1996). All the studies in intertextuality also point to the impossibility of isolating a particular text from other discursive/textual formations (Kristeva 1971, Barthes 1982, Bauman and Briggs 1990). I am aware that setting a boundary to listening practices is an artificial and problematic conceptualization. Yet, in order to begin to explore how listening transforms and creates social situations, I find important to analyze listening practices as genres, and differentiate among them, as a useful tool to begin to understand how listening is a dynamic and transformative activity providing directionality.

understanding of how the members of a society relate to each other (See Erlmann 2004).

**4. Listening genres**

Thus, my main argument is that just as there are many ways of speaking, there are many possible ways of listening. Compassionate listening is not the same as when a mechanic is listening to the sound of a broken car, and listening to Wagner's The Ring of the Nibelung opera is different from a doctor listening to a patient's heart through the stethoscope. A music expert, for instance, may be listening *for* the musical form of a particular music piece, focusing on structure, syntax, style, and history, through either architectonic or synoptic listening, which requires a certain knowledge of musical structure (Kivy 2001), while a neophyte who listens *to* the same musical piece may experience, instead, a physical and emotional change (goose bumps, tears), without having any notion of musical structure.

Each particular *way* of listening in the examples provided, I contend, is a listening genre. A listening genre is a framework of relevance that surfaces at the moment of reception and orients the apprehension of sound. Sound reception is not neutral, it always involves a particular type of ideological and practice intervention, and it is never automatic. The listener, by focusing through a particular frame, creates a *context*, or more precisely a *contextual configuration of reception* that provides a unique interpretative lens. Listening genres—as speech genres—are types that are produced at the moment of reception (Hanks 1989, Bauman and Briggs 1990, Bauman 1992,) and they are social in that they present a "cultural horizon" (Hanks 1996) by helping to elucidate how the listener "tunes" the ear into a particular frequency and thus, as much as ways of speaking (Hymes 1974) create structures of relevance that provide directionality.

The process of creating structures of relevance through listening emerges through embedding. Embedding designates the relation between contextual aspects that pertain to the framing of discourse by "centering or grounding it in broader frameworks" (Hanks 2006:18). For example, what conversation analysts called a "setting" definitionally has a structure of relevance, whereas Goffman's (1964) "situation" is a mere environment of mutual monitoring possibilities with no order of priorities: "an environment of mutual monitoring possibilities, anywhere within which an individual will find himself accessible to the naked senses of all others who are 'present.'" (1964:135). In context understood as sheer situation, there is no already established frame, only co-presence. If interaction even occurs it can proceed in any direction. However, once a situation is embedded it is defined in terms of frames and relevance. Genres, especially genres of listening, consist of frames of relevance and thus, they embed the situation into the setting. So defined, the "situation" is an analytic abstraction, simply what is left when we have peeled away the effects of semiosis (Hanks 2006:18).

To exemplify how this process ensues, consider the following example: a boy is playing inside a house. At one point the boy (pretending that he is Superman) jumps with his arms extended from the kitchen counter toward the couch in the adjoining family room. He fails to reach the couch and falls. The boy starts crying. His father, who is in his home office, listens to the first sound of his son's lament, and immediately "knows" that something serious has happened. There are not words exchanged, only sounds. He rushes to the boy and discovers the boy has broken his arm.

The father has listened to his son cry many times before this incident happened. But this time it was different. He "knew" from the first cry that this sound was not an index of frustration or irritation. As soon as the father listened to the first sound emitted by his son after the fall, a *situation* was created in which any possible direction could ensue. The situation gets rapidly embedded in a setting; a hierarchical structure emerges that points to a particular frame of interpretation: the boy was severely hurt. The particularities of the boy's lament are generic in that they direct a particular course of action and create a particular context. The listening genre surfaced only when the father recognized a sound as his son's cry, thus emerging at the moment of reception.

*4.1 Why Genre?*

There is a substantial literature on the formation and propagation of textual, verbal, and musical genres, ranging from the study of poetic structure, to music composition, practice theory, and literary theory, to name just a few areas of investigation.[11] The abundance of studies that focus on genres is motivated by the fact that genres have the capacity to create context and social relations bringing an array of ideologies, orders of knowledge, or horizons together in practice (Hanks 1987). Each genre has structural and compositional dimensions that organize the thematic content and style of particular works. These constraints are logically prior to the interactional settings in which they are inserted, creating "relatively stable types" (Bakhtin, 1986:60). Genre types orient the reader, spectator, or listener, guiding her how to apprehend symbols inside a particular framework. Bakhtin (1986) recognizes genres as grounded in social practices, as embodied in concrete works that are negotiated at the moment of interaction.

How genres accomplish this function is part of an ongoing discussion in different fields. For example, genres can be constituted by particular operations of reading determined by the interpretation of the reader who focus on particular features of the text while overlooking others, as in the case of the emergence of the "fantastic genre" presented by Todorov (1980). In this form the reader must be suspended between a "naturalistic and a supernatural" explanation in order for this genre to become visible. This idea is compelling because there is a moment of hesitancy where the reader is confronted with not knowing what to make about a particular reading: "The fantastic occupies the duration of this uncertainty.... The fantastic *is that hesitation* experienced by a person who knows only the laws of nature, confronting an apparently supernatural event" (1980:25 emphasis added). The fantastic requires, then, in order to be able to exist within the text, the fulfillment of three conditions, in which the reader takes an active role. The first one, asks the readers to take the characters as live beings, giving them human form, and to wonder between a natural and a super natural explanation of the events taking place. The second need the hesitation experience by the character. The third one asks the reader to reject poetical and allegorical interpretations (Ibid: 41). Thus the reader becomes the most important element in this process.

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11 For poetic structure see Jakobson 1958; Bauman 1975, 1986; Bauman & Briggs 1990; Briggs 1993; Banti and Giannattasio 2004. For literary theory Bakhtin 1981, 1986; Jauss 1974, 1982; Barthes 1975; Todorov 1980. For music genres Kivy 2001; Rentfrow and Mcdonald 2010. And for practice theory see Hanks 1987.

I found Tododov's emergence of the fantastic genre valuable because it exemplifies Goffman's idea of *situation*. In Todorov's conceptualization, the reader can go in any direction until she embeds the text into the fantastic genre. Any social *situation* entails hesitancy, until it founds a particular directionality.

In order to understand how genres create directionality, it is useful to look at Hans Jauss' "pre-constituted horizon of expectations" available to the receptor of a work of art (rezeptionsästhetik). An horizon of expectation is a basic situation model, or the "normative basic patterns," and maxims and values associated with a particular work of art, helping to delineate the process of reception (Jauss 1974:210). This horizon encompasses the social norms and historical situation of a given time and place, and also situates the work in relation to others so that the readers' "horizon of experience" (what they may have already read) can also be included (Ibid:23). Reader response is dependent upon the extent to which the work does or does not conform to these norms and expectations. These horizons are therefore historically flexible, meaning readers may interpret and value a text differently from a previous generation. It also emphasizes the reader as an important element in the processing of texts. Consequently, the horizon of expectation about a work of art is based on a dialogical relationship between reception and the intertextuality of different discourses. For Jauss, genres are to be understood not as genera (classes), but rather as groups of historical families:

> If one follows the fundamental rule of the historicization of the concept of form, and sees the history of literary genres as a temporal process of the continual founding and altering of horizons, then the metaphorics of the courses of development function, and decay can be replaced by the nonteleological concept of the playing out of a limited number of possibilities (Jauss 1974:46).

The idea of "horizon of expectation" is relevant for the study of listening genres in that listening genres, while some are spontaneous and ephemeral, are always constructed out of already existent "listening discourses." Listeners do not receive sound in a vacuum, but rather compile them from pre existing listening-texts. An horizon of expectation is thus, a similar concept to intertextuality, an idea that Bakhtin, even though he did not call it intertextuality but spheres of communication, developed in detail. Bringing this concept is helpful because, contrary to Bakhtin, Jauss is interested in reception, not the production site, focusing on the function, reception and influence of literary works and genres in their historical reality and social environment.

In Bakhtin's theory of the novel, genre is defined as a specific type of formalized text with defined metrics, grammar, phonetic structure, lexicon, and style that are present in several kinds of oral and written discourse (Bakhtin 1986). In this view, language is understood in the form of individual concrete utterances (both oral and written) by speakers, and these utterances "are inseparably linked to the *whole* of the utterance and are equally determined by the specific nature of the particular sphere of communication" (Bakhtin 1986:60 emphasis in the original). These spheres of communication have a dual attribute, on one hand they seem to pre-exists any particular interaction yet they are shaped by the particular social situation in which the interaction takes place. In the process of interacting pre-existing communicative spheres are altered. It is the human capacity for and the need of establishing relationship with others, that makes possible

meaning in interaction.[12] In this model, genre is "a routinized vehicle for encoding and expressing particular orders of knowledge and experience" (Bauman 2001:80), and as a special kind of creative activity embodying a specific sense of experience.

Genres are useful units of analysis because they link particular formal units (e.g. phonetic, lexical, and grammatical) to thematic ones. They also structure relations between the speaker (and listener) and other participants during spoken communication (Bakhtin 1986). This means that genres pre-exists any particular interaction and yet they are adopted and combined in speech situations (Goffman 1964). Generic types, thus, orient toward a specific conceptual horizon, determined by "the concrete situation of the speech communication, the personal composition of its participants" (Bakhtin 1986:78), and the already established orders of knowledge that precede the interaction (Bauman, 2001). This framework is a direct attack on any formalist model that views linguistic classification as a closed system. Genres are thus defined as "kinds of discourse" that are the outcome of historically specific acts (horizons of expectations), that "derive their thematic organization from the interplay between systems of social value, linguistic convention, and the world portrayed. They derive their practical reality from their relation to particular linguistic acts, of which they are both products and primary resources" (Hanks 1987:671). Thus, the listener is in a permanent state of vigil where the sum of her personal history and social agreements that inform a particular social situation, get embedded, creating genres of listening.

Speech genres, thus, are a precondition for meaningful communication, since they organize our speech in almost the same way as grammatical (syntactical) forms do, conveying expectations of content, style, and structure which helps to shape any verbal exchange, from the simplest conversational rejoinder to the most complex scientific statement (1986:90).

Consequently, if we transpose to listening practices the idea that speech genres point to a specific conceptual horizon during interaction, we will find that generic types order reception. Types of listening differentially tune or guide the ear to attend to some aspects of an utterance –or sound– while not attending to others. Genres create context and frameworks of relevance that shape the listener's orientation at the moment of reception.

### *4.2 Intention*

As stated, listening *for* and listening *to* are analytic poles of a range of different forms of engagement of listening. Both poles (and everything in between) create structures of relevance and are intentional. Here I am referring to the social ontology of intentions defined as the property that the subjects' thoughts as well as their embodied actions have to be directed towards something, "the 'aboutness' of our mental and physical activity" (Duranti 2006:36). In this framework, intentionality is always involved in human action, and I argue that, since listening genres direct the scope of a particular framework (situation), there is always intentionality involved. Inside this ontological conception of intention, there are also particular culture-specific intentional acts, for example, the doctor listening through the stethoscope, the Egyptian listening to a sermon,

12 Bakhtin is arguing against a formalistic approach to poetic language as a closed system.

or the music expert looking for particular signs. There is a particular arrangement of the trajectory of signification that will be followed. I am equating these culture-specific intentional acts to the listening *for* given that there is an explicit attention directed towards a specific aural sign. The ontological dimension of intention I associate with listening *to*, where there is no determined course of action, but the spontaneous appearance of genres that come and go without the tapering effect that occurs when one follows a pre-determined path of signification. When listening genres emerge, they give directionality to the sound whether or not the listener consciously imposes a frame of relevance: there is always intentionality involved. It is important to underline that no matter how casual the listening *to* something is, there is an (ontological) intention involved as well as the emergence of a particular framework even if the phenomenon is ephemeral and unconscious. I am pointing to this issue in direct response to some scholars interested in listening as a conceptual framework (Erlmann, 2004; Carter 2004; Hirschkind 2006) who tend to focus on the analytic separation between listening versus hearing, in which the former is always looking for meaning and signification and is intentional, while the latter is not. As exposed, the main distinction that these scholars make is the *attentiveness* that listening involves through a conscious positioning as an active phenomena, while hearing is seen as a passive enterprise (as the Saussurian model of the talking heads propose). In this way hearing remains monological while listening is always dialogical since listening always conjures historical, cultural, and social situations that are brought to light through the attentive listener (Carter 2004:44).

My approach to listening genres suggests that this analytic separation is not always accurate. Psychoanalytic listening, as this work will show, reveals that 1) consciousness or attentiveness is not a necessary component to be able to "listen," 2) there is no "passive" listening since there will always be frames of reference inside a situation that are always intentional, and 3) every sound that is apprehended by a listener leaves an imprint in his or her psyche, whether or not the subject is aware of this effect. Therefore the sounds that the listener does not "consciously" process are still relevant for the constitution of her subjective experience.

Bottom line, everything that subjects listen to matters. By focusing on the constitution of listening genres, I argue that it is possible to establish a listening orientation that is important for the conceptualization of new ways of knowing and gaining a deepen understanding of how the members of a society relate to each other, when the analysis of talk is insufficient.

## 5. Psychoanalytic listening

To demonstrate how listening genres get constituted, creating not only social identities, but social ways of listening, I turn the attention to *psychoanalytic listening*, a particular listening genre that has permeated social interaction in the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina. As I will demonstrate later in this work, a key part of the formation and spread of psychoanalytic listening is its reflexivity. Psychoanalysts are acutely aware of their own ways of listening and speaking, and they attend to analysands through a specific interpretative lens. Typically, this means they go far beyond what a patient says to infer which is meant but unsaid. Spoken words are placed in a relation of relevance to unspoken (perhaps unrecognized) motives and feelings. A signature statement of the

genre is: "when you say x, I hear y." It is the regularities of the genre that allow the analyst to get from what is said to what is inferentially heard.[13]

Even though listening is one of the key elements in the psychoanalytic encounter (i.e. an analysand speaks and a psychoanalyst listens, and vice-versa) there are not many studies that focus the attention on the listening component in this interaction. Most of these studies focus on listening to the internal voices produced by the super-ego as a punitive voice, and in the process of fantasy creation (See Freud 1995; Isakower 1939 [1982]). Historically, there was only one psychoanalyst, Theodor Reik[14], who took the time to develop a theory of listening between an analyst and an analysand and tried to systematize this particular phenomenon (Connor 1997, 1999a, 1999b, 2003; and Wilberg 2004 are contemporary exceptions).

While analyzing the sense of 'guilt,' in the *Ego and the Id*, Freud made some remarks on the role of auditory traces in the constitution of fantasies: "it is as impossible for the super-ego as for the ego to disclaim its origin from things heard; for it is a part of the ego and remains accessible to consciousness by way of these word-presentation…but the *cathetic energy*[15] does not reach these contents of the super-ego from auditory perception (instruction or reading) but from sources of the id." (1989:654). Freud is explaining a particular kind of listening that gets constituted during childhood through the super-ego, which involves the internalization of parental voices "[f]irst and foremost there is the incorporation of the former parental agency as a super-ego…identifications with the two parents of the later period and with other influential figures" (Freud 1995:780; Leader 1998). Internalizing the parental voice creates verbal residues that are in fact derived from auditory perceptions, but that the child is not yet capable of understanding (decoding) as such. But by the unconscious process of internalizing these auditory insights, they will eventually constitute the super-ego, which is punitive and regulatory in essence. Thus, the super-ego is depicted as an "internal voice" that will both reprimand us for our disobedience and encourage us in the pursuit of impossible tasks, while the ego is left to suffer the consequences of these contradictory imperatives (Freud 1989:654-655;780-85).

In his article "On the Exceptional Position of the Auditory Sphere" (1939) Otto Isakower,[16] one of the few psychoanalysts who paid attention to the importance of listening in psychoanalysis, followed Freud's proposition on the constitution of the super-ego as an internal voice, but intended to explain/demonstrate how this process happens physically as well as psychically. He reached the conclusion that what he calls "the auditory sphere" which encompasses both, the auditory dimension as well as the sense of equilibrium and orientation, are of critical importance for the understanding of the

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13 It is important to mention that the process of inference is co-constituted between the analyst and the analysand. The analysand brings to the encounter a particular frame, product of individual experience, and the analyst makes sense of it through a dialectic process between what is says, and what it infers.

14 Theodor Reik was one of Freud's disciples, as well as a personal friend, he developed most of his studies to understand the pragmatics of listening inside the psychoanalytic theory.

15 The term is generally used to designate various psychic impulses in energy terms.

16 A famous Vienese psychoanalyst (later nationalized American) who is mostly famous for his contribution to the hypnogogic states while falling asleep, that later became known as the "Isakower phenomena" (1938).

formation of the unconscious. Making a curious comparison between the constitution of the super-ego and the crustacean Palæmon (a kind of prawn), Isakower explains that the otolith apparatus (a structure in the inner ear responsible for balance, movement, sense of gravity in lower animals, and sound detection in higher aquatic and terrestrial vertebrates)[17] in the crustacean, does not serve the function of hearing, but serves the purpose of "the perception of movement and position of the body relative to its environment and orientation in space" (1939:340). In order to be able to orient itself, the crustacean fills the canal of the otolith apparatus with sand or any material that is close by. In other words, the crustacean incorporates external elements in its organ to be able to orient itself, and depending on the characteristics of the elements it is incorporating (rock, sand, magnetic debris, etc.) its awareness and constitution of the way it perceives the environment will be determined. For Isakower, something similar happens with the formation of the unconscious.

The external "resonance" of the outer-world, which is yet to be decoded by an infant, gets inside the auditory sphere the same way the crustacean fills its ears with gravel, making an unconscious imprint that will shape the infant's behavior (1939: 342-343). The super-ego, thus, gets constituted as the "psychical organ of equilibrium" (Ibid:344) the one who regulates and controls behavior. It is in the capacity or ordering linguistically the structure of the auditory perception that the child begins to form an inner voice, and for Isakower this is what constitutes the "ego-apparatus in man" (Ibid: 345).

This theory about the auditory sphere constitutes a very particular way of understanding listening, where there is the incorporation of more than one cognitive modality (i.e. audition and equilibrium). Under this framework, listening becomes the most valuable sensorial dimension for the constitution of one's self. As Isakower reminds us and underlines, purely optical sense-impression would not be able to account for the formation of logical or ethical judgment, something that the auditory sphere does (Ibid:345). He explains that the visual system of a newborn infant takes some time to develop. In the first week of life, babies don't see much detail. Their first view of the world is indistinct and only in shades of gray and it takes several months for the child's vision to develop fully. In contrast, the auditory system in a newborn is fully developed.[18]

Psychoanalytic listening is established as a dialog inside one's own psyche. How this listening translates to the psychoanalytic encounter is a different analytic problem. Understanding the connection between a sound image and a concept in a psychoanalytic exchange—a session between an analysand and an analyst— is a difficult task. Theodor Reik has importantly described in his books "Listening with the Third Ear" (1948) and "Voices from the Inaudible" (1964) that psychoanalysis has developed its own way of listening, or what he called a "third ear." According to Reik, the main peculiarity of this listening genre is that it surpasses the conscious dimension "[p]sychoanalysis is not so much a heart-to-heart talk as a drive-to-drive talk, an inaudible but highly expressive

17 Definition found in Oxford Dictionary.

18 According to Anna Karpf in her book *The Human Voice* (2006), the audio responsiveness of unborn infants react to some sounds from as early as 14 weeks—it can distinguish between male and female voices, and from within a group of people can recognize its mother speaking and so be soothed or excited by her voice. Karpf explains that until the child is 4 years old, listening/hearing is the most important sense until other—specially—vision, takes its place.

dialog" (1948:144). The psychoanalyst learns to collect this material which is not conscious but which has to become conscious. The suggestion is that when an analysand is speaking to an analyst, the semantic reference attached to certain utterances, lose their referent, and the analyst task is to *listen* to how "one mind speaks to another beyond words and in silence (Ibid:144). The following quote summarizes this position:

> "It can be demonstrated that the analyst, like his patient, knows things without knowing that he knows them. The voice that speaks in him, speaks low, but he who listens with the third ear hears also what is expressed almost noiselessly, what is said, *pianissimo*. There are instances in which things a person has said in psychoanalysis are consciously not even heard by the analyst, when you say x, I hear y but none the less understood or interpreted" (1948:145)

To illustrate this process in a clinical concrete occurrence, Reik recounts an example of a female patient that he has been treating for some time. At the end of their fifth meeting, he notices that this patient does not look at her self in the mirror when putting on her coat and hat. At that moment Reik realizes that that is an unusual practice, and he begins to wonder why he did not notice this conduct before.[19] His conclusion is that through all the previous sessions, he unconsciously began to hear things that surpassed the conscious sphere, and somehow accumulated. The sudden realization that this woman never looked at herself in the mirror, is the result of this auditory accumulation that finally –unconsciously – revealed through the noticing of this single trait; it became a sign of something he was not able to understand before. According to him, he probably noticed this action before, but he only recognized it when there was an insight, "when the unconscious became visible" (Ibid: 148-149). This is because for Reik psychoanalysis listening is not a conscious thought process, or a logical operation, but "an unconscious—I might almost say instinctive—reaction that takes place within" (Ibid: 147). This example resembles the crustacean Palæmon metaphor, where the analyst is filled up by information of all kinds that will later develop in the demarcation of a specific path. What Reik is then referring to when declaring that a psychoanalyst should be able to hear the "inner voice" of the patient's unconscious, is to this kind of phenomena. While not necessarily focusing only on the restrictive inner voice of the super-ego, the aurality a psychoanalyst is trying to decode, pertains to the unconscious world. Let's remember that psychoanalysis for Freud "cannot situate the essence of the psychical in consciousness, but is obliged to regard consciousness as a quality of the psychical" (Freud 1995: 630). Thus, the duty of the analyst is to find this auditory space inside the psyche of the analysand and by doing so, the analyst constitutes a specific psychoanalytic listening genre.

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19 One of the techniques that Freud postulated as key for the recollection of relevant information is to develop a particular kind of attention: *gleichschwebend*, or mobile attention (gets commonly translated as 'free-floating attention'). The idea is to avoid the dangers of focusing the attention towards one particular point, because if the analyst do so (Freud warns us) would be a mirror of the analyst own expectations or inclinations. What the analyst should do instead, is to pay attention to every single detail equally.

*5.1 Resonance*

Lacan defines his primary purpose as the explication of what he considers to be the true nature of Freud's original discoveries in regard to psychoanalytic theory and technique. It is his contention that the foundation of the psychoanalytic understanding of man was Freud's initial recognition that the unconscious is structured as a "natural language" (1966). Such seminal works as *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, and *Jokes in Their Relations to the Unconscious* are cited by Lacan as indicating that the basic philosophical problem of psychoanalysis is the problem of language. Indeed, it was from Freud's initial focus upon the mechanisms of speech that the "talking cure" derived, with its emphasis upon the evocative power of words, the elucidation of parapraxes and the linguistic complexities of dream work. Lacan insists that Freud's fundamental insight into the structure of the unconscious was obscured by his eventual adoption of a pseudo-biological model, derived by nineteenth century physics, borrowed in the hope of establishing a respectable scientific metapsychology (1998). Since language is that capacity which is most uniquely human, Lacan proposed that the contemporary science of linguistics provided a more congruous model for scientific exploration of the unconscious and the world which constitute the psychoanalytic situation. Within a linguistic frame of reference the role of the therapists is conceptualized as that of "a translator between conscious and unconscious meaning systems" of both the analysand's and his own subjectivity (Bär 1974:531).

A full exposition of Lacan's work is beyond the scope of this chapter, but what I want to underline, is that even though he dedicated a lot of his attention to language, it is his formulation of the concept of "resonance" that strikes as one of the most important contributions to understand the relationship between analysand and analyst. Acoustic (or mechanical) resonance is connected with the frequency range of human hearing. In what follows Lacan's concept of resonance will be consider in some detail.

The idea that Freud postulated later developed by Isakower—the resonance that makes an imprint in the infant's psyche—is later amplified and circulated by Jaques Lacan. It is known that central to Lacan's theory of language is the work of Saussure, especially Saussure's observation that the linguistic system is constituted by signifiers which stand in relation to a *that* which is signified, this relationship being arbitrarily assigned by a particular code. Lacan developed his own conceptualization by regarding that the *that* which is signified is itself another signifier (1977b). He tell us that signifiers can be related to each other in a particular linguistic space and many form sequences in a "signifying chain" in accord with semantic and syntactical laws of conventions. Lacan argues that each person in the course of her development becomes uniquely characterized by subjective significations arising from the subjects own unique experience of being in the world (Lacan 1970). Lacan characterizes the vertical (synchronic) as well as the the horizontal (diachronic) dimensions of language "suggestive of an orchestral score where polyphonic and harmonic textures surround each note and sequence of notes in their melodic progression" (1977:96). For Lacan, in the curse of speech, particular words may become "nodes" for a particular salient and polyphonic chain of signifiers. Thereby, the primary task of the analysts is the "achievement of a state of resonance" (Ibid:126) with the polyphony of the patient's language which may permit a recognition and explication

of nodal points in the patient's discourse when they occur. In describing the process of resonance in Lacan, Ysseling (1970) observed that "analysis does not intend so much to control the speaking, but rather to let oneself be dominated and controlled by a word to which one must correspond and listen" (1970:108). By employing her own associations in resonance with the patient's the analyst joins in the quest for that which is signified at a nodal point. Lacan thus contends that it is this activity which can permit and facilitate the analysand to speak fully by bringing into speech those words in their significating relationship to one another which constitutes "the essential structure of his own fundamental subjectivity." The importance of the concept of resonance is not that it leads to interpretation on the part of the analyst, but rather that it permits the analyst to speak evocatively, therein facilitating an enrichment in the polyphony of the discourse of the other (Lacan 1968:62-63).

The concept of resonance developed between Freud and his disciples remains the core of psychoanalytic listening: it implicates a codification that does not necessarily involve an act of consciousness, yet it needs to reach consciousness for interpretation through the resonance of the analysand's and analyst listening. The imprints that are formed in the psyche of the infant throughout her life are thus what will inform the formation of the analysand's subjectivity, forming as Lacan points out, nodes with the enunciation of particular words that the analyst will be able to uncover once she "resonates" with the analysand's subjectivity.

### *5.2 Subgenres*

Psychoanalytic listening, thus, is based mostly on the idea of resonance just exposed. But within the scope of psychoanalytic listening as a genre, we need to ask if there are other forms of listening involved within this genre. A recent work by Salman Akhtar (2013) dissects psychoanalytic listening in four analytic techniques, what I call *sub-genres*:

1) *Objective listening* consists in paying attention to *what* the patient is talking about but grater interest remains in *how* the patient is talking, thus, the process is conferred more value that the content. Consequently, pauses, hesitations, emphases, peculiarities of intonation, and slips of the tongue evoke the analyst's interest to a greater extent than the story on the analysand's mind. According to Akhtar "an unmistakable feature of an analyst listening objectively is that he relies less on his intuition and more in his intellectual capacity, however silently the latter may operate during his clinical work" (2013:5).

2) *Subjective listening* entails relying upon the analyst's subjectivity in her attempts to understand what the analysand is trying to communicate. They subscribe to Freud's (1912e) declaration that the analyst's unconscious, if properly attuned, is directly able to pick up what the patients unconscious is transmitting. This idea was exposed by Reik's (1937) warning that conscious logical thinking is detrimental to analytic perception, the attunement of the analyst to the analysand's unconscious, happens organically by ways of relying on intuition.

3) *Emphatic listening* involves the analyst's actively seeking to resonate with the patient's experience. In order to empathize with someone, one "introjects this object transiently, and projects the introject again into the object. This alone enables him in the

end to square a perception from without and one from within" (Ibid:9).

And lastly, 4) *Intersubjective listening* is an interpersonal view in psychoanalysis which declares that self is nothing but a collection of "reflective appraisals." In this view, the analyst's perception of the patient's thoughts, feelings and fantasies, etc., is always shaped by the analyst's subjectivity. Therefore, the patient's psychology is itself co-constructed (Ibid: 13).

These psychoanalytic listening divisions are in themselves individual listening genres. I call them *subgenres* in this context because while they are specific, and the turning of the ear is different in each case, they are still part of psychoanalytic listening as a broader category (context). What this means is that they all have the same goal: to establish a connection with the analysand's unconscious drives, and discover how the psyche of the patient is constituted, using different steps and positionalities. If we study these categories separately, like for example *emphatic* l*istening*, in which there is not only a specific attunement but also an embodiment of listening, we can do so in many different contexts, for example when one is listening to a friend who has experienced a loss. There are many contexts in which the embodiment of listening will change depending on who, why, how, when, and where the listening is taking place.

This is an important feature of listening genres; the fact that within one genre there can be different *listenings*, or subgenres. When the listener is listening *for* particular features of sound, as in the case of an expert listener, we can safely say that since the directionality has been already established by the context, every different subgenre that would emerge during pursuing the specific listening goal, is a subgenre of the broader genre. When expert listening is not involve, as the example presented of the father listening to his son's cry, the relevancy structure that will emerge as a listening genre, is a listening genre in itself, no matter the ephemeral constitution of it.[20] Consequently, when focusing on listening genres, it is imperative to understand what kind of listening is happening (i.e. expert vs. natural) to be able to trace different positionalities, changes in the *eartune*, and the performativity emergent in relation to the reception of sound.

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The auditory field is thus, saturated with preconceptions, ideas, epistemologies, etc. that are as important in creating contexts, identities, and social interactions. By paying close attention to the constitution of listening genres, we can begin to understand how listening practices directs behavior, create social relationships, and are performative. In order to demonstrate the importance of listening genres, and how they can shape social interaction, I am focusing on psychoanalytic listening in the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina. The following chapter describes in detail why I chose Buenos Aires as a site of inquiry, presenting an historical reconstruction of the psychoanalytic field in

20 I decided not to use Bakhtin's concepts of primary (simple) and secondary genres (complex) to explain subgenres within a "broader" genre. The reason being that secondary genres, what I would call an overarching listening genre, are usually mediated (written) and removed from the context of "actual reality" (Bakhtin 1986:62). Listening genres, to the contrary, far from being removed from actuality, have a material reality and impact. At the same time, since complex genres, as historical formations that tend to absorb and digest primary genres, accentuate primary genres, they can be useful to understand the different technicalities of listening inside a larger frame. To avoid confusion, I would stay with the concept of subgenres.

Argentina, as well as a review of the most important institutions where psychoanalysis is disseminated.

Chapter Two

# The Psychoanalytic Field in Buenos Aires

*The psychoanalyst knows better than anyone else that the point is to hear* [*entendre*] *to which 'part' of this discourse the significant term is relegated, and this is how he proceeds in the best of cases: he takes the description of an everyday event as a fable addressed as a word to the wise, a long prosopopeia as a direct interjection, and, contrariwise, a simple slip of the tongue as a highly complex statement, and even the rest of a silence as the whole lyrical development it stands in for.*

(Lacan, *Écrits* - 252).

## 1. Introduction

In order to understand how listening psychoanalytically as a genre gets constituted, I am focusing on the practice of psychoanalysis in Buenos Aires. Argentine psychoanalysis occupies an important position in Argentina, one that partially symbolically structures other fields and many discursive arenas (we can find psychoanalysis outside the clinical setting: in newspapers, TV and radio shows, in sports, etc.). Psychoanalysis in Argentina, but especially in Buenos Aires, is not only an institutionalized form of a therapeutic practice, but also a way of relating to the world. What this means is that psychoanalysis has become a framework that helps to explicate some experiences of everyday life, influencing ways of acting and thinking, nurturing social identities and lifestyles. There is a direct relationship between the clinical and pedagogical institution of psychoanalysis, and everyday experience (Visacovsky 2009).

As explained in the previous chapter, a signature statement of psychoanalysis is that particular acts, verbal or not, will stand for something else (when you say x, I hear y). There is a figurative meaning to actions, saying, and hearings. For example, while in Buenos Aires, when I passed a knife to a friend after cutting a tart, accidentally giving her the knife from the blade rather than from the handle, she interpreted this action as me wanting to tell her something indirectly. "What are you doing this?" She replied, "Are you trying to tell me something?" To my lack of response (I did not understand what was happening), another friend present replied, "Stop projecting your own neurosis into other people." This kind of interaction: I would do or say something that will be interpreted as meaning something else, was a common experience throughout my eighteen months of fieldwork. At the beginning of my research, they led me to think that in Buenos Aires, many individuals have a tendency to "over interpret things." It was not until later, that I started to realize that this was a reflection of something else: the prevalence of

psychoanalysis as an interpretative framework, that it is more clearly expressed through listening practices. In Argentina, people listen different than in other places. They are looking for meanings that are not attached to a particular referent, but to a particular framework of interpretation: psychoanalysis.

As most expert knowledge, psychoanalysis has been thought for some of its followers and disseminators as a clinical theory of universal properties, immune to the effects of the specificities of each individual national or regional adoption. Against this trend, studies about the diffusion of transnational commodities, lifestyles, knowledge, etc., demonstrate the importance of the local conditions of reception (see Latour 1986, 1993; Plotkin 2001). In other words, the diffusion of ideas, concepts, even goods, does not remain unchanged but is provided with meaning according to prevailing local modes of cultural interpretation (Inda and Rosaldo 2002). The forms of knowledge defined as "experts" such as psychoanalysis, do not escape the same rule; although their cognitive universals pretentions are universal, they are primarily social practices rooted in cultural traditions and networks of signification, composed, performed and appropriated in particular contexts.

This chapter intends to explain the specificities of this form of knowledge in Argentina: what does psychoanalysis mean in the Argentine context, what are the specificities of this practice, who are their disseminators, etc. This historical account is important to appreciate the complexities of this phenomenon and to have a better idea of the object we are dealing with. Consequently, this chapter aims to give a general historical context on how psychoanalysis has been conceptualized by scholars, different mental health providers, analysts, students, etc. in Buenos Aires. Special emphasis is given to the institutional training needed to become an analyst. This is an important element since, as this chapter will show, to become an analyst requires a long, and sometimes difficult process that contributes to the constant exposure to psychoanalytic listening as a genre. After all, while not directly stated, but implicit in every action a future analyst is exposed, the aspiring analyst is taught how to listen psychoanalytically.

## 2. History of the Psychoanalytic Field

In 2005 the World Health Organization[21] estimated that in Argentina there were 154 psychologists—including psychoanalyst—for every 100,000 inhabitants, making Argentina the country with more psychologists per capita in the world. In comparison, Denmark, the second-ranking country had 85 psychologists (almost half than Argentina). By contrast, in the United States, the fifth ranked country by 2005, there were 31.1[22] every 100,000 inhabitants. A more recent study shows even higher numbers in Argentina, estimating 196 psychotherapists per 100,000, or one every 510 inhabitants. According to this study the proportion grows a disproportionate 828.5 psychotherapists every 100,000 inhabitants in the capital city of Buenos Aires (Alonso 2008).

According to Mariano Ben Plotkin in 2001 almost one of every 200 *porteños* (as citizens of Buenos Aires are called) is a psychotherapist of some sort meaning that they

21 www.who.int/mental_health/evidence/atlas/profiles_countries_a_b.pdf (accessed November 2013), pages 62-64.

22 The American Psychological Association (APA) estimated a smaller number for the United States: 27 per 100,000 inhabitants (Romero 2012).

would use a psychoanalytic framework (in different degrees) in their practice (2001:6). There are many analytic institutions, and many practitioners of psychoanalysis, but as stated by several historians and/or specialist in psychology of Argentina, psychoanalysis often gets confused with other forms of mental health therapeutic (Dagfal 2009; Vezetti 1993; Plotkin 2001; Lakoff 2006). When I interviewed Germán García, a very prominent international figure within the school of Lacanian psychoanalysis, and director and founder of the *Descartes Center*, a training institution for Lacanian psychoanalysis in the city of Buenos Aires, he sustained that the majority of the people who call themselves psychoanalysts are in actual fact psychologists. In his own words:

> [E]very time I speak to French, Italian or Spanish people, I got tired to explain to them that there are not that many psychoanalysts in Argentina. [Argentina] is the only country where the psychologist is called psychoanalyst. In Spain, for example, there are sixty thousand, or eighty thousand psychologists, who knows? But they call themselves psychologists, and they say "I am a clinical psychologist," "I am a developmental psychologist"…

What Germán García and other scholars are pointing to is the semantic overlap of different mental health disciplines. In Argentina, psychoanalysis has *somehow* overlapped with other disciplines that have in common, the idea of a therapeutic as the means to heal some emotional distress, and the idea of mental disorder. Accordingly, psychology and psychiatry are part of the exchangeable semantic nuance when referring to the practice of psychoanalysis, and vice versa. People use the word psychologist when they are going to analysis, or psychiatrist when they are referring to a psychologist, or the colloquial: *el loquero/la loquera* (roughly referring to the experts in dealing with crazy people).[23] If we consider each particular therapeutic method as a field, it is not difficult to perceive that these three fields of mental health, even though in its constitution they differ greatly, share some of what Bourdieu called *illusio, "*the belief that the 'game' we collectively agree to play is worth playing, that the fiction we collectively elect to accredit constitutes reality" (1992:97). *Illusio* as illusion, makes reference back to a common history of activity and the desired outcomes. In the case of this extended field, the *illusio* are the implicit expectations governed by the relationship mental health patient – mental health expert and the common goals shared by these subfields.[24] Psychoanalysis is thus inserted inside a broader field of mental health that scholars who have studied psychoanalysis in Argentina refer to *el mundo psi* (the psy-world).[25]

But the fact that psychology and psychoanalysis share the same *illusio* and semantic reference, does not necessarily explain how or why this process happens. The fact that, as Germán García explained, in Spain, as in most parts of the world, these two

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23 I am not trying to imply that people do not know the difference between these three fields, nor I am suggesting that there are no institutional differences. I am pointing to a linguistically interesting phenomenon where people use the same words to refer to dissimilar therapeutic situations. For a detailed analysis between the overlap of medical, psychiatric and psychoanalytic practices in the public hospital see Visacovsky 2008 and Vezzetti 1996.

24 For a history of psychoanalysis inside public hospitals see Visacovsky 2002, 2007, 2008.

25 See Plotkin 2001, Visacovsky 2002, Dagfal 2009, Balán 1991, Lakoff 2006.

fields remain separate, and in Argentina psychoanalysis and psychology are almost interchangeable terms, is worth looking at. This has been the research focus of Alejandro Dagfal, a psychologist and author of the erudite book *Between Paris and Buenos Aires, the Invention of the Psychologist* (2009) who explains this phenomenon through what he calls the "cultural French exception." His central hypothesis points to the connection and exchange between Paris and Buenos Aires as absolutely critical to understand how in Argentina, psychology does not represent the cognitive paradigm linked to the Anglo Saxon scientific tradition. Instead, through the French influence, Buenos Aires subtracts a big part of the biological component of psychology, and inserts a subjective dimension that draws psychology closer to the humanities. Another factor that contributes to the "humanization" of psychology is that at the moment of insertion of psychology to the curricula at public universities in 1944, there were no many psychology professors. Thus, many philosophers, self-taught amateurs and some medical doctors with psychoanalytic training, would teach psychology bringing their conceptual framework to this upcoming field, which, as a result, helped to shape the way psychology was framed in Buenos Aires: "[i]n our country there was a big anti-positivist reaction during the 1930's, after that, the experimental or naturalist modern currents from any direction, didn't have a strong resonance inside the universities" (Dagfal:31). [26] It is within this period that psychoanalysis became a governing force and it did not leave its hegemonic position "unlike Brazil and even France where after the sixties, psychoanalysis became threatened by more scientific approaches and had to fight to maintain its central place" (Ibid). As a consequence, the "Argentine exceptionality" which is the counter part of the "French exception," was born and it is what Dagfal underlines in his study, the fact that Argentina is also exceptional: "Buenos Aires does not only mirrors Paris, but creates its own image, its own hybrid idea of the reflected image" (Ibid:47)

This history, the relationship between France and Argentina, is a complex process that many scholars—mostly historians—have documented.[27] This historic association includes many participants who made possible the fact that psychologists in Buenos Aires have always taken part of philosophical and political debates.[28] The "subjugation" as some authors have called, of Buenos Aires to French culture, has been one of the most recognized points of departure to understand the Argentine exceptionality.[29] In the case of psychoanalysis, learning institutions became the focal point to understand how psychoanalysis made its way to the curricula in the career of psychology. Also, the fact that Argentina has one of Latin America's most extended public welfare systems and the synergy between the university (also public) and the health system allowed psychoanalysts to extend their practice beyond the private clinic, reaching vast sectors of

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26 All the quotes from Dagfal 2009 are my translation.

27 See Halperin Donghi 1992, 1995; Dagfal 2009; Plotkin 2001; Vezetti 1983, 1996.

28 For example, when the 2001 economic crises erupted, psychologists and psychoanalysts were interviewed to comment on the possible sources of the economic turndown. Their analysis pointed to the possible psychic origins of the economic crisis, using words as "narcissism," "obsessive", "compulsive," to describe the cause of this social phenomena (See Plotkin & Visacovsky 2008, Bleichmar 2002).

29 This term does not only refer to psychoanalysis. Many historians also use the term to talk about several aspects of Argentina that are considered different from other parts of Latin America.

the population through free services at the public hospital (Balán 1992). Since the 1970s, political and economic crises strengthened the role of psychoanalysis as an interpretive and therapeutic tool (See Damousi and Plotkin 2009; García 2005). As a result, as the numbers presented suggest, Argentina has by far the highest concentration of psychotherapists per capita in the world.

Continuing the dissemination of psychoanalysis, in the 1960's the social sector that comprise the natural potential clientele for psychoanalysis – a relatively affluent and highly educated middle class[30] – expanded quickly. As a result, changes in the traditional concept of family and women's role in the home and in society opened another area for the reception of psychoanalysis (Plotkin 2001). In the past, the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA)[31] only accepted medical doctors to practice and study psychoanalysis. But as Balán points out in his book *Cuéntame tu vida* (roughly "Tell me about your life," 1991) in Argentina, the wives of some of the main historical figures that brought psychoanalysis into the country, began practicing as psychoanalysts (the wives were not doctors). The estrangement of psychoanalysis from medical institutions made it an attractive career for women whose entrance to medicine was frustrated by the medical establishment (1991:57). The IPA prohibition was lifted in 1954, when it was agreed that a degree in psychology would suffice in order to become an analyst. Thus the boom in psychoanalysis that extended from 1956 to 1964 was stimulated by the aforementioned growth of university enrollments and the development of new career paths in psychology: "analysts were drawn into hospitals and universities because of a social demand emanating from the new waves of university students" (Balán 1991:61).[32]

Throughout the modernization process and social restructuration that Argentina experienced after the 1960's, psychoanalysis became simultaneously used as a therapeutic method, a means to channel and legitimize social anxieties, and an item of consumption that provided status to a sector of the population obsessed with the concept of "modernity."[33] Above all it became an interpretative system. According to Plotkin "if neurosis was *the* modern disease, then psychoanalysis was *the* modern therapy to deal with it, and it was touted as such by numerous magazines and other publications" (emphasis in original 2001:73). At the same time, the middle classes reaction against President Perón, whom they perceived as authoritarian and anti-liberal, employed psychoanalytic concepts to describe the Peronist regime: they judged it "schizophrenic" and "neurotic," beginning a long tradition that will remain present to this day in Argentina: to describe political and economic circumstances through a psychoanalytic

30 From 1950 to 1960 Argentina ranked third in the world in the number of university students per 100,000 inhabitants (Germani and Sautu 1965).

31 The IPA is the world's primary accrediting and regulatory body for psychoanalysis. Its mission is to assure the continued vigor and development of psychoanalysis for the benefit of psychoanalytic patients. It was founded in 1910 by Sigmund Freud. Its first President was Carl Jung and its first Secretary was Otto Rank.

32 It is interesting to note that women are still the dominating force behind psychology. The estimate is that 87% of the registered psychology students are women (Alonso 2008), but institutional positions and successful private practice are equally distributed.

33 The idea of an inner self is quintessential index of the modern subject (see Inoue 2006)

frame.[34] To this day the appropriation of psychoanalysis as an interpretative instrument by the intellectual left is an important factor to the dissemination and legitimization of psychoanalysis in Argentina.[35]

Thus, psychoanalysis in Argentina historically has provided a way to connect a therapeutic discourse with the broader fields of social sciences and the humanities (See Plotkin 2001:166-190; Dagfal 2009; Vezzetti 1996). As Alfonso,[36] an established psychoanalyst who has been working for almost 30 years in his private practice, and has published many articles and a book about psychoanalysis, told me:

> I don't know the answer [why psychoanalysis is so pervasive in Argentina] but I can tell you that when I was younger I wanted to be a philosopher. I wanted to read, to think, and have interesting political debates with people that I used to admire that thought were absolutely brilliant. But I didn't think philosophy would be economically profitable, so I needed to think on a career that would provide me with some kind of financial security. So for me becoming a psychoanalyst was a good way to be able to read, research and be in the discussions that I wanted to be, but also have a steady income.

Psychoanalysis became a profitable way to engage in political, philosophical and more recently economic debates. It is largely stipulated (see Aguirre 2009, Derbyshire 2009, Plotkin 2001, Vezzetti 1991) that it was primarily through Oscar Massotta's reading of Sartre's existentialism where Sartre criticized the anti-humanism in Communism and Marxism bringing psychoanalysis to the social debate, where psychoanalysis began to infiltrate the political and intellectual realm in the 1960's. Massotta, a charismatic self-taught intellectual became a prominent and influential figure in Buenos Aires, and later transitioned from Sartre's existentialism to Lévi-Strauss's structuralism to subsequently introducing Lacan to Argentina. He founded on 1974 the first Lacanian psychoanalytic institute in Argentina, an according to Plotkin "probably [the first one] in the whole Spanish speaking world" (2001:185). Lacan's emphasis on language and on the unconscious as a structure opened the door to an array of debates, predominantly cultural and political.[37] Thus, the acceptance of Lacanian psychoanalysis by people who already had accumulated symbolic capital in some field (political, educational, clinical, etc.) marked the entrance of psychoanalysis to debates outside the clinic.

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34 A great example of this is the article *Saber y autoridad: intervenciones de psicoanalistas en torno a la crisis en la Argentina* (Visacovsky & Plotkin 2008). An analysis of how psychoanalysis was used as a theoretical frame to explain the devastating economic crisis in Argentina from 2001 to 2003.

35 For example, famous psychoanalyst and author Silvia Bleichmar, in her best selling book *Dolor País* (roughly Country Pain making reference to the economic measure "country risk") describes the psychological dimension of different economic crises in Argentina.

36 Pseudonym.

37 Oscar Masotta was one of the responsible actors to merge the social sciences and psychoanalysis combining Marxism, the social sciences and psychoanalysis.

Another important aspect of the dissemination of psychoanalysis outside the clinic is the circulation in popular magazines, journals, and periodicals of all kinds, of psychoanalytic columns that varied in degree of difficulty and specialization. In the late 50's and early 60's women's magazines, for example, developed weekly and monthly editorials directing women towards new ways of getting to know one's self, providing new technologies of self-understanding like psycho-tests and quizzes where women psychoanalysts began to become "experts" in women's issues (Vezzetti 1983, Plotkin 2001). The emergence of these printed materials coincided with the developing discourses of the family as an agency for the individual self-fulfillment rather than a cell for the reproduction of the species. More recently, the proliferation of radio and TV shows that broadcast live sessions between analysands and analysts, or psychoanalysts analyzing television celebrities and sports icons, and diverse advertisement campaigns that use the figure of the analyst in its most iconic representation, contribute to the circulation of psychoanalytic language in Argentina.

The history of psychoanalysis in Argentina is vast and complex. I am in no way making justice to the vast field of research and decades of scholarly work that have aimed to reconstruct this history. In this brief historical summary, my goal is to underlined some of the most relevant arguments that scholars have provided to understand the pervasive nature of psychoanalysis in Argentina; and to comprehend more broadly what does psychoanalysis mean in the Argentine context. Consequently, we can reduce the possible factors to: the humanization of psychology discourses (rather than a more "scientific approach"); the semantic overlap of various psy-sciences; the modernization process of Buenos Aires; secularism; and the circulation and vulgarization of psychoanalysis thorough the dissemination of psy-discourses inside magazines, television and radio shows.

## 3. Training

As indicated, the fact that psychoanalysis is part of a broader *psy-world* means that its boundaries are not always well defined and that it surpasses its own discursive ground. The orthodox practice of psychoanalysis –the highly ritualized private contract between a psychoanalyst and the analysand– in Argentina takes many forms. There is psychoanalysis offered at public hospitals and small public clinics where there is no couch but a desk that separates both analyst and analysand. These exchanges last between 25 to 35 minutes instead of 50 minutes (the average of Freudian psychoanalysis) and there is no payment, which in the practice of traditional psychoanalysis is a pre-condition to analysis.[38] There are psychoanalytical multi-family sessions inside a big auditorium with several psychoanalysts and as many as 80 "analysands" in the room; TV shows where people are being "analyzed" in front of the cameras; amid many other representations.

By being part of the *psy-world* psychoanalysis gets to share different positions inside the social field, and sometimes these positions are not entirely within the doxa. For

38 In "The Psychoanalytic Technique" (1918) Freud introduced the necessity of payment as a precondition to analysis. According to Freud the absence of payment as a corrective force has serious consequences since it would imply that analysis is beyond the real world.

example, when interviewing a psychoanalyst who does not consider himself an "orthodox psychoanalyst" (he rarely uses the couch, does group analysis, and works at the hospital on 24 hour shifts) still finds problematic the "over use" of the *psy* stem:[39] "the prefix *psy* or *psycho* can be followed by anything. You can find "psychic-tarot" and aberrances like that everywhere… in this career we don't sign blueprints you know, architects have to sign something."

This utterance expresses two different propositions. The first one is the creation of cultural hybrids that no matter how unorthodox, they continue to be part of the psychoanalytic field (Canclini 2005). The second part involves the question of the legitimization of a social arena that has surpassed its own limits. Until 2005, when a masters degree in psychoanalysis opened at UBA, there was no 'psychoanalytic degree' recognized by the university system,[40] instead, there are psychoanalytical institutions that recognize the training received at their premises but do not 'certify' the students.

How (or by who) does a psychoanalyst get legitimized? This question is still part of a large debate in Argentina, France and the United States (See Leze 2006). In Argentina, in order to practice as a psychoanalyst, the aspiring analyst must have a *Licenciatura* (a degree that is in between a B.A. and a M.A.) in either psychology or psychiatry. After finishing this degree, there are different possible paths to follow that present different levels of complexity. Among the most common we find: 1. Applying for a paid *residencia* or a *concurrencia* (concurrency) at a public hospital. These last four and five years, respectively. 2. Enroll at one of the many psychoanalytic associations that offers training for clinical supervision that last approximately two to three years. And 3. Start a private clinical practice. But, most importantly – and this goes for any direction the aspiring psychoanalyst takes, he or she must undergo analysis. In this realm, is where the analyst in training begins to learn how to listen to him/herself, to the analysand, and to listen psychoanalytically.

### *3.1 Public Hospital*

The first path mentioned, and by far the more prestigious one, is to compete for a paid residency at a public hospital. One of the many benefits of getting a residency – besides the training, exposure to patients of different backgrounds, and the slow acquisition of expertise, is that residents will be able to compete for tenure positions at public hospitals, and also will be better positioned to be part of the *pre-paga* system (private medical insurance) which will increase the possibility of financial security. Both the residency and the tenure positions are *not* psychoanalytic positions, the positions are open for clinic psychologists, and depending on the student's preference (and luck), it can

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39 Many psychoanalysts do not agree with the idea of using psychoanalysis outside of the clinical setting. In Seminar XI, *The Four Fundamental Concepts*, Jaques Lacan explicitly states: "Psychoanalysis is neither a Weltanschauung, nor a philosophy that claims to provide the key to the universe. It is governed by a particular aim, which is historically defined by the elaboration of the notion of the subject. It poses this notion in a new way, by leading the subject back to his signifying dependence." In Argentina, in spite of the opposition of many analysts, this does not apply.

40 Many students and professors explained that this Masters degree is still in the process of getting the academic exigency that other social sciences, and humanity degrees have accomplished. It is still in the process of obtaining enough capital, to compete with other training institutions.

be at a children's hospital, a women's hospital, a mental health ward, a psychiatric institute, etc.

This process is exceptionally difficult since there are between 800/1000 new graduates applying for approximately 28 to 30 open positions each year. In order to be able to participate in the contest to win one of these scarce positions, the student must present a test that is administered by the Department of Health of the government of each city (the case I'm studying the city of Buenos Aires).[41] It is a standardized test that is meant to prove the knowledge about general psychology of the aspiring resident. The test is designed by a group of psychologists from different areas of expertise and reflects the curricula of the degree in psychology administered by the University of Buenos Aires. The annual exam changes each year and it includes 100 multiple-choice questions. The exams with the highest scores in combination with the top final GPA of the student's bachelor degree get the positions. The whole process is meant to be a fair competition that will result in a meritocratic and democratic practice (everyone with a degree in psychology can compete).

This particular type of field – the public hospital – generates specific capital. A psychology graduate who is able to get into a paid residency will always be considered 'exceptional,' in part because there are so many graduates and so few positions, but most importantly because the system seems to work fairly. Everyone I interviewed at the institutional level, students, psychoanalysts, etc., underlined the fact that this process is absolutely transparent. The meritocratic component of this process is already embedded inside a system of honor with its own share of capital.

But the residencies at public hospitals prepare recent graduates to work into the field of clinical psychology not psychoanalysis, so one could ask why psychoanalysis is relevant inside this specific institutional setting? After taking a close look at the psychology standard exam for the last eight years, we can reach a possible explanation. From the 100 questions that are developed specifically to have a comprehensive knowledge of the psychology field, in between 47 to 55 (depending on the year) questions are directly related to psychoanalysis. The questions are either about classic psychoanalysts: Freud, Lacan, Klein, Winnicott, etc., or by more recent psychoanalysts like Laurent, Bleichmar, Ey, etc. This discovery is really fascinating and informative since it shows that not only psychoanalysis is the main area of expertise that is needed in order to have a higher score in the exam (50%), but it also shows how different fields of psychology are relegated compared to psychoanalysis like cognitive, systemic, behavioral, structural, etc. Psychoanalysis is by far the most important theoretical framework that is needed to get a position at a public hospital.

On the other hand, there are concurrencies that are a very interesting social phenomenon. Since only few graduates will get paid residencies, many aspiring residents get a concurrency. A concurrency is a five-year commitment to attend four hours – three to four times a week – to a public hospital and perform very similar duties as their fellow residents: both will be exposed to patients after approximately three weeks working at the hospital, both would get clinical supervisions by senior psychologists/analysts (at least 85% of the supervisors are psychoanalysts), and both are expected to get 60% clinical training and 40% patient care. The differences are that residents work eight hours instead

41 The standardize test was implemented in 1988.

of four, five times a week for four years – instead of five years, *concurrentes* do not carry out hospital guards, and the rotation between external, internal, and primary consultation varies. But the main difference between a resident and a concurrent is that concurrent positions are *ad honorem*[42] – they don't get any financial reward.

From a mere economic perspective concurrencies represent free labor. Without counting the previous *concurrentes*, the new comers will provide 6,400 hours of free labor a week that in the course of five years will transform into 1,664,000 hours. But *concurrentes* are accumulating capital at a slow pace. By working at the public hospital, they get inserted inside the institutional framework of mental health where they can compete for a tenure position (in order to apply for a permanent position in a public hospital, one has to be a resident or a concurrent). After the termination of the residency/concurrency, the analysts in training only have six months to apply for an open position. Six months after the termination of their time serving at the public hospital, the analyst can no longer apply to one of these positions. Since there are so few opening, many *concurrentes* stay past their five-year commitment in order to keep their status and wait for an opening. This is a strategic move that help both, the public institution – which gets free labor for an extended period of time – and the concurrent who will have a better opportunity to get a tenure job at this institution when/if there is an opening. Another form of capital that *concurrentes* develop is the fact that private health insurance agencies value hospital training over other kind of training, making them more appealing to private insurance companies.

There is no denying that there is a constitution of symbolic capital involved in the concurrencies, but one important reason that they hold together (five years of unpaid labor!) is because "there is a strong ideological component of supporting public institutions in Argentina" as Diana Rabinovich, prominent psychoanalyst and Lacan's personal friend stated. Take Alberto for example, a second year concurrent that when I asked his opinion about working without a salary for five years he answered: "The term *ad honorem* is a beautiful one, it is an honor to bring this service to the hospital, and what we charge, we charge with our formation. I mean the people who we work with and supervise us, and what those people give us back to our professional formation, it gives us what an ATM could never gives us."[43] To state that a particular linguistic form is "beautiful" outside the realm of poetry and literary analysis, it necessary conveys an ideological component. Following Irvine's definition of language ideologies as "the cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests" (1989:255), we can clearly see the constitution of an ideology of civic duty and a commitment to learning that no money would be able to cover in Alberto's response.

Another example of the ideological component of *ad honorem* positions is the supervisors at the public hospitals, which, many of them are also working *ad honorem*. Most of the supervisors are well known and respected, and have successful private

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42 The expression *ad honorem* is actually used when talking about concurrencies at public hospitals, which has a strong ideological semiotic value. It implies that the concurrent is invested inside an honorific structure where material capital is segregated to privilege learning and care.

43 It is important to note that I didn't use the expression *ad honorem*. I specifically asked him how does he felt about working for five years at the hospital without a salary, to which he responded with the expression *ad honorem*.

practices. They have accumulated enough symbolic capital to make a comfortable living. So why spend many hours supervising new residents and *concurrentes*? The answer can be summarized in the response of a well-known psychoanalyst who supervises new residents and *concurrentes* at the children's public mental health hospital T. de Alvear, who told me: "it is absolutely imperative that we [renowned psychoanalysts] support public heath systems to avoid the mercantilism structure of private health corporations, if we don't do it, who will?" Working as a supervisor with no economic remuneration at a public hospital is another form of capital. It invests the analyst with the ethical suit of supporting a fair system that will provide quality services even to those who are unable to afford them, it also signals the analyst as a good person, and, more selfishly, it helps the analyst to develop his own school of thought. Unpaid positions do not only invest subjects with experience and knowledge, and the opportunity to be part of an institutional organization, it also signals individuals as occupying specific social positions, that are immerse in a sea of ideological constructions, ethics, and power relations.

Residencies, concurrencies, and unpaid supervisions exemplify the strategic nature of the psychoanalytic field in Buenos Aires. Inside the mental health institution, being exposed to patients from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, is highly valued, and economic remuneration – although highly desirable – it is not the motor that motivates this social field. The exposure to different circumstances (i.e. internal, external patients, emergencies) at the hospital, in addition to the process of getting inside the public hospital structure (the exam), creates specific symbolic capital that will cover some of the 'lack' of the state's institutional recognition of the training of psychoanalysis. After being trained, or worked at the hospital for four or five years, the capital accumulated during those years is there to stay, creating a specific field with defined rules, goals, and expectations, action, meaning, strategies and interests which are unified by the "struggle for hegemony in the local order established by the field itself" (Bourdieu 1979:112) in this case, institutional recognition, and the possibilities of getting inserted in a permanent tenure position.

The case of psychoanalysis inside the public hospital is particularly interesting. Argentina's mental health field has developed an inherent strategy that has transformed psychoanalysis as the dominant capital and has surpassed different psychology specialties (the standard exam is a prove of that). It shows how the boundary of the fields, and the definition of who is inside a specific field, is a matter of constant struggle, specifically a by-product of attempts to establish legitimate domination within the field (Bourdieu 1992).

One important aspect of the training received at public hospitals, is the exposure to patients and co-supervision: Celia, a fourth year resident working at the children's mental health hospital Tobar García, recounted the following story:

> Last year [2009] we were in the hospital guard when a woman of about 50 was admitted with some scratches and small wounds in her face, she seemed scared. You could tell she was from a low-income background and she didn't look right. But despite the fact that she was bleeding—she had a cut next to her right ear—she asked to talk to the psychologist. My supervisor, Dr. F. and I went to see her. She sat down and started talking almost without looking up, about the problems she had with her husband, and her fear that *la nena* [referring to her

> youngest daughter] was going with the wrong crew. I was very moved when suddenly, Dr. F. interrupted her and told her "why don't you make an effort and *tell us what you really want to say*." Immediately after that, the woman began to cry and said "I have cancer, I am really scared and I don't know how to tell my family." It was shocking, evidently Dr. F. **was able to listen to something that I, despite all the work I have been doing in the hospital, couldn't hear**. That's the kind of training that we receive in the hospital. And I don't think that there is a better place to be exposed and understand what analysis is about.

In her account, Celia tells us that she was exposed to psychoanalytic listening, something that she admitted did not master. Stories like these were constant when interviewing residents and *concurrentes*. Besides talking about the pride of doing the work they do, they also talked about their experience inside the public hospital, as if it was a world that needed its own codification available to the future analyst once he/she is able to listen: "It's all about paying attention to the signs, they can be verbal or not, you have to learn to read between the lines, **you have to listen**, yeah, **it pretty much comes down to listening, something that can take a life to achieve**." These words came from a third year male *concurrente*, who was explaining to me that things are "not really what they look in the surface." He was describing his own problems trying to understand the "human psyche."

Listening, while not always explicit during the training received at public hospitals, is a pivotal element that analysts have to learn to be able to become effective phychoanalysts. Aspiring analysts are exposed to psychoanalytic theories throughout their undergraduate education. What is interesting to note here is that it was not until recently (from 2004 and on)[44] that analysts began to write about listening practices in psychoanalysis. Freud never fully developed the listening component of his remarkable theory, it was his students Theodor Reik and Isaac Isakower, two of Freud's closest disciples, who later would develop a theory of listening in the psychoanalytic field. Nevertheless, the idea of learning how to listen *differently* is fundamental in the analysts training, and while not always explicitly stated, it is always there.

### *3.2. Public University: University of Buenos Aires (UBA)*

As mentioned, the entrance exam to get into the public hospital is design for students of psychoanalytic theory, with 50% of the questions devoted to this field. The exposure to psychoanalysis begins during the psychology training at the University of Buenos Aires (UBA), the most prestigious public university in the country, and the one that hosts the most students (274,667 registered students in 2011). If we take a look at the syllabus of psychology at UBA the amount of classes devoted to Freud, the so-called *French* and *English* schools of psychoanalysis, psychopathology (Lacan), and clinical psychoanalysis, outnumber (by far) other specialties like behavioral, cognitive, or developmental psychology, among many other specialties.[45] The ratio is 8 to 1, there are eight elective psychoanalytic options compared to only one of systemic theory, one group

44 See Akhtar 2013; Wilber 2004; Connor 2005.

45 http://www.psi.uba.ar/ (acceded on February 2013)

therapy, one legal psychology, etc. This is an important fact because, as already stated, this formation will not only affect the training of the psychologist, but it also has an impact on where the future psychologist can work, can compete inside the world of private health insurance, and what kind of private practice will be able to develop.

The popularity of psychology as a degree in Argentina is considerable. The last national statistic research conducted inside higher education institutions in Buenos Aires in 2009,[46] found that there were 23,424 psychology students registered at UBA. From this number, approximately 4,148 are new psychology students. This number does not include other universities or post-graduate institutions, which would make a total of 62,243 registered psychology students in the country; thus, UBA has 37.6% of the total population of psychology students in the country. During my fieldwork at UBA, I did a quick survey among 107 students of psychology, asking what would they want to do after finishing their degree. Of these, 84% (89 students) want to pursue a clinical-psychology career compared to the remaining 26% (18 students) who want to develop a different career path, mostly cognitive brain research or some kind of biological psychology. These propositions were consistent with my own experience attending psychology classes. Psychopathology, psychoanalysis and clinical psychology are so popular that there is not enough space to house all the students who want to attend to these classes. Classrooms that can usually sit sixty students, hosted one hundred or more students. Students sit on the floor or remained standing during class. In comparison, inside the classroom of behavioral psychology, and neuroscience, there are approximately between fifteen and eighteen students in attendance (sometimes even less). But the massive attendance starts to decrease after the third year. Not everyone registered finishes the degree, but according to recent statistics, 1,542 students will come out every year with a psychology degree.

These numbers represent people who will become mostly, clinical psychologists. When I interviewed psychoanalysts working at public hospitals, they use both "psychologist" and "psychoanalyst" to refer to their profession. But mostly, they use psychoanalytic terminology to talk about their patients. For example, the use of the term "Other" which they would explicitly underline that it is spelled with a capital "O," referring to the Lacanian idea of radical alterity;[47] or the term unconscious to define the purpose of analysis; 'desire' described as the 'desire of the analyst,' as the libidinal force that makes possible the analytic experience; just to name a few. This does not come as a surprise since, as discussed, the curricula is so heavily influenced by psychoanalysis, that *they become socialized to speak inside a particular professional psychoanalytic ethos*.

But the question comes back: are they trained psychoanalysts?

I asked many students of psychoanalysis weather or not they considered themselves to be psychoanalysts. The answer was almost always the same. They are analysts in training. They are not yet psychoanalysts because to become a psychoanalyst is a process that takes many years of personal analysis and experience working with patients. For the professional psychologist working at public hospitals, and having

46 http://www.me.gov.ar/spu/documentos/Anuario-2009.pdf (acceded March 2011)

47 For Lacan, radical alterity, an other-ness which transcends the illusory otherness of the imaginary because it cannot be assimilated through identification. Lacan equates this radical alterity with language and the law, and hence the big Other is inscribed in the order of the symbolic.

developed their private clinic somehow successfully, the question was more complex. They agree with their fellow students that to become an analysts is something that takes many years of personal training, but (and this is the interesting part) they say they are capable of providing psychoanalysis inside the public clinic by *listening* as a psychoanalysts.

To exemplify this idea, consider the following exchange between myself and Alicia, a young psychologist/analyst who was working at the drug and alcohol division of a mental health hospital Florentino Amegino for the past five years, and who recently started to have individual clients at her private practice:

> X: are you an analyst?
> A: well, I want to become one, it is a hard process. But it would be presumptuous to call my self an analyst, but I am in training.
> X: so you are a psychologist?
> A: yes, technically, that's my title. I'm a clinical psychologist.
> X: what does that mean in terms of your patients? What exactly do you do? do you talk to them, give them medication…what is your role?
> A: at the hospital we do many things, we talk to the patient, try to convince him/her to come regularly, sometimes we do some social work because the patients don't have any money, talk to their families…
> X: but that doesn't necessarily sound like psychoanalysis. I mean, can you say that what you are providing in this office [we are inside her office at the hospital] is psychoanalysis?
> A: well, it depends how you define psychoanalysis. For me, I don't need to have a couch, a quite space, and a picture of Freud on one of the walls to do psychoanalysis. When I am talking with my patients, **I'm listening as an analyst**, and that's how I think psychoanalysis is done inside public hospitals. It is far from being an "orthodox kind of psychoanalysis" [she makes quotation marks with her fingers] which would be closer to what I do at home, but what really defines psychoanalysis for me is the **psychoanalytic listening** (*la escucha psicoanalítica*).

This is a very interesting and different way of defining psychoanalysis. Once defined as the "talking cure," psychoanalysis emphasis has always been on language. By being able to articulate into words the unconscious (repressed) drives that guides our behavior, one can liberate one self of such disturbances such as neurosis, anxiety, and hysteric episodes. But as the opening quote of this document suggest, another way of understanding psychoanalysis is by listening in a particular way. What Alicia is telling me is that anywhere, at any place one can "become" an analyst by switching the ear and listen in a particular way. There is a performative act by switching the ear into psychoanalytic listening that provides the listener with social attributes, in this particular case it transforms the subject into a psychoanalyst.

This idea: the fact that listening is one of the key components to become an analyst, kept resonating while doing fieldwork. The mastering of particular listening practices is what defines whether or not you have become an analyst. In what follows, I will analyze specific instances where listening is provided as one of the most important

aspects of becoming an analyst.

### *3.3 Other Training Institutions: EOL and APA*

The second most common path to become an analyst is to enroll at a psychoanalytical training institution. Though a small percentage of recent graduates do both – start a residency/concurrency and enroll at a psychoanalytical institution – these two institutional settings are very different and attract a varied body of social actors. As I was told by many psychoanalysts, there are "hundreds of institutions that offer psychoanalytical training" some more popular than others, some more difficult to enter than others, and some affiliated to international and more prestigious institutions. Part of my fieldwork focused on two of the most important and international recognized psychoanalytic institutions in Argentina: *La Escuela de la Orientación Lacaniana – EOL* (School of the Lacanian Orientation), and *La Asociación Psicoanalítica Argentina – APA* (Argentine Psychoanalytical Association), the latter being part of the International Psychoanalytic Association – IPA, and the former adhered to the *Instituto del Campo Freudiano in* Paris (Institute of the Freudian Field – Paris). I focused on these two institutions because of their historical trajectory, but most importantly because they are in high demand. Both institutions have high standards for admission (though they are sometimes flexible) and are recognized as being two of the best institutions in Buenos Aires. In contrast with the public hospital which focus is 90% on the patients, these institutions focus more on the theoretical aspect of analysis, and while there is clinical modules where particular cases are analyzed, the majority of the courses are directed to understand Freud's and Lacan's theories.[48]

#### *3.3.1 School of the Lacanian Orientation (EOL)*

Inside the EOL, there is the ICBA (Clinical Institute of Buenos Aires) a post-graduate private institution founded in 1998 by Jacques-Alain Miller (who is married to Lacan's daughter, and owns Lacan's copyright) which provides the equivalent of a Master degree in psychoanalysis. Its mission, as expressed in their guidelines, is to "teach and disseminate the philosophy of Lacanian psychoanalytic orientation throughout different levels: teaching, research and clinical practice." While Freud, and many other authors are part of the curricula of the institute, the core of the program is to understand and apply Lacan's teachings though Lacan's writings, as well as texts of renowned analysts that have engaged with Lacan's theories. Consequently, all Lacan's and Miller's books and essays are assigned. No matter what subject is been reviewed (e.g. transference, trauma, anxiety) it is always centered inside Lacan's framework.

I was allowed to attend, almost for an entire semester, two classes that are part of their introductory courses and that are mandatory: psychosis and neurosis. Most classes are closed to registered students, and the director of ICBA made sure that I understood that she was making a big exception for letting me attend these two classes (she later told me that she was curious to know what an anthropologist would say about the ICBA). The

48 It is important to note that they do have clinical sessions, but they are close to students and instructors. In order to access the clinical workshops, one must be enrolled as a student.

classes are held inside a big room, and between a hundred or a hundred and twenty student, depending on the class, attend each time. Each class lasts two hours, and they are interspersed, one Tuesday psychosis the following Tuesday neurosis and so on. The classes on neurosis are always packed, whereas classes on psychosis have many empty chairs.

There are many things to observe about ICBA. Unlike UBA, where there are people from different socio-economic background, ICBA's demographics are mostly middle and upper-middle class. It still shares with UBA that the majority of students are women, but the ratio is not as extreme. This is a graduate seminar, so everyone already holds a psychology title, and many already have a private practice. There is an economic investment in order to have a private practice, so this element already underlines the fact that this place is economically speaking more elitist that UBA.

The most noticeable aspect of the classes, and the institution as a whole, is the personality cult around Lacan's figure. They use the word "initiated" to talk about the interlocutors of Lacan's ideas. As a Freudian psychoanalyst told me when referring to *lacanians*: "they are immerse inside a hierarchical structure, and they will always be, because no one knows what Lacan said, not even Lacan! So the interlocutor, translator, o the person who 'thinks he knows' would always be in a position of power."[49]

The format of the two classes I was able to observed followed a lecture style. An expert in a particular topic would present a Lacanian concept or text, followed by a period of questions. The lectures were mostly theoretical and very dense, with enough mathematical symbols to make it seem like it was a physics class. Every single concept presented was transformed into a mathematical algorithm. For example, the presenter would explain that if a patient uttered a word that the analyst thought it was a signifier, the analyst will annotate $S_1$. If the patient continued to utter that specific signifier in relation to another signifier, the algorithm will read something like this:

$$S_1 \rightarrow S_2 + 1$$

Where $S_1$ symbolizes the emergence of the first and *master* signifier, the arrow represents the connection to the second signifier, and $S_2$ characterizes the second signifier (also known as the field of knowledge) attached to a +1 indicating that it was uttered twice. This basic formula will take many forms, and many other symbols will be added depending on the concept.[50] Consequently, knowledge about the symbols was required to understand the lectures, which resulted in classes where almost no one participated. Instead, students were taking notes incessantly and quietly.

During the semester I attended classes there was not a particular class dedicated to develop a theory about listening in the psychoanalytic encounter. Yet, listening was mentioned one way or another almost in every class, especially when the presenter discussed the analyst's role as an *escuchante* (listener) whose function is to make sure that analysis takes place by listening to the patient through a psychoanalytic

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49 In my experience, usually, analysts that focus more on a Freudian approach to analysis, do not think very highly of "Lacanians" because of what they perceive as having a cult-like structure.

50 See Bruno de Florence *Lacan and Topology* (2011) for some examples of the many symbols and complexities of Lacan's mathematical semiology.

configuration. What this means is that analysis will not begin until the analyst *listens* psychoanalytically. This idea is best exemplified through one conceptualization that is of special importance for Lacanian psychoanalysis: the "preliminary interview" a notion that, according to most Lacanian psychoanalysts, is key for the development of a successful therapeutic encounter (Lacan 1971; Miller 1997). Lacan's expression "preliminary interviews" is somehow similar to Freud's "preliminary treatment" (Freud 1913). The expression indicates that there is a threshold, an entry into analysis that is not the same thing as the entrance giving onto the analyst's office. It is a preliminary working period, prior to analysis proper, which begins not in continuity to this initial work but, as the name "preliminary treatment" itself suggests, after a rupture, "a cut that qualifies a change and determines a before, a preliminary, and an after. This cut corresponds to the crossing of the threshold into a new social bond, which in our case would be the analytical discourse" (Miller 1997:41).

To illustrate how the preliminary interview is based on the analyst's listening skills, I want to present the following example, taken inside one of the classes on neurosis at ICBA on Tuesday, October 14, 2011; where Ernesto Sinatra, one of the most influential interlocutors on Lacan's ideas in Buenos Aires, close friend of Miller, and a full time professor at EOL, was in charge of a lecture dedicated to the preliminary interview in the clinical setting. Sinatra explained that:

> The beginning of analysis is not an automatic procedure that will be secured just through a number of encounters between patients and analysts. It requires a particular devise in order to develop the conditions for the possibility of analysis. The preliminary interviews fulfill this need, and it is essential to evaluate that that person, in that moment and not other, will begin a psychoanalytic treatment with that specific analyst. One session—and sometimes more—is needed to make an evaluation. And is in this session that the analyst must **listen carefully** to see if the possibility of analysis opens.[51]

To explicate a preliminary interview, he presented the following clinical vignette: A man called him and asked if he could have a clinical session, but only one. He said that he had a question that needed an answer but he would come to Sinatra's office just once. Sinatra explained that this was an unusual request, but he agreed to the meeting because it enticed his curiosity. The question the man had was simple: his girlfriend did not want to have intimate relationships with him, and he wanted to know why? Throughout the session, the patient kept talking about this woman, and how he felt humiliated by her for her lack of response towards him. Right at the moment when the patient uttered the word "humiliation," Sinatra recounted that the patient started taking about his father, and how bad he had treated him throughout his life, describing him as an absent father. At some point, when the patient was about to mention his girlfriend's name, he uttered the first syllable of his father's name instead. Right at that moment, the patient realized that his girlfriend is precisely the type of woman his father would like, possessing all the characteristics that his father would approve. After this "discovery" the patient became quite. Sinatra then stopped the session and the patient asked to continue the treatment.

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51 All Sinatra's as well as student's quotes come from the classes I attended and I translated each excerpt.

This preliminary interview, according to Sinatra, represented a successful one explaining that he was able to perceive in this particular case, that there was a possibility for analysis. He was able to do so, because in his own words, he was listening through a psychoanalytic framework:

> As analysts, you have to pay attention to the words, but not too much attention. The purloined letter (*la carta robada*) is always there, in your face, but you have to let intuition run first, if you look too much for it, you won't find it. I was annotating things while the patient was talking, and at one point I had written: *novia y padre* (girlfriend and father), as the two signifiers that began to organize the discourse in that moment. At some point, as I looked back to my notes, I read: *no vía padre: no había padre* (there was no father). **I did not listen to this homophony consciously**, but I was able to capture the essence of what the analysand was trying to express, by **listening not to the content of the words, but to the signifying chain**, inside a psychoanalytical framework.

The next session took place on Tuesday, October 28. Sinatra asked the students if they have questions since the previous class he did not have time for inquiries. The students seemed intrigue about the interpretation (or listening) of the binomial *novia-padre*. One student offered a different reading: "After looking at my notes, I realized that the interpretation presented was not accurate. It seems to me that the subject's discourse is not referring to *no había padre*, but to *no vi al padre* (I did not see the father) instead. The fact that he chose a woman who humiliates him, who replicates what the father does, and the fact that this is a woman that the father would like, or approve of. For me it represents that he wasn't able to *see* his father in this woman."

Sinatra warned about the temptation to over interpret, "following that reasoning" he explained "we can even say that the binomial can be interpreted as *vía del padre* (via/through the father). Over interpreting is risky. Risky in that there is an aggregated plus on our behalf, that is coming from us, not from the patient." He then referred to an oxymoron that Lacan proposed "learned ignorance" (*docta ignorantia*) a sort of "wise ignorance" which allows the subject to suspend all referential meaning and "let the analyst to be taken by the occasion" (Lacan 1971). This, according to Sinatra, is what the analyst in training should do, to suspend all judgment and will to interpret, and let the "ignorance" guide the session.

The pedagogical question crucial to Lacan's own teaching is: where does a text (or a signifier in the patient's speech) makes no sense, that is, resists interpretation. Where does what the analyst sees and what she reads resists her understanding. Basically where is the resistance to knowledge (what he calls ignorance) located (1978, S II:242). The problem that the students of psychoanalysis inside the Lacanian framework will face is "how to ignore what he knows" (Lacan [Sciliscet] 1968:20). In Lacan's own words: "there is no true teaching [psychoanalysis] other than the teaching which succeeds in provoking in those who *listen* and insistence—this desire to know which can only emerge when they themselves have taken the measures of ignorance as such—of ignorance inasmuch as it is, as such, fertile—in the one who teaches as well (1978, S II:242 my emphasis).

Thus, teaching psychoanalysis for Lacan and his disciples is not the transmission of ready-made knowledge. It is rather the creation of a new condition of knowledge, the creation of an original learning disposition. "What I teach you," says Lacan, "does nothing other than express the condition thanks to which that Freud says is possible, the condition that makes possible Freud's teachings" (1978, [S II]:368). What is this condition? According to Miller in analysis "what sets in motion the psychoanalytical apprenticeship is the peculiar pedagogical structure of the analytic encounter. The analysand speaks to the analyst, whom he endows with the authority of the one who poses knowledge, knowledge of what is precisely lacking in the analysand's own knowledge" (Miller 2000:54). But according to Lacan, the analyst knows nothing of this knowledge, his only competence lies in "what I would call textual knowledge, so as to oppose it to the referential notion which only masks it" (Lacan [Sciliscet] 1968:21). Textual knowledge is the knowledge of the functioning of language, of symbolic structures, and of the signifier; knowledge directed toward interpretation. But such knowledge cannot be acquired or possessed once and for all cases, since each case (text), has its own specific symbolic functioning and requires a different interpretation. Analysis thus has no use for ready-made interpretations, for knowledge given in advance (Lacan 1968:20).

When I interviewed Sinatra and asked the specificities of how is an aspiring analyst trained to be able to be immerse inside an analytical framework, he answered that the position of alterity is indispensable "knowledge is what is already there, but always in the Other. Knowledge is not a substance but a structural dynamic. It is not contained by an individual but comes about out of the mutual apprenticeship between two partially unconscious speeches that both say more than they know." Dialog is thus the condition through which ignorance becomes structural informative in analysis. It is the ignorance of referential meanings—through the Other in each partaker—who will allow some kind of communication that will only surface as such after the fact.

The students of psychoanalysis at EOL are thus exposed to "learn by unlearning" and fostering the ignorance necessary to establish a dialog between the analyst and the analysand's unconscious. When Lacan argued that the unconscious is structured like a language, what is at stake for the unconscious is precisely grammar, which has to do with repetition, a pattern. Here is where Lacan's ideas about resonance appear. The students need to find those signifiers that would give shape to a discourse that appear as a resonance of particular words uttered by the analysand. If the analyst is able to *listen* to these words unconsciously, analysis is possible. Hence, the preliminary interview, as the key moment for deciding whether or not there would be analysis, is a listening exercise where knowledge will become evident if the analyst is listening inside this particular genre. Analysts must develop trust in self and institutions must "let go" of first reference.

### *3.3.2 Argentine Psychoanalytic Association (APA)*

The Argentine Psychoanalytic Association is the oldest and more traditional psychoanalytic institution in Buenos Aires. It takes pride in that it is part of the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA) that was founded by Freud in 1910. When reading about its history, they believe that the introduction (or discovery as it is framed) of Freud in Argentina is the result of a society "marked by immigration and a lost past

trying to make sense of their loss and their new environment" (Rascovsky de Salvarezza, 2004:23). APA was founded by a group of young professional immigrants, or Argentine born of European decent, that in 1942 decided to create a unified institution that would encompass medical, psychiatry and psychoanalytic theories (Vezzetti 1996). Ángel Garma, a renowned Spanish psychoanalyst who was analyzed by Theodor Reik, and later immigrated to Argentina, is one of the founders and first president of APA. In the 1950's thanks to the active role of some of APA's members at the University of Buenos Aires in different capacities (professors, lecturers, administrative positions) psychoanalysis was introduced to the public University by a large extent thanks to APA's collaborators.

APA, through the "Instituto de Psicoanálisis Ángel Garma" provides a four-year plan to become an analyst that includes a whole range of classes relevant to psychoanalysis. Among the most important requisites to become an analyst are: 1) Have weekly (more than one) analytical sessions with a current member of APA throughout the duration of the program. 2) An exhaustive engagement with Freud's work where the aspiring analyst must take at least 12 courses dedicated entirely to Freud's theories. 3) Select among many of the seminars offered the ones that are pertinent for the specialization that the student chooses. 4) And have at least two supervised clinical sessions (the student, an analysand, and a supervisor). The specializations at the Institute are many, for example, students can focus on "Sports and Psychoanalysis" dedicated to the understanding of the transferential relationship between the athlete, the manager, and the public, the development of narcissistic personalities among its participants, the representation of violence inside a game, etc. Other specializations focus on new media technologies and the psyche, on sociological approaches to the self, on eating disorders, among many others. There are also many introductory classes that are mandatory for all students including the study of Oedipus complex, introduction to the clinic, repression and the unconscious, to name just a few.

I was not able to attend any classes at APA due to the fact that students must hold a psychology or medical degree to register. If you are not in the medical field, there is an institutional permit that I was not granted, becaue I needed to complete certain classes that I was unable to take due to scheduling conflicts. Instead, I was able to attend the Multi-Family Structured Psychoanalytical Therapeutic Communities (MFSPT) meetings for six months. Students of psychoanalysis at APA are encouraged to attend these meeting in order to witness clinical cases, and to learn about multi-sessions in psychoanalysis. These meetings are psychoanalytic sessions that entail the participation of many different partakers, including several psychoanalysts (most of them renowned and with a long trajectory), many analysands, some of which have individual analytic sessions with the analysts that participate, and family members of some of the analysands. In the following chapter, I will discuss in detail how these sessions are constituted, and how they exemplify psychoanalytic listening as a genre.

APA is one of the most important psychoanalytic institutions in Buenos Aires; it has smaller branches in different states (e.g. Córdoba, Mendoza) that are inter-connected having an important number of registered students among them. They provide what they call "Freudian psychoanalysis," and unlike EOL, where in some cases sessions can last up to five minutes, APA provides the traditional 50-minute sessions, and are less interested in finding the structure of signifiers, and more emphasis is given to the historical account of the analysand. But there is an element in which both institutions

coincide: the importance of listening in the clinical setting. As an analyst that participates in the MFSPT and serves as one of the clinical directors at Institute Grama put it:

> The Institute's focus is on clinical practice. We provide the students with all the necessary tools to understand the works of Freud. But obviously, that's not enough. You can know in theory how to launch an aircraft but it is not until you try and experiment with the theory that you learned that you know what to do. Here, our emphasis is on the clinic, which means that students early on are exposed to patients. It is the transferential relationship in the clinic, where the student will learn **to listen to the unconscious of the patient**. There is no other way to learn how to be an analyst, but to **sit down and listen to your patients**.

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The specificities of psychoanalysis in Argentina—the fact that since the 1950s it entered public universities, that analysis was mainly introduced by European immigrants, the commitment shown by aspiring analyst who work without any economic incentive for years inside the public hospital, and more importantly for advancing this research, the fact that there is an explicit meta-listening in which talk about listening practices is present, underlying the fact that listening is the most important aspect of analysis (i.e. when the analyst "listens inside a psychoanalytic framework, analysis is realized")—marks Argentina, and specially the city of Buenos Aires, as a unique place where psychoanalysis became a social practice.

The following chapter will focus on how listening psychoanalytically is enacted inside the clinical setting, by analyzing interactions between analysands and analysts inside the Multi-Family Structured Psychoanalytical Therapeutic Communities (MFSPT). While we are still in the realm of the clinic, how listening psychoanalytically is produced in the relationship between analysand and analyst, as further chapter will show, psychoanalytic listening surpassed the clinical setting. To understand how this process happens. It is important to look at the internal functioning of this practice, which the next chapter will explain in detail.

Chapter Three

# Psychoanalytic Listening as a Genre: An Example from the Multi-Family Structured Psychoanalytical Therapeutic Communities

*One of the peculiarities of this third ear is that it works two ways. It can catch what other people do not say, but only feel and think; and it can also be turned inward. It can hear voices from within the self that are otherwise not audible because they are drowned out by the noise of our conscious thought-processes.*

(Theodor Reik, 1948:146)

## 1. Introduction

If we go back to the inception of psychoanalysis as a methodology practiced only in the clinical setting, we will see that the scope of psychoanalysis is reduced to a private encounter between an analysand and a psychoanalyst. The routine inside this space is highly ritualized, and the contract between the analysand and analyst is very private and is meant not to be disrupted by any external force (e.g. I was not allowed to record my own psychoanalytical sessions because it would bring something external that could potentially disturb the flow of ideas). Inside this setting, an analysand will talk mostly uninterrupted with an attentive listener who is trying to make sense of the flow of speech. One of the participants – the analysand – is the object of interpretation by the other person – the analyst. Generally speaking, this interpretation is based on the idea that human behavior is determined by drives, and that these drives are mostly unconscious. These drives are constituted during particular events that happened in early childhood which get repressed creating neurosis, anxiety, and obscure the "real" cause of the symptom of the analysand (Freud 1909, 1915). Through the interpretation of the analyst, this repressed force comes to light, free association become visible, and the suffering analysand, by being able to articulate the source of the symptom, can better understand it and live with it. In short, psychoanalysis does not necessarily look for the cure, but it is in search of the "truth" that would allow the analysand to understand his inner self (Lacan Seminar XIII 1965).

Another characteristic of the psychoanalytic encounter is the fact that there is an economic transaction that defines it. In two technical papers, "Recommendations to Physicians Practicing Psycho-Analysis" (1912) and "On Beginning the Treatment" (1913), Freud addresses the function of payment in the dynamics of therapy and its implications for the transference and counter-transference. Freud uses the figure of money as a "mediated form," a symbolic mediation that would place both, analyst and analysand in specific positions to avoid the subjective attitudes toward money that are inevitable. It also defines the setting as a specific field of action where particular duties

from each side are expected and performed.

Within this dynamic of intimacy and exchange (transference), it is hard to imagine how such a private encounter could translate into something outside of this confined space. Is it possible to achieve the same level of analysis inside a large room filled with many suffering analysands? What if these analysands bring family members to this space? And instead of having one analyst, the room is filled with many of them? What if it was free?

These questions can be answered through the Multi-Family Structured Psychoanalytical Therapeutic Communities (MFSPT), a group established in 1962 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and later imported to Italy, Spain, Uruguay, and Brazil (Markez 2010). As its name indicates, is a multitudinous group using in a particular way the psychoanalytic frame. The man behind the idea and design of this therapeutic group is Dr. Jorge García Badaracco, a very prominent Argentinean psychiatrist and psychoanalyst who after finishing his medical degree with a specialization in psychiatry in 1947, he went to Paris in 1950 to study psychoanalysis with some of the most prominent psychoanalyst of the time like Henry Ey and Paul Girau. Later he met Lacan when Badaracco enrolled in his seminars from 1951 to 1953. He later became an accepted member of the Paris Psychoanalytic Association. On his return to Argentina in 1956, he worked as professor of neuropsychiatry, and became the director of the neuropsychiatry division at José T. Borda public Hospital in Buenos Aires, one of the two major public mental health hospitals, where mostly male patients are admitted (the other hospital is called Neuropsychiatric Hospital Barulio A. Moyano which admits only women). In 1972 he became the director of the Mental Health Department of the Argentine National University (UBA). And between 1980 and 1984 he was the president of the Argentine Psychoanalytic Association (APA). Since its inception in 1962, García Badaracco dedicated his efforts to form and participate in the MFSPT groups inside the public hospital, but also at APA and later at his personal foundation.

García Badaracco was very meticulous when describing the rationale behind the MFSPT. He wrote three books and many articles narrating in great detail the mechanisms that make these sessions effective. All of his insights, inspirations and further developments are based on his training as psychiatrist and psychoanalyst. The model of his analysis is inserted inside a framework of mental health and scientific knowledge, and he quantifies and grounds his achievements through "empirical observation." In what follows, I want to give a detail account of how this therapeutic is constituted, through García Badaraccos's own account.

## 2. The History of MFSPT

At the beginning, MFSPT sessions were designed to target psychotic patients. It began with chronic patients who had been admitted to a mental health institution for many years, and for whom it was difficult to establish a dialog with the psychiatrist or other people around them. In his book *Psicoanálisis Multifamiliar* (2000) García Badaracco explains that the so called "difficult patients" or patients where it is difficult to establish transference, through jointly meetings with other patients and other families, they were able to engage in conversations about what was problematical for them and in some cases improved immensely. These meetings began casually, what García

Badaracco later called "encuadre espontáneo" (spontaneous framework) stating the importance of "being available" for the patients, and be aware of the moment when the conditions to create a group become possible (1990:52). This is a drastic difference between the classic contract between analysand and analyst where there is always a time, date, duration of the session, and a commitment to it. On the contrary, inside the multi-family sessions, it is the spontaneous framework the base of the therapeutic relation, thus no one is required to attend. Patients and family members are encourage to attend these meetings, but there is not a contractual obligation (after the MFSPT sessions became more regulated, a specific time and place where the sessions will occur was established. But the attendance continues to be voluntary).

Borrowing from Donald Jackson, an American psychiatrists and pioneer on family therapies, García Badaracco employs the term homeostasis to refer to the family tendency to equilibrium. When there is a change in one of the family members, this change produces deep changes in the structure of the family who will try to reach homeostasis again (2000:27). This can generate networks of pathological interdependency among the family members who tend to reproduce and perpetuate the problem: "This creates the 'power of the pathogen' between one over the other, between the patient and the so called healthy family member" (2000:40). What García Badaracco is pointing out is the interrelation between mental health patients and their families as a dialectic that constructs and maintains the mental problem. It is inside the family that one can elucidate the gestation of the problem, and thus, be able to control it. For Badaraco everything is relational, an aspect that he learned from Maxwell Jones, a British psychiatrist who explored the idea of the "therapeutic community" as the democratization of the roles between mental health patients, nurses, and psychiatrists, to build a network of support to the patient (Jones 1953). Badaracco's contribution is to include the families of the patients to this network, and also do it simultaneously with other families and other patients.

But having a family therapy session does not have a strong efficacy in many patients (specially the "difficult ones") because the family is already alienated and it take a long time to disentangle the complex webs of misunderstandings, blaming, rancor, and all the different manifestations of pathological dynamics that could develop inside families. This is where, according to García Badaracco, MFSPT sessions come into play because in the context of *listening to* other families interactions, it becomes much easier to observe the unfavorable influence that a patient might develop with his or her own family member (2000:38). Within this context, Badaracco proposes to focus on what he calls *virtual sanity*, meaning "to go beyond listening and respect, tolerate and redirect the 'gaze of the other' to parts that no one has gone to before, those parts that have to do with the human existence [of the patient]" (1998e:67). It is through the virtual image of the sane person that this therapeutic has an effect thanks to the re-humanization of the patient.

To exemplify virtual, I want to draw on an example that Badaracco describes in his book "Multi-family Psychoanalysis" (2000). He explains that one time he was in the middle of a multi-family session inside the Hospital Borda when suddenly, one of the patients appeared completely naked. He tells us that his first reaction was to call the nurse to make sure that this man would get properly dressed. But on a second thought,

after feeling the impact that it generated among the other people in the group, he decided to stay quite, even though everyone was expecting him to say something:

> I started to think that the patient had just brought up something really valuable that was unable to share with others. If I didn't have the capacity to see the humanity in the patient, I would have called the nurse telling him that 'he was crazy,' and needed to put on some clothes. There was no doubt that he "was crazy" to any psychiatrists who would have treated him as a schizophrenic. But I felt that he was bringing an experience of abandonment, of helplessness, that could only be expressed in the way he acted. And through this act, he was able to bring up a feeling of solidarity among all the present. Each one of them began to feel that there was something about that in them, about the nakedness, the helplessness, the abandonment. A little later, the patient left and came back to the group dressed up, and through the solidarity created, we were able to work on this subject (2000:86).

The example above allows the understanding of many aspects of the MFSPT dynamics. The fact that Badaracco was able to "see" the humanity or what he calls, the *virtual sanity* in the act of the patient, marks a big difference with his fellow psychiatrists who would have a different approach about the acting out of the patient. It is the humanistic and psychoanalytic dimension that characterizes the work inside the MFSPT. Badaracco was known as having "fought like no one before in Argentina against the so called 'incurability of the psychotics'" (Canevaro 2010). The fact that he "dedicated fifty years to the formation and dissemination of the MFSPT is because he was able to witness first hand the benefits, improvements and cure of psychotic patients he worked with" (Markez 2009:18).[52] This humanistic approach is the approach of the analysts, but according to Badaracco, by being exposed in front of many people, the therapeutic of the 'release' of the patients has two sides: he/she has a platform where he/she can "act crazy and be contained" and thus, liberate and expose an oppressing feeling. But also it moves something inside the other participants. There is a sort of communion that gets enacted through the *resonance of the silences*, the gazes, and the words that get produced inside the MFSPT group (Badaracco 2000:19).

This communion gets translated as transference inside the MFSPT, where "what has been said from others, can be heard differently and connect with something deep and particular *inside the hearer*" (GB 2000:31). This process is very similar to what Lacan defined as *resonance,* something that surfaces in a particular moment, resounds with "the shockwave emitted by something that happened over there," in which this event is the sudden creation but not a new reality, with a myriad of possibilities (Lacan 1966).

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52 My own research and experience working with other psychoanalysts that participate of the MFSPT is another example of the absolute faith these therapists have in these groups. This faith, is backed up—according to the members—with numbers and stories about the improvement of the patients. I could not find specific numbers on how many schizophrenic cases have ameliorated through MFSPT therapy sessions. Most of the analysts who attend the APA sessions, also work at public hospitals, and it is through the recount of the stories that they narrated, that one can speculate that this treatment is in fact effective.

According to Badaracco, something similar happens inside the MFSPT where the story of the patient produces this resonance effect opening possibilities for change.

While the structure of the MFSTP is very democratic, since every participant is able to contribute to the well being of the patient, by bringing their own interpretations and contributions, Badaracco underlines the importance of the psychotherapists as coordinators of the group. It is through their expertise, that together as therapists can guide the group and help to listen to different aspects of the conversation that others may have missed, "the role of the coordinator is to be able to detect the transference aspects that keep emerging and being capable of bringing them back for analysis" (Interview with Badaracco 2010:20). Still, these roles are sometimes blurry, and different social configurations are enacted throughout the sessions. But overall, the interactions inside the MFSTP are expressed horizontally rather than vertical.

After the MFSPT groups began to surpass the hospital walls, and the groups started to form at APA and different places (this happened in the 1990's) the group began to attract and work also with neurotic patients. The group at APA where I attended MFSPT sessions has a combination of both, medicated patients who have suffered psychotic episodes, and neurotic patients. In Hospital San Isidro, where I also attended sessions, the group is much smaller and most of the people in attendance are neurotic or suffer from a particular addiction. It is important to mention that most of the people who attend to the MFSPT are undergoing personal analysis and some have also psychiatric appointments many of them with the analysts that serve as moderators inside the group. The MFSPT serves to reinforce and contain the participants, but it is most of the times accompanied by other form of psychotherapy.

### 3. The MFSPT setting

The sessions were conducted inside a big room –an auditorium kind of room– with carpeted floor, long drapes covering the windows, and full of chairs that face a stage at the very end of the room. The room can easily accommodate over a hundred people, and it is so big, that there is a need for a microphone in order to hear when people are talking. The sessions that I attended had approximately eighty-five people in attendance. From these eighty-five people, between twelve and seventeen (these numbers fluctuate with every session) were psychoanalysts. The psychoanalysts were seated in different places, but they were always found in the front rows, except for five analysts that sit on chairs that are up on the stage. These five analysts were usually the same people. The rest of the persons in attendance that were not psychoanalysts are analysands, or people that not necessarily are going to psychoanalysis, but want to come to this sessions to talk. Approximately fifteen students are from the "Instituto Ángel Grama" that come to this room to "observe and learn," as a psychoanalyst and a student told me. The age, gender, and socio-economic background of this specific kind of public was mixed, with the exception that there were no children. There were people with university degrees, 'blue-collar' working class, housewives, and professionals of different kinds. Most people came by themselves; but others were accompanied by a family member, usually a spouse, a son/daughter, or mother/father. The only thing that was a common denominator to the audience in attendance is that they experienced some kind of emotional distress. And they came to this room to try to ease their suffering.

Since the psychoanalytic encounter is so intimate, there was no possibility to record, let alone witness, any session between analysand and analyst. Consequently, in order to be able to observe first hand how these encounters ensue, and how listening psychoanalytically is enacted, I attended during a six-month period, weekly MFSPT sessions that lasted two hours. These meetings provided a window in how the therapeutic encounter develops even if it is not on a one to one basis but witness by many participants.

The meetings happened every Tuesday night, from 8pm to 10pm at the Argentine Psychoanalytic Association (APA). I was allowed to record these sessions[53] and have a total of twenty-seven two hour-long recordings. These sessions are open to the general public, there is no economic exchange in any form, participants do not pay a single penny, and the psychoanalysts, who are very well know and respected in the field, do it because they "feel passionate about the work we do during these sessions," not receiving any economical remuneration for their work at these sessions. Anyone walking by can go up to the second floor at the APA on a Tuesday night and participate; there is no restriction.

The sessions followed more or less the same process. People begin to gather in the room ten minutes before seven. The "regulars" greet each other, and chitchat about menial things that range between the weather, to the praising of the clothes they are wearing, to asking about family members, among other things. The people who are not extroverted, or that have not been going to many sessions, sit by themselves and wait for the beginning of the session. Psychoanalysts are the last to arrive, and it is common that some arrive a little late. After ten or fifteen minutes past seven, one of the psychoanalysts sitting on the stage and using a microphone – usually the same female analyst– starts the session by asking the audience to keep quiet and declares the session open. After a couple minutes of silence, a person in the audience raises his or her hand; a microphone is handed to this person and introduces his/her self always beginning by stating his/her first name (e.g. "Hello, my name is Emilia, and I want to tell you…"),[54] following by a verbal performance of a personal story involving different registers and temporalities, change in footing , and a number of different contextualization frameworks that provide a particular narrative that situates the analysand as an historical subject.

The duration of these interventions vary greatly depending on the person speaking. This is one of the main reasons why conflict erupts: when people want to keep on talking and they are interrupted by an analyst or fellow attendee. The rationale behind the stopping or interrupting a verbal performance is not always clear, but most of the times, interruptions happen when an analysand speech is repetitive, are not being courteous about the time framework (there are many people that may want to talk) and specially when there does not seem to be a rapport between the analysand, the general public, and the psychoanalysts (i.e. they ask question that are ignored and the personal performance keeps on going ignoring other interventions).

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53 The sessions are always recorded through the microphone into a stereo. I did not use those recording, instead, I brought my own digital recorder and discretely recorded my own materials.

54 Rigid designators (in particular proper names) play a crucial role inside this encounters by establishing a relationship between the speaker and the listeners.

Depending on different factors, for instance, if there is a very emotional outburst, in which case, the person suffering the breakdown gets a lot of time to speak, there will be between five and a dozen (twelve was the maxim number I witnessed) interventions of analysands. After a couple of analysands have performed their stories, a psychoanalyst begins to ask questions, or give a general reflection about García-Badaracco's approach to the problem,[55] or just refer to issues that were brought up during the performance. Usually, other psychoanalysts intervene, and then another person in the audience will raise the hand and the cycle begins again (these cycles get interrupted when conflict arises). At the end of the session there is a closing reflection and the "theme" of the session is chosen. Things like "solitude" or "rancor" or "family" appear as the guiding axis of the session. Long and complicated exchanges between some of the participants, become a solid and unified narrative.[56] Following the logic of the MFSPT, one story leads to a different story that still relates to the first one and so on. According to the analysts this is one of the efficacies of this therapeutic; the fact that a unified discourse emerges through the variety of the voices and positionalities. After the session is over, people stay and talk with each other for a little bit, the analysts mingle with the people and give some hugs, and little by little the room starts to get empty until everyone is gone.

## 4. Psychoanalytic Listening inside the MFSPT

In what follows, I will analyze the participation of some of the attendees to the MSFSPT meetings in order to exemplify how listening psychoanalytically inside the clinical setting ensues. While this type of psychoanalytic encounter is unorthodox, it follows most of the same ideas and procedures that occur inside the private practice. The emphasis that the MFSPT participants place on the emergence of a particular word that would define the course of the whole meeting, resembles both, Lacan's idea of resonance, where certain words would "touch" the analysand in a particular way without she knowing of it; and Freud's idea of floating attention where the analyst must suppress all critical activity, and "suspend . . . judgment and give. . . impartial attention to everything there is to observe" (Freud, 1909:23).

Freud posits an optimal attentional stance or state of mind characterized by two fundamental properties: the absence of reason or deliberate attempts to select, concentrate or understand; and even, equal and impartial attention to all that occurs within the field of awareness. As set out in chapter one, listening has been defined as paying attention to certain sounds and no others, attention being the defining characteristic of listening and separating it from hearing. As the examples here will demonstrate, attention is not the definitional character of listening in the psychoanalytic realm. This listening genre is characterized by suspending attention, and simply listening

55 Jorge Gracía Badaracco passed away on September 11, 2010. He was 86 years old. He used to attend every MFSPT session, until his health no longer allowed him to continue. I was unable to meet him. When I started this research he had been out of the public sphere a couple months before. Since his passing was so recent, the people in attendance to the MSFPT meetings talked about him often.

56 It is interesting to note that this idea is very similar to Lacan's chain of signifiers in which one signifier will lead to another and so on. García-Badaracco was a student of Lacan, and there is definitely a lot of influence on his work.

open one to "the polyphonic cacophony of immediate conscious experience and, simultaneously, to silence and the inner self" (Langan et. al., 2009:829).

*4.1. Temporality*

There is a particular characteristic that defines psychoanalytic listening which sets it apart from any other therapeutic listening genre. The emergence of a specific temporality that defies the here and now of sound production; the following case exemplifies this form.

On November 16th 2010, the meeting's focus was centered in the story that Adela told to the group. Adela[57] is a frequent attendee[58] who has the tendency to talk for long periods of time, and recite many times, what seems to be the same story. In her story, she is the victim of misunderstanding and abuse; and according to her, she has been misdiagnosed by some psychiatrists who labeled her as a "crazy person," alienating her from her family and friends. When speaking, she is very aggressive with both the analysts and the attendees, and speaks in "a tone of superiority" as one of the attendees complained about. Throughout the delivery of her story, she emphasizes that she has not done anything wrong, that she is just a victim. This lack of "taking responsibility for her actions" as an analyst expressed, creates some animosity towards her. Most of the times, analysts have to interrupt her, but she always tries to continue speaking, which irritates more than a few. I have to admit that Adela's constant repetition of her story can be tiring, and in more than one occasion, her interventions produced in me a sense of uneasiness.

Adela's story opened the door to a variety of reflections about why she keeps repeating the same account. Unlike other sessions, most of the comments were positive and encouraging. Juan, a young attendee in his mid twenties who had been attending to the meetings for roughly a year, but never asked to speak before, finally asked for the microphone:

> Mi nombre es Juan y he estado viniendo a las reuniones hace un año más o menos, y nunca he hablado antes. Es muy triste escuchar la historia de la señora. Evidentemente ella quiere decirnos algo, **si tan solo pudieramos escuchar lo que quiere decir, lo que significa**. Pero la señora repite la misma historia sin producir ningún efecto. (Multi-APA- 11-16-10, 29:13)
>
> [My name is Juan, and I have been coming to the meetings for more or less a year, and I never talked before. It is sad to listen to the lady's [Adela] story. She obviously wants to tell us something, **if we could only hear what she wants to say**, **what she means**, but the lady keeps repeating the same story without producing any effect.]

After Juan's comment, one of the senior psychoanalysts responded the following:

57 The names of all the participants have been changed for identity protection.

58 She began to attend to the meetings around May 2009.

> Juan, lo primero es que estoy sorprendido por el 'Adela siempre repite la misma cosa, y no produce ningún efecto.' Hoy te hizo hablar! [risas] por primera vez! Genial! **Algo pasó en el que su insistente discurso finalmente encontró una respuesta**. Porque tú pensaste 'tengo que decir algo.' Así que ella no está tan **equivocada al insistir en ser escuchada, porque al final, alguien la va a escuchar.** (Multi-APA- 11-16-10, 32:15)
>
> [Juan, first, I am surprised by the 'Adela always repeats the same thing, and it does not produce any effect,' she got you talking today! [General laughs] for the first time! Great! Something happened so that her insistent discourse finally found an answer. Because you thought 'I have to say something.' So she is not so wrong insisting to be listened to, because at the end, someone would listen to her.]

Juan, after having attended the MFSPT sessions for a year, finally felt compelled to speak, moved by the fact that he wanted to understand the unconscious meaning behind Adela's story. In doing so, he was dismissing the denotational and semantic reference of Adela's narrative. But Juan was not aiming to have what Adela was *saying* clarified or conceptualized, represented or reformulated in the analyst's own words, but rather to *listen* to the inaudible voices of Adela's aural residues. Listening in this context is a bodily experience rather than a mere reception of sounds. It implicates a codification that does involve an act of consciousness, yet it needs to reach consciousness for interpretation.

By focusing on the unspoken intentionality of Adela's story, Juan was already *listening* in a particular mode: he was looking for meaning that had not been uttered, that was to be found somehow outside of the conscious realm of utterances. He was enacting psychoanalytic listening as a generic type, where listening is not something one passively submits to, but a particular kind of action itself. The relevance structure that anchored the directionality of this encounter was embedded in the frame that Juan brought by dismissing the denotation and referential qualities of Adela's speech.

There is always a particular *temporality* attached to this listening genre. The amount of time required to "listen" and to be able to make sense of it, varies from case to case. The intervention of the senior analyst underlines this point, "something happened so that her insistent discourse finally found an answer." Following the logic of psychoanalytic listening, what happened to Juan is that something "resonated" inside him and even though he could not make conscious sense of it, he was able to listen to Adela within Freud's conceptualization of aural residues, or Reik's idea of the 'third ear.' He might have waited another year to speak, or he could have spoken earlier. The temporality involved in this listening genre is aleatory, though it involves the unconscious recollection of stories as well as the subject's "inner voice." At some point the accumulation of all this information will reveal something.

Listening to something in purely physical terms takes place in the hear-and-now after a sound is produced. Physiologically, after a sound is made, soundwaves are "reflected and attenuated when they hit the pinna, and these changes provide additional information that will help the brain determine the direction from which the sounds

came,"[59] and then the ear canal is responsible for the amplification of sounds. But psychoanalytic listening is cumulative, sound images will find a concept (or not) through the resonance that echo inside one's self that will be triggered by something that surpasses the conscious dimension. This listening genre is not linear, and while it develops in time, it possesses its own temporality.

*4.2. Cultivation*

As indicated, listening genres can be ephemeral and unintentional when listening to a passing sound, a music piece, or a lament, that immediately invokes a frame of reference that surfaces through the embedding of the sound into a particular setting. The example of the crying of the boy presented in the first chapter, is a token of a type that embeds a particular situation: either the child is hurt, irritated, or frustrated. The relevance structure that emerges when listening to the child's lament is automatic and instantly indexes the situation as urgent or not important; it emerges spontaneously and does not require a specific pedagogy. On the contrary, psychoanalytic listening entails a long cultivation process of listening practice.

Hence, some genres require explicit training, especially when listening *for* a particular sign, for example a mechanic in the process of learning how to interpret sounds produced by cars. Others, as the example of the child crying, are ephemeral and do not require training. A third category develops over time when the listener is exposed to a genre that she is not necessarily conscious of but that still make an imprint on the her psyche.

The following example, also taken from the MFSPT sessions, illustrates the cultivation of this generic type:

Roberto, an avid MFSPT attendee in his late sixties who had been coming to the sessions for the past ten years, and who developed a close relationship with Jorge García Badaracco, made the following intervention following a discussion about misunderstandings between families. He explained that he used to always get involved and give unrequested opinions every time his daughter had a conversation with her mother:

> **Hubo un momento en el que pude escuchar**, y pude ver que estaba equivocado, y que he estado equivocado por mucho tiempo. Estaba equivocado porque la verdad es que **no podía escuchar**. Y aquí [en la MFSPT], **me enseñaron cómo** [**escuchar**]. Porque cuando uno se deja llevar por un sentimiento, uno no puede pensar bien o escuchar. Y esa es la frase que uno debe llevarse a casa." (Multi-APA- 8-11-10, 58:06)
>
> **[There was a moment in which I could listen**, and I could see that I was wrong, and that I have been wrong for a long, long time. I was wrong because the truth is that **I could not listen**. And here [the MFSPT], **I was taught how**

59 Definition of 'auditory system' taken from the Oxford Dictionary.

> [to listen]. Because when one is taken by a sentiment, one cannot think straight or listen. And that is a phrase that one has to take home.]

Roberto's example describes the cultivation of psychoanalytic listening as a moment of revelation. There was an instant where he was able to listen, and through this new acquired competence, he was able to understand his past mistakes and make amends. This learning process follows a personal trajectory and is something that cannot be measured. Again, a particular temporality becomes present. The moment of revelation that Roberto experienced is related to the emergence of a particular frame of reference that gives directionality to a situation that he was previously unable to codify. This moment was spontaneous and unexpected, but it required a long process of listening practice to reach proficiency.

In spaces where there is a form of "social listening" as in the case of the MFSPT, there is the emergence of what Judith Becker (2010) calls a specific "habitus of listening" which produces a concrete "culture of listeners." Becker's analysis focuses on what she calls the "Pentecostal arousal" where through listening to music inside a Pentecostal congregation, music becomes the vehicle for the creation of an emotional apotheosis. The fact that music can awaken a particular sensibility in a sudden moment is due to the cultivation of a particular genre.

While the listening that Roberto is experiencing and the sudden 'awakening' of a Pentecostal follower do not belong to the same experiential phenomenon, they share the characteristic that the listening occurs unexpectedly. They are both immersed within a situated listening framework where there is a pedagogy of listening; and through this new acquired capacity, transformation occurs. If we extrapolate Becker's conceptualization to the MFSPT sessions, as a place where a particular listening habitus is formed—through the sensibilities and dispositions of attendees—we can substantiate the claim that listening develops in practice (Hanks 1987).

Defined at the level of practice, "genres mediate between event types and modes of participation: the totalization and segmentability that distinguish *events* as units from *action* as an ongoing process depend on the same genre types which govern the engagements of participants" (Hanks 1996a:161). This means that in addition to their thematic orientation, texts (oral, written, or aural) are also oriented toward the action contexts in which they are produced, distributed, and received. In this formulation, textual genres are seen as both the outcome of historically specific acts, and the constituting dimensions in terms of which action is possible (Hanks 1987). Something similar happens with listening. Listening genres, to the same degree as textual genres, orient action. And this action is both motivated, and created at the same time by modes of listening as practice and the internal structure that organizes the specific practice.

Since one characteristic of habitus is the generation of homologous formations across different cultural fields (Bourdieu 1977) it is productive to understand Roberto's active listening: listening that entails action, learned by being immersed in the habitus of a particular listening genre. This listening happens inside a specific institution with specific characteristics, as in the Pentecostal example. But while the idea of a listening habitus is a useful instrument for the analysis of the pedagogy of developing a particular listening ear, I focus instead on listening genre. The reason behind this is that because of the way habitus is epistemologically constituted (e.g. having a dialectical relationship

with the notion of field), linguistic phenomena are never universally available to all members of society and tend to be produced, circulated, and accumulated asymmetrically in a world of power relations and commodification of linguistic (listening) resources (see Bourdieu 1977; Woolard 1985; Irvine 1989; Gal 1989; Silverstein 1979). It is certain that forms of capital are created through listening (e.g. the doctor listening through the stethoscope establishes power relationships that are emphasized throughout the whole auscultation process). But by focusing on listening genres allows for a broader and more inclusive framework, where asymmetries and particular political economies are insufficient to account for the emergence of specific listening genres (e.g. passionate and compassionate listening).

The question of how to cultivate psychoanalytic listening is an important question that many psychoanalysts ask. Both Lacan and Freud wrote extensively about the pedagogy of psychoanalysis in which the subject's own experience of analysis functions as the most essential learning tool for the development of an analytic ear (Lacan 1973, 1975; Freud 1913). The idea of learning through experiencing is the focus of the book *Situated Learning* (1991) where Lave and Wegner propose that learning occurs in the process of co-participation, not individually. It corroborates Becker's idea of the situated character of understanding and communication, but they go a step further asking what kinds of social engagements provide the proper context in order for learning to take place. They offered the concept of "legitimate peripheral participation" (LPP) as the inevitable ways in which learners participate in communities of practitioners (1991:14). "Legitimate peripheral participation provides a way to speak about the relations between new-comers and old-timers, and about activities, identities, artifacts, and communities of knowledge and practice" (1991:29). It is a process by which newcomers become part of the community of practice. The MFSPT exemplifies the idea of a community of practice, since the participation of all the partakers of the meetings is necessary and contributes to the healing of the patient. In order to cultivate psychoanalytic listening as a genre, it is imperative that the listener is not only exposed to the genre but participates of it. The MSFPT is precisely constructed by co-participation.

The format of the MFSPT is democratic in that everyone has the right to speak and voice their opinion despite the credentials they possess. The voice of any of the participants can trigger in another attendee something that would transform his/her emotional being. As Roberto explained in the opening quote of this section, he was "suddenly able to listen." This sudden acquisition of a listening genre was possible, in part, because he had been exposed to psychoanalytic listening for many years by being part of this specific community of practice. He was part of the LPP where the learning process is always relational and participatory, since the stories that the analysands bring, the analysts interpretations, as well as the comments of other participants, make possible the habituation of the ear to this particular genre. How these stories contribute to the listening psychoanalytically is dependent on the particularities, or "situation" as Lave and Wegner put it, of the learning experience. This framework is useful because L&W see participation in social practice as both, subjective as well as objective because it suggests a very explicit focus on one person, but as a person-in-the-world, as a member of a sociocultural community. This focus promotes a view of knowing as an activity by specific people in specific circumstances, as situated learning (1991:52).

But the situated aspect that Lave and Wegner suggest carries some confusion: "on some occasions 'situated' means merely that some of people's thoughts and actions were located in space and time. On other occasions, it means that thought and action were social only in the narrow sense that they involve other people, or that they were immediately dependent for meaning on the social setting that occasioned them" (1991:32). Goffman's definition of "social situation" (1964) would help centering the "situatedness" of this learning process. As explained in chapter one, a situation for Goffman is "an environment of mutual monitoring possibilities, anywhere within which an individual will find himself accessible to the naked senses of all others who are 'present.'" (1964:135). The situation then would get embedded into a setting where a semiotic process would take place. When a genre emerges through the embedding of a social situation there is a particular context that emerges. As in the case of any listening genre, it is at the moment of reception (practice) that the genre would emerge. Roberto is thus, capable of listening psychoanalytically thanks to his legitimate peripheral participation, situated at the moment of reception. The context is created once the situation is embedded and a specific setting emerges. This conceptualization of situation is broader that L&W definition, it focuses more on the subjective aspect, since the context (the social aspect, or objective as L&W put it) only emerges when it is embedded.

Within psychoanalytic listening, before one is able to *listen*, there is a process parallel to Peirce's categories of Firstness and Secondness, and much later Thirdness. Peirce's broad definition of a sign is useful because it extends beyond words: "something which stands to somebody for something on some respect or capacity" (Peirce 1998: 2.228). It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. More simply, a sign is something that evokes something for someone. A sign points to an object and, at the same time, it brings to the interpreter's mind another sign (called the "interpretant") that translates and mediates the original sign. [60] This is the structure of semiosis, or the making of meaning, of which sign, object, and interpretant are three necessary parts. Without one of the parts, semiosis does not take place—the triad is not reducible to pairs of dyads.

The typology Peirce returns to most is that of Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness, which describe degrees of mediation and reflexivity. Firstness is a condition of unmediated, unreflexive access. Firsts are experience without reaction, cause without effect (Peirce 1998:1.305). Secondness is a condition of mediated but not yet reflexive access. Seconds are experienced and the reaction it evokes, cause and the effect it provokes, but not yet a reflection on the reaction or effect. Thirdness is a condition of mediated, reflexive access. Thirds are experience, reaction, and the reflection upon that reaction. They are cause, effect, and the extension of that effect to the form of habit or convention or law (Peirce 1998:1.303-1.312).

Firstness is a conception of being in its wholeness or completeness, with no boundaries or parts, and no cause or effect (Peirce 1998:1.305). It is the quality of pure, latent potentiality. Firstness belongs to the realm of possibility; it is experienced within a kind of timelessness. Firstness corresponds to emotional experience. Thus, Firstness I equate to Goffman's "situation" in which is pure potentiality. Once the setting is

60 CP= Peirce, Charles S. The Essential Peirce Vols. 1 and 2, 1998.

embedded, Thirdness appears.

My analysis, thus, suggests that since the temporality of psychoanalytic listening as a genre is aleatory, it can happen at any moment in time, as Adela and Juan example shows, or Roberto's "sudden" listening; there is a constant suspension of interpretation, living in a space between Firstness and Secondness until it gets embedded. But the embedness is not necessarily codifiable. Juan's example illustrates how even when he *listened* to something that made him compelled to speak (according to the analyst's interpretation) there is still not a definite idea of what he listened to. It was clear though, that he was listening inside a psychoanalytic framework dismissing the denotation and referential meaning of Adela's words, but when I state that this listening is suspended between Firstness and Secondness is because Thirdness (interpretation) is missing (at least in Juan's case). Once there is a code of understanding, interpretation finally can happen, in the meantime, the chains of signifiers described by Lacan, represents this suspension between these two typologies.

The purpose of bringing Peirce's typology to psychoanalytic listening is to exemplify that in this particular listening genre, the intentionality of the listener, defined as the "aboutness" of the situation, is suspended. The cultivation of psychoanalytic listening consists in being able to be suspended within these categories.

### *4.3. Performativity through the Voice*

As exposed above, psychoanalytic listening is a genre, which includes a particular temporality, and a particular pedagogy or disposition. Its interpretation awaits codification being suspended until it is embedded into a setting. For the scholar interested in the study of language in interaction, this listening genre poses many analytical complexities, since the analyst is supposed to listen to something that: a) is not uttered, b) something that does not coincide with the convention already established of particular signs; but instead to listen to c) the "inner voice" that the analyst is reproducing in her inner speech through the cultivation of a "third ear," as Theodor Reik would suggest.

Listening psychoanalytically posses many analytical problem because it is not only the analysand who is listening without codification, the analyst is attempting to listen to the "discourse of the other" as Lacan indicates, and in the case of the MFSPT, all the participants are listening as well. Everyone involved listens to something different, although sometimes there is agreement on what was listened to, when it has been already contextually situated. What this means, is that sometimes the ear has already been *tuned*, so the context has already been defined, the "aboutness" of the genre has been put forward. It has been embedded into a setting. The following example illustrates this.

Lucía, a young professional in her early thirties and who comes from a well-to-do family had expressed many times in previous meetings, the bad relationship that she has with her mother. According to her past stories, Lucía's mother does not seem to validate Lucía's life choices and is constantly criticizing her actions. This creates animosity between them, which in turn generates constant fights.

> La verdad es que ya no sé qué decir. Cada vez que voy a la casa de mi madre, lo único que oigo son quejas. No le gusta mi ropa, se molesta porque no la llamé a cierta hora…El otro día incluso me dijo que estoy engordando. En fin, en sus ojos ¡yo no hago nada bien! Pero yo lo único que hago es laburar y laburar, me mantengo, pago mis cuentas con mi propia guita. Pero no sé, a veces pienso que no hago nada bien. El otro día en el laburo -como no puedo dejar de pensar en mis problemas- entregué el presupuesto de la remodelación de un hotel en el Microcentro con un montón de errores. ¡No se pueden imaginar la vergüenza! ¿Qué va a pensar el cliente? ¡Que si no sé contar, no hay manera de que pueda participar en el proyecto remodelando! No he oído nada. ¡Obvio! Lo más seguro es que no quieren saber nada de mí, nunca jamás.
>
> [The truth is that I don't really know what to say. Every time I go to my mother's house, the only things I keep hearing are complaints. She doesn't like my clothes, she gets mad because I didn't call her on time… The other day she even told me that I am gaining weight. In the end, through her eyes I don't do anything right! But the only thing that I do is work and work, I pay my bills with my own money. But I don't know, sometimes I think that I don't do things right. The other day at work –because I cannot stop thinking about all my problems – I submitted a budget for the remodeling of a hotel at Microcentro, and it had many errors in it. You cannot imagine the embarrassment that I felt! What is the client going to think? That if I am unable to count, there's no way I will be able to remodel and participate in their project! I haven't heard from them…but of course! Most likely they don't want to know anything about me ever again.]

Lucía was crying when a female psychoanalyst interrupted her:

> Lucía…yo, yo siento la necesidad de interrumpirte porque, porque…necesito que regresés. **La persona que está hablando no sos vos, es tu madre hablando, y necesito escuharte a vos, no a ella.** Te das cuenta ¿no? Vos desparecés de la historia y solo escuchamos a tu madre hablando.
>
> Lucía…I, I feel compelled to interrupt you because, because…I need you to come back. **The person who is speaking is not you, it is your mother speaking, and I need to listen to you, not her**. You realize this, don't you? You disappear from the story and we only listen to your mother speaking.

On the day that Lucía made this intervention, the MFSPT conference room was packed. There were 91 persons present, one of the highest concentration that I witness during the six months I attended the sessions. We all witnessed her moving performance. To my surprise, no one challenged the idea that Lucía was somehow possessed by her mother's voice, everyone seemed to agree with this scenario. After the female analyst finished talking, another attendee—an analysand—contributed to this idea by saying:

> ¿Sabés Lucía? Yo creo que la doctora. M. está percibiendo algo correcto. Yo tampoco puedo reconocerte en lo que estás diciendo. Y ojo que esto no siempre es así, muchas veces cuando participás, está clarísimo que sos vos la que hablás. Pero hoy, no se, **no me parece que la persona que estoy escuchando seas vos**.
>
> [You know Lucía, I think that Dr. M. is perceiving something right. I also cannot recognize you in what you are saying. And this is not always the case, many times when you participate, it is very clear that you are the one speaking. But today, I don't know, **it doesn't seem that the person that I'm listening to is you**.]

What does it mean that Lucía is not speaking, but instead it is her mother speaking? What does it mean to *listen to* the mother speak?

To answer these questions, we need to situate the listening inside a listening community, in this case the MFSPT, which encompasses a group of subjects that at different levels are familiar with the basic ideas of psychoanalysis, and that are inside a psychoanalytic institution (APA). The theory of psychoanalysis places big emphasis in the idea of the unconscious through Lacan's concept of "radical Otherness" (Seminar III, Psychoses, 1981), which is autonomous and is comprised by the residual listening or resonance of the infant's early exposure to sound. In this theory, there is a divided subject, the opposite of an integrated self: "We can speak of the Other *as a subject* in a secondary sense only when a subject occupies this position and thereby embodies the Other for another subject" (Seminar VIII, Tranference, 1994, emphasis in original). Lacan argued that "being," as a subject defined by language, determined one's thought. In this case, the subject is not merely an "I" or the ego. It is the "speaking being" that is the subject. Through the symbolic order of language, the subject coalesces and comes forth (Écrits & Campbell, 2004). For this reason, the Lacanian subject is not a material, physical entity. It represents, instead, a relationship between words or, to be more specific, a relationship between the words. The subject does not merely "know" herself. Rather, she represents what is known through language. She is created by the unconscious and language, two factors that set limits and offer possibilities. In Lucías case, that possibility is to bring the discourse of her mother to the MFSPT, and she is able to do so because she is inside a community of listeners, that *tuned* their ears into a psychoanalytic frequency. In this case, the context is already set, bringing the voice of Lucía's mother as an embodied force, is validated and accepted in this setting because there is a convention that sustains this practice: the fact that in psychoanalytic theory the subject is divided and can bring up different voices through the Other inside the anlysand.

Interestingly enough, there is some resonance within psychoanalytic theory and Bakhtin's theory of the voice. As already discussed, psychoanalytic listening as a genre is a sort of "residual listening" that surpasses the here-and-now production of sound. Bakhtin (1981) poses a similar idea when developing his theory of dialogism. In his theory of the novel he postulates that there are no 'free' utterances meaning that, every "images of language are inseparable of images of various worlds views and from the living beings who are their agents—people who think, talk, and act in a setting that is

socially and historically concrete" (Bakhtin 1981:49). What Bakhtin postulates is that speakers are not unified entities, and their words are not transparent expressions of subjective experience (See Keane 2001) but rather they are informed by a multiplicity of voices (polyphony) and the different social personae they inhabit (heteroglossia) (Bakhtin 1981:61). This is comparable to what psychoanalytic listening is aiming to do. The 'residual' trace of previous listenings, gets accumulated and at one point it starts to create a coherence narrative that the listener begins to grasp. The auditory residual is formed by the different soundscapes produced by diverse sources ranging from the actual voices of the people we are surrounded by, non-referential sounds coming from the external world, as well as our own inner voice. These multiplicities of sound images do not necessarily have referents attached to them, but the listener register them unconsciously inside their psyche. They finally acquire meaning—surface the conscious world—when sound images get connected to a larger interpretative frame (Goffman 1974), and this frame is experienced rather than denoted. As in the case of polyphony in verbal and non-verbal texts, psychoanalytic listening is always informed by a multiplicity of sound images that the analyst and the analysand are trying to retrieve. In the residual sound there is a co-existence of ideas of the present and the past as well as different ideological constructs.

It is important to focus on the multi-vocality dimension of psychoanalytic listening since the voices that are shaping the interpretative frame, are at risk to take over the agent's own voice, as in the case of Lucía. Lucía's words are directly influenced by her mother's own ideas about her. This experience, Bakhtin tells us, can be characterized to some degree as "the process of *assimilation*—more or less creative—of others' words" making all utterances "filled with others' words, varying degrees of otherness or varying degrees of 'our-own-ness'.... These words of others carry with them their own expression, their own evaluative tone, which we assimilate, rework, and re-accentuate" (1986:89). According to Bakhtin's framework, any word uttered is "interindividual" because everything that is expressed is located outside the speaker: "The author (speaker) has his own inalienable right to the word, but *the listener has his rights*, and those whose voices are heard in the word before the author comes upon it also have their rights (after all, there are no words that belong to no one) (Ibid:121-122 emphasis added). In the example provided above, Lucía's is bringing her mother's voice to the setting. According to the analyst, she has appropriated these words and has begun to enact the stories that the mother told, something that I, as a listener outside of this community of listeners, was not able to register. What Bakhtin is pointing to is that the listener also has a right of interpretation, which may, or may not coincide with the speaker's utterance. Since when a speaker utters a word, that word is already immersed in a particular frame of interpretation, listening becomes crucial for the understanding of the direction that the interpretation is taking.

After the female analyst interrupted Lucía, there was a lot of consoling from the audience as well as the analysts towards Lucía. Everyone seemed to have listened that she was performing her mother's words, and that when she would be able to "see the real Lucía" her sorrows would come to an end. Nobody in the audience questioned the idea that she was speaking her mother's words. Everyone inside the MFSPT was listening in the same way because there was a context already in place that focused on a particular way of conceiving subjectivity.

This phenomenon, to perform the speech of another person, is different from entextualization (inserting a text into a different context) and closer, to a certain degree, to replication since it tries to portray the textual as opposed to contextual aspects of original discourse (See Urban 1996). But it not a replication per se since Lucía is not aware that she is repeating her mother's words (plus they may not even be the same words). What Lucía examples shows, is closer to Derrida's idea of the descentered subject formed in the performative reverberating of language itself: "Voice can betray the body to which it is lent, it can make it ventriloquize as if the body were no longer anything more than the actor or the double of another voice, of the voice of the other, even of an innumerable, incalculable polyphony. A voice may give birth and-- there you are*, voilà* --to another body." (Derrida 1984:79 emphasis in original). The capacity of language to create particular subjectivities has been generously studied, especially in feminist theory (See Butler 1993, 1997, 2000). All performative studies reverse the idea that an identity is the source of more secondary actions like speech. Instead it inquires into the construction of identities as they are caused by performative actions (Butler 1993). In these studies, speech (and writing) has been the center of the performative experience.

But Lucía's example is bringing something different. It is by listening psychoanalytically, listening inside a specific genre, that the mother of Lucía is brought to the MFSPT. Consequently, the transformation happened through listening. It can be argued that not everyone inside the MFSPT session listened in the same way, and it was the analyst's position of power that directed the attention to this particular aural interpretation. But even if just a few listeners listened, not necessarily to the voice of the mother, but as the other participant expressed, as if she was not the one speaking, there was a particular listening context that the listeners were reproducing by tuning the ear into the psychoanalytic frequency. As in Becker's discussion in chapter one about the Pentecostal arousal, the fact that there are a group of people reunited reproducing and enacting at the same time a particular context, the MFSPT is creating a particular context in which interpretations are possible.

❧

This chapter illustrates in detail some of the most important characteristics of psychoanalytic listening as a genre. They all underline an interesting aspect, the fact that there is an explicit comment about listening. There is an overt description on the importance of listening for the healing/well-being of the analysand, as well as an important part for the reproduction of the MFSPT sessions (the person attends in order to be able to listen and to be listened to). The importance of focusing on a meta-listening level is considerable because through the conscious acknowledgement of the role that listening plays in the overall organization of psychoanalytic listening, the attendee of the MFSPT sessions is providing some direct evidence of their interpretative structure, where the interpretative frames that speakers share derive in large measure from their metalinguistic common sense, and the process of producing frameworks in actual use incorporates a significant metalinguistic component (Hanks 1993:129). That is, what is performed metalinguistically is the culturally specific 'competence,' or knowledge, that renders the context of the performance accessible to an individual who belongs to a particular group. This way, cultural concepts emerge as stereotyped meanings in the

sense that they organize the social field in which a particular interaction takes place (Hanks 1993; Urban 1991, Silverstein 2003). The overt focus on listening in the examples provide evidence to the fact that inside the MFSPT sessions there are shared schemes of discursive but also aural knowledge that can only be understood from inside this particular listening genre.

This is only one aspect discussed, it is important to also recognize that the cultivation of this elusive listening genre, since it defies time, entails the suspension of interpretation, being in an almost liminal state trapped between Firstness and Secondness.

The next chapter will discuss how psychoanalytic listening surpassed the clinical setting and became a day-today experience. The focus is mainly on the circulation of psychoanalytic representations on popular television shows, as well as advertising and radio broadcasting.

Chapter Four

# "What you really mean is …": Listening Ideologies

*"I don't have money for the psychologist, that's why I'm calling you." (Woman of approximately 40 years talking on her phone in the subway)*

*"Leaving your psychologist is like leaving a boyfriend, it is very hard to tell him." (Woman of approximately 25 years talking to another woman at the bus stop)*

*"I don't know why he is behaving like that. He's been going to the psychologist for five years, and he is doing better. Can you imagine if he didn't go?" (Man of approximately 55 years speaking on his phone at a coffee shop)*

## 1. Introduction

In Buenos Aires, psychoanalytic listening as a genre has extended beyond the borders of the clinical setting, and has become a way of listening in day-to-day interaction. This is reflected during casual interactions where *porteños* (as the inhabitants of Buenos Aires are called), suspend the denotation and referential content of verbal utterances by listening to that which is not said; as previously discussed, this is a central characteristic of this generic type underlying the generic nature of this specific form of listening. And it also points to the emergence of particular listening ideologies and ideologies of knowledge reflected in common phrases like "what you really mean is...." "I think that what you want to say is...," as constantly voiced after an utterance has been presented. The circulation of this generic type has created a social way of listening.

I found that people in Buenos Aires use many psychoanalytic terms to talk about common situations. For example, they often use the word hysteric to refer to women or men who do not commit to anything (specially to emotional relationships); the word phobia to express dislike for any situation; psychosomatic to talk about specific bodily ailments; and *me psicopatió* (he/she "psychopathized" me) when someone makes you feel bad about something they did but put the blame on you. But people not only use psychoanalytic jargon, as the opening quotes show, they also tell stories about it: from the taxi driver who tells you that he is going to analysis because he "likes women too much" but doesn't want to put at risk his long-term relationship with his wife, to the woman at a convenience store who looks sad and when asked by the owner of the store why she looks so sad she responds "I just came out from therapy," to what the store owner replied, with absolute familiarity, "who said knowing yourself was easy?;" to random conversations at

the subway and bus stations where friends or relatives discuss their own or someone else's analytic situation.

But there is another aspect of the circulation of psychoanalysis beyond using clinical jargon and talking about your own or others' analytic experiences. In Buenos Aires, in many occasions, people from different ages, gender, and professions reproduce psychoanalytic listening by making psychoanalytic interpretation outside the clinical setting. Consider the following example that took place inside a cab. A woman (W) in her early thirties and the taxi driver (TD), a man in his fifties, both born and raised in Buenos Aires, drove in front of a group of children dressed in white and light blue. The woman looked at the children and the following exchange ensued:

> **W:** I really dislike that combination of colors, especially light blue. I don't think anybody looks good in that color.
> *[No me gusta nada esa combinación de colores, especialmente el celeste. No creo que le quede bien a nadie.]*
>
> **TD:** What's the matter? **I listen to a lot of animosity in your words**. Does your mother wear that color often?
> *[¿Qué pasa? Escucho un montón de mala onda en tus palabras. ¿Tu vieja usa ese color seguido?]*
>
> **W:** What are you talking about?
> *[¿Qué decís?]*
>
> **TD: I think that you mean something else**, but you don't dare say it. No one hates a color without a reason.
> *[Y yo creo que querés decir otra cosa, pero no te animás a decirlo. Nadie odia un color así sin razón.]*
>
> **W:** No, not my mother…. but now that you mention it ... I will have to think about it.
> *[No, mi vieja no… pero ahora que lo decís (…) voy a tener que pensarlo.]*[61]

After inquiring if the taxi driver had formal training as an analyst, he responded "I think more than thirteen years of therapy makes you understand how these things work. But to answer your question: no, I have never been trained as an analyst."

The exchange presented is extraordinarily common in Buenos Aires, and so is the answer, when posting questions about what are the credentials that a subject possesses when making apparently unrelated connections between the semantic meaning of a particular utterance and a psychoanalytic interpretation (e.g. you don't like a color, therefore you are thinking of a particular person that you dislike: you say x I hear y). Frequently there is a personal reference to the number of years that an individual has undergone therapy. Some answers point to the "commonsensical" relation between an

61 I did not record this exchange but I transcribed it right after it occurred to the best of my memory.

utterance and its "real meaning" without further explanation, and some reveal that a close friend or family member is a therapist and consequently they are exposed to the particularities of this listening genre.

The example presented underlines extremely important aspects of this kind of interaction: the emergence of a multiplicity of ideologies is present in the exchange. These ideologies emerge by listening, by tuning the ear in a particular way. The orientation is not directed to linguistic forms, but to listening. The addressivity form: "I think that you mean something else…" plays the role of a shifter (a term whose meaning cannot be determined without referring to the message that is being communicated between a sender and a receiver, for example the word "I," "you," "here," "now," etc. can only be understood in the context that they have been uttered) that makes explicit how the taxi driver *is* listening. By doing so, he is not only reproducing a psychoanalytic genre (suspending semantic meaning) but pointing to different ideological dimensions: 1) an explicit ideology of knowledge, indexing the taxi driver as knowledgeable of something the passenger does not perceive; 2) a believe in unconscious practices; and 3) a disregard for semantic content in favor of an hermeneutic approach.[62]

The implication is that there is an open access to interpretation of verbal utterances that point to "uncover" aspects of the most intimate self. There is a tacit subtext that reads: "you are unable to understand the real motives of your actions and feelings, so a translation is needed." When someone says, "what you really mean is," there is an immediate transformation of a social situation (Goffman 1964) into a setting that grounds the exchange psychoanalytically and where many ideologies are at play.

## 2. Listening Ideologies

In linguistic anthropology, the concept of linguistic ideology points to the more or less explicit knowledge and evaluation that speakers have of their own local communicative practices, being both pragmatic and self-reflexive. As pointed out by Susan Gal, "linguistic ideology is a guide to speakers for how they should understand the metapragmatic cues that relate linguistic signals to their context of use and that provide information about the 'what is going on here' of interaction" (1998:322). From its inception, the 'ethnography of communication' was concerned with language ideology as the cultural system of ideas, beliefs, and social values about language use. Current writings on linguistic ideology, focusing on the linkages among linguistic forms, semiotic codes, and power and social relations, rejects the notion that linguistic ideology is a singular politically neutral cultural construction, and instead argues that different, multiple ideologies construct alternate, even opposing realities within a culture (Briggs, 1998). Language ideologies are the mediating link between social forms and forms of talk (Hanks, 1996), so the choice of a speech form (i.e. polite language, informal speech, scientific language, slang, etc.) has political implications exactly because of speakers' commonsensical convictions about what a language is and what the use of language is assumed to imply; "they [speakers] hint at the existence of cultural models of speech – a metapragmatic classification of discourse types – linking speech repertoires to

62 We can think here of Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutics of suspicion (1965:32).

typification of actor, relationship and conduct" (Agha, 2007:145). Therefore, if linguistic ideologies encompass both social interaction and linguistic forms, it is because they can be understood as verbalized, thematized discussion, and as the implicit understandings and unspoken assumptions embedded and reproduced in the structure of institutions and their everyday practices (Gal 1998:319).

Following the concept of linguistic ideologies, as creating contexts that are already immersed in broader cultural models, where the 'cultural' is always a system in the real-time functioning of social action that indexically invokes sociocultural conceptualizations (Hanks 1987) can we formulate the concept of listening ideologies as a structuring force that creates particular frameworks of action, interpretation, and subjectivity? Is there an auditory ideology?

Historically, the ideological dimension of listening has been generally conceptualized in terms of the content and the social prestige of what is being listened to (see Peterson 1992; Emmison 2003; Savage & Gayo 2011). The most extensive area of study in this regard is music, since the classificatory system of music (i.e. highbrow vs. lowbrow) has opened a huge debate about how consumers of music use cultural taste to reinforce symbolic boundaries between themselves and categories of people they dislike (Bourdieu 1979, 1984; Bryson 1997). In these studies, the emphasis is on the shared networks of signification that are constituted in the appreciation of music. Hence, the ideological construct is somehow external to the actual listening. The ideological sphere of listening is located *in the associations*, not in the act of listening per se (*versus* language ideology where the ideologies are created in/during the verbal utterance). These associations are shaped by dominant aesthetic and social expectations that are themselves historically structured, and are constantly changing, creating particular kinds of audiences (see Warde, Wright, and Gayo 2010). Accordingly, the cultural history of listening to particular kinds of music, as well as its ideological dimension, encompasses change in aesthetic response in relationship to public behavior. Studies of music consumption thus conceptualize the constitution of a social subject in relation to the choices he or she makes in regards to listening to particular symbolic sounds.[63]

If we only focus on the relationship between sounds linked to particular groups of people, we miss key elements to understand listening ideologies *in the act* of listening. To undercover aural ideologies we need to focus on the *metalevel* of listening: how do subjects listen? What are the evaluations that listeners construct? Do sounds have the same meanings for everyone? Listening—as any other mode of perception–is historically structured (Foucault 1972); and by focusing on the way social actors apprehend sound, we can begin to understand how listening ideologies are shaped.

Listening and sounds are historically dependent and reflect different paradigms depending on the context and the individuals that apprehend sounds under particular historical circumstances. For example, in *Listening in Paris: a Cultural History*, James Johnson explains that in travelers' descriptions, and concertgoers' accounts of the Paris Opera in the 18th Century, the public was "at times loud and at other merely sociable, but seldom deeply attentive" (1995:2). The audiences talked during the whole duration of the

63 An important exception is Hennion (2013) whose analysis on amateurs' attachments and ways of apprehending music can both engage and form subjectivities, rather than merely recording social labels, and have a history, irreducible to that of the taste for works.

performances not paying attention to the music. It was not until a hundred years later, through a long process of subtle transformation, that the relationship between concertgoers and music changed; people stopped talking, and the audience began to *listen* to the music. The notorious shift in listening practices (or auditory ideologies) between the 18th and 19th centuries in Paris, was a result of change in aesthetic response by the popular comprehension of new aesthetic styles that, according to Johnson, are "at the same time structural and personal" (1995:4). There was an emergence of the refinement of new models of perception that were historically constituted. What Johnson is pointing to is that any public response to sounds (including silence) is social: "[p]ublic expression, although freely chosen, is drawn from a finite number of behaviors and styles of discourse shaped by the culture" (1995:3). And at the same time, the expression of these modes of reception does not exist objectively, their significance reside in *the particular moment of reception*, which entails an array of contextual elements.

This dialectic—the structural and the personal aspects of reception presented by Johnson–resonates with the concept of "meaning" in language, which only makes sense in light of the social and psychological conditions under which a particular linguistic code is used (Basso & Selby 1976; Ochs 1979). Meaning is shaped by various factors, including the age, sex, and social class of speakers and hearers, the style of speaking, the events or activities in which language is used, the institutional roles of participants in the interaction, and the organization or flow of information in the prior discourse. This relationship is known to be bi-directional: "language shapes contexts as much as context shapes language" (Goodwin & Duranti 1992:77). In the case presented by Johnson, we can say that *reception shapes contexts as much as context shape reception*. In other words, the reality of the sign, be it linguistic or auditory, is wholly a matter determined by communication (Voloshinov/Bakhtin 1973). It is in the intricacies of this dialectic that linguistic and aural ideologies come into being since both concern how the structure of language or sounds, the use of language and listening practices, and the beliefs about language and sounds (both their structure and use) are necessarily interconnected and constitutive of each other (Silverstein 1979). Johnson's Paris Opera example of the emergence of a new aesthetic response to sounds exemplifies how an ideology and practice of listening reorganized in a different fashion auditory practices of the Opera house, establishing a new regime of silence, attention and focus that governed this social space. This example provides a glimpse to the extraordinary force that listening has in constituting social space and direct behavior.

Auditory ideologies are everywhere. Since "we have no ear lids" and "we are condemned to listen" as Murray Schafer points out (2003), every time we listen, we are consciously or unconsciously making assumptions, judgments, and sometimes having fastidious ideas about the ranges of sounds we admit as "good" or as interruptive. All of these assessments represent a collection of varied ideas about sounds that are impregnated with semiotic meaning. For example, Mark Smith (2000) in his historical analysis of the constitution of meanings and sounds in antebellum America reveals how some regional soundscapes helped to define social relations. He explains how the elites of both North and Southern states associated certain sounds with the notion of progress: "defined by nascent capitalists and boosters, sound heralded progress and, as such, it was sound, not noise" (2000:139). The sounds Smith is referring to were mainly industrial sounds that far from being signified as noise, became signs that represented growth and

development (e.g. the sound of the first railroads). In contrast, the quietness of the countryside was synonym of recession and of backwardness. In this context, when Native Americans were expelled from their land, the elites' policy was to "settle them in a *quite* home" (Monro 1850 cited in Smith 2000:141 my emphasis). These examples illustrate the intrinsic relation constructed between what was perceived as a space without sound. In antebellum America different sounds acquired meanings that reflected the desires, the fears, and the discomfort of this particular historic period. As the Opera example, these are instances of reflexivity of listening, which entails a strong ideological component.

These same sounds that were the harbingers of progress and economic growth, acquired a total different value in the late 19th century and early 20th century, as Kerin Bijsterveld explains in "The Diabolical Symphony of the Mechanical Age" (2001). In her analysis, the definition of what has become to be perceived as noise is directly linked with the cultural meaning of sound. The sounds of the city and the mechanic revolution that in antebellum America were considered "good" sounds in Europe were re-signified as noise at the turn of the century. Social classifications also transformed and the people who showed no sensitivity to noise were considered "insensible to arguments, ideas, poetry and art – in sum, to mental impressions of all kinds, due to the tough and rude texture of the brains," as philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer suggested in an article published in 1851 (1974:156). But Schopenhauer was not the only one who expressed discontent for the external noise. The intellectual elite at the turn of the century in Europe agreed that there should be the implementation of a "noise etiquette" for the abatement of excessive noise because they could not concentrate and contemplate beauty, due to the "many torments to which our delicate organs [the ear] are exposed" (Bijsterveld, 2001:167). New typologies of people emerged, separating the "brute" and uneducated, who were unable to distinguish noise from other types of sounds, from the refined and delicate, who could not appreciate beauty under the torments produced by excessive sounds.

What is interesting about these debates is the emergence of subjects who have different ears, thus, differently categorized and belonging to different social strata. In each example, we can grasp a specific listening ideology that indexes particular social actors to certain practices that are ideologically constructed. Among these practices, gender is a notable feature. Bijsterveld notices how the people who were pushing for noise reduction campaigns at the turn of the 19th century in Europe were classified as feminine and weak, constructing a gendered narrative about being able to tolerate sounds as masculine and powerful and not being able to do so as womanly (2001:176-177). In consequence, according to these examples, how subjects apprehend sound constitute particular ways of being in the world.

Going deeper into the analysis of gendered subjectivities, Myako Inoue (2001) in her research on the constitution of a modern Japanese female subjectivity, situates the practice of listening and other corporeal sites of subject formation (e.g., other senses like seeing or smelling), as socially constructed and historically emergent, paying particular attention to the gendered constitution of the female character in Japan. Inoue focuses on how Japanese schoolgirl speech became a signifier of an historical social formation related to the modernization of Japan. In her account, the female voice, which was largely unheard, began to have semiotic meaning from approximately 1887 to the end of WWII. The female voice, which was considered background noise, slowly begins to take the

form of a linguistic genre: "school girl talk," which was dubbed as "vulgar," "sugary and shallow," and problematic in the view of male Japanese intellectuals at the turn of the century (2001:156-59). Inoue takes on Silverstein's (1979) examination of linguistic ideology, and explains that these auditory practices (listening to school girl talk) are embedded inside an already customary language ideology that established what constituted a language and what did not. In her analysis, Inoue focuses her attention on the metapragmatic ideology that emerges in male intellectual description of schoolgirl talk to put on display that these intellectuals are listening ideologically. What is striking in this example is that in the way Inoue presents her examples, "school girl talk" is an imagined *auditory ideology* that male Japanese intellectuals constructed existing more in the minds of elite men that the mouths of girls. But the auditory ideology is sufficiently real that it enables people to hear this imaginary talk. Particular sounds created a noteworthy discomfort in the listener, later classified as "school girl talk." This process is possible, according to Inoue, because the female voice was already embedded in a specific linguistic ideology with clear boundaries and expectations about what the female voice should be or should sound like.

Inoue, does not introduce the term *listening ideology*; instead, she focuses on the linguistic ideologies through the metapragmatic content of male Japanese utterances to understand the formation of the emergent imagined linguistic genre she is presenting. One reason that could explain the absence of this concept is the paradox that sometimes listening practices present. In order to conceptualize the experience of listening practices, scholars rely on the verbal accounts of the experience of the apprehension of sound.[64] Inoue's analysis helps us to understand that listening ideologies are in a large degree imagined. There is nothing "real" about the discourses that link certain types of people to certain listening practices, but beliefs and projections that indicate a way in which the subjects understand the world.

In the case of Argentina, when someone is turning the ear into the "psychoanalytic frequency," what the listener is doing is bringing to life a set of beliefs that index the listener as inhabiting a particular epistemology. The same phenomena that one can observe when a professor utters the following metapragmatic sentence: "how dare you call me 'John'" to a young student, conveying a strong ideological component (e.g. I am older, I have more institutional power, we are not friends, etc.) can be observed with the addressivity form "what you really mean is?" or "I hear x, y, and z in your words," as many other linguistic forms pointing not only to the generic form of psychoanalytic listening as a genre, but the ideologies that emerge by listening psychoanalytically. These addressivity forms become shifters pointing to an array of ideological constructs.

64 An important exception comes from Hirschkind's (2008) analysis of listening to Islamic sermons tapes on cassette tapes in Egypt, where there is an embodiment of listening practices observable to any witness without any linguistic feature involved. Also Benzecry's (2010) analysis of Opera fanatics in which there is a physical transformation when listening to music is another great exception.

## 3. Listening Genres and Modernity

As the taxi driver example shows, these ideologies are somehow specific, reflecting beliefs about unconscious practices, ideologies of knowledge (someone having a specific knowledge you do not posses), and a disregard for referential meaning. But there is more. There is an extended literature that has conceptualized the construction of modern subjectivity as constituted in relation to an alterity, where the "other" is not an accidental by-product but is a necessary condition for the modern self (De Certau 1984-1988; Anderson 1983; Chakrabarty 2000; Inoue 2003; Deleuze 1988). These authors suggest that the modern individual, whose political life is lived in citizenship, is also supposed to have an interiorized "private" self that pours out through different outlets like diaries, autobiographies, memoirs, etc. Inside this episteme, the analyst's office becomes the epitome of the expression of the private self. For example, Chakrabarty pointed directly to psychoanalysis as a "genre that helps express the modern self" (2000:35), where the dichotomy between the private and the public self becomes evident. The main idea is that there is an *internal life that is unique*, that is not the expression of a social position; this position is either domestic (i.e. family roles: mother, son, brother in law, etc.) or public (being part of an ethnic, professional, economic group, etc.). Instead, the modern subject in this literature represents the self as irreplaceable, personal, intimate, and not transferable.

Transposing this particular way in which modernity has been defined to the circulation of psychoanalysis outside the clinical setting in Buenos Aires, I argue that through listening psychoanalytically, the listener is not only referring to the ideologies already discussed, but she is also performing a modern subjectivity based primarily on the idea of unconscious practices. This means that in Buenos Aires there is a public culture constructed on the basis of a radically modern ideology—psychoanalysis—and that this culture is created through listening practices that circulate on an everyday basis. My argument is that psychoanalytic listening is what constitutes modernity in Buenos Aires, a proposition that overturns the epistemologies that the Enlightenment favored where listening as a perceptual mode was categorized as being precisely the opposite of a modern self, while vision was considered the epitome of modernity (Jay 1993; Gouk 2004).

The epistemologies that place listening as non-modern and the visual as a modern figure rely on the increasingly visual mastery for Western science and cultural practices (Foucault 1970). In the wake of the "communication revolution" that took place through the emergence of the printing press, it has become commonplace to assert that a decisive shift took place in the early modern West from a predominantly aural to a primarily visual culture (Anderson 2006; McLuhan 1962). The emergence of positivistic frames of interpretation based on observable facts to determine the veracity of particular phenomena also contributed to new emphasis on the visual, leaving other sensorial expressions behind (Schmidt 2000; Smith 1999; Gouk 1999, 2004). The influence and legacy that a visualist frame has in today's world is immense. For example, in the introduction of *Downcast Eyes* (1993) Martin Jay begins his exploration about the eye with the following opening quote:

> Even a rapid glance at the language we commonly use will demonstrate the ubiquity of visual metaphors. If we actively focus our attention on them, vigilantly keeping an eye out for those deeply embedded as well as those on the surface, we can gain an illuminating insight into the complex mirroring of perception and language. Depending, or course, on one's outlook or point of view, the prevalence of such metaphors will be accounted an obstacle or an aid to our knowledge of reality. It is, however, no idle speculation or figment of imagination to claim that if blinded to their importance, we will damage our ability to inspect the world outside and introspect the world within. And our prospects for escaping their thrall, if indeed that is even the foreseeable goal, will be gently dimmed" [1993:1]

This paragraph presents twenty-one[65] visual metaphors, which suggests how ineluctable the modality of the visual is in our linguistic practice. The ear, on the contrary, has no such metaphoric force and has been connected with the past, with religious practices, stories of possessions, a connection with the so called "natural" and "sensible" world, among other representations. Psychoanalytic focus, which for many years was placed on "the talking cure," presents a model of listening that, as explored in the previous chapters, defies linear conceptualizations of time and implies a codification of signs that are not referential; most importantly, through this framework one listens to the inner or "true" self (Lacan1966). Psychoanalysis created a new form of subjective experience that gave birth to the idea of a divided subject, unique and exceptional, pointing to how the modern self is conceptualized. Thus, psychoanalysis, as being mostly a listening practice and a quintessentially modern enterprise, contradicts the idea that listening is a non-modern practice.

Two important ethnographies relating listening and modernity also point to the public and private divide that signals the emergence of a political modern subjectivity; they emphasize the need to re-conceptualize the ear not as a passive organ, but also as capable of creating modern spaces: Miyako Inoue *Vicarious Language* (2006), and Charles Hirschkind *Ethical Soundscapes* (2006). Inoue's attention is placed on the metapragmatic attacks used by male intellectuals in order to reify a nonexistent women's language. Their imagined aural ideologies construct an epistemic violence representative of linguistic modernity which lies not on the erasure of what the other (the woman) is saying but in the nonreferential aspects of female speech, on prosody (the final particles of intonation) and grammatical structure (2006:53). "Schoolgirl speech" is constructed through how these men listen to female utterances, as Inoue explains: "reducing the cultural significance of her speech to its nonreferential aspect denies and represses her *referential* voice, her will to mean and signify something in a rational manner" (2006:54, emphasis in the original). The reduction of female speech to mere sound signals how male intellectuals were listening. Male intellectuals overheard and cited speech that was not addressed to them. This disembodied voice (which Chion 1994, would call acustomatics, where the source of the sound is not visible), invites the listener to guess who is speaking, creating ideological constructs through metapragmatic awareness.

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65 Jay explains that many of these metaphors are embedded in words that do not necessarily seem directly connected to them, for example the word vigilant derived from the Latin *vigilate*, meaning to watch, to show.

Modernity in Inoue's case is thus reflected on the creation of an alterity, where the Japanese intellectuals separate themselves from this emerging "other."

Hirschkind's analysis of sermon cassettes in Egypt places modernity in the act of listening to the sermons and their relationship with modernity. While criticizing the "ocularcentric" constitution of modernity of the Enlightenment episteme, he describes three forms of listening that are considered modern: 1. The prevalence of "subterranean" listening practices, meaning that Egyptians are exposed to sounds all the time and that these sounds are the outcome of modern landscapes (e.g. cars, phones, music, etc.). While cities are often understood as spaces of the visual, in reality in day-to-day life, subjects rely more on listening practices to orient their selves than visual cues. 2. The place of auditory practices within techniques of self-fashioning, pointing specifically to psychoanalysis, where listening establishes the conditions of intersubjectivity and the unconscious. 3. Technologies of listening, like the gramophone, the telephone, the radio, etc. and the tape recorder, that according to Leigh Eric Smith—a religious historian—played an important role in fashioning modern subjectivities through mediated forms (2006:18-23). Hirschkind's proposition that listening to sermons in Egypt is a modern practice, is predicated on the idea that listening to sermons has a similar outcome as psychoanalysis since it is also a "technique of self-fashioning" centered on the therapeutic capacities of listening, but where its focus is on ethical living rather than psychological stability; and the fact that the circulation and listening of the cassettes is one of the most important technology to mold a national citizenry. Thus, in his account, listening to sermons constitutes a new form of citizenship; since it appeals to a inner self, the embodied experience of listening produces—as psychoanalysis does—the alterity that is quintessentially modern.

The difference between these ethnographies and the performance of modernity that the circulation of psychoanalysis in Buenos Aires brings to life by listening psychoanalytically is that both authors are working on the constitution of public cultures based on epistemic principles that are non-modern, or at least not intrinsically modern. In Inoue's example it is the reactionary patriarchal ideology that sustains the listening practice that creates the "Other" as shallow and insignificant. It breaks with an old model while another social reality is emerging. In Hirschkind's work, we find a religion that adopts new features that are related *by association* to modern forms. The premise is that since these religious listening practices are a) mediated by a modern technology (the cassette recorder) which allows the listener to access sermons any place and any time (like inside a taxi) and b) have infiltrated every space of modern living, this listening practice lies inside a modern episteme. When I say that this listening practice is modern *by association*, it is because there is nothing intrinsically modern about listening to sermons in order to achieve ethical living. The practice becomes modern, according to Hirschkind, because this listening practice has been inserted inside everyday living, coexisting with modern bureaucracies, and national citizenship.

In Buenos Aires, on the contrary, listening is based on a radically modern form, psychoanalysis, which is by definition intrinsically modern (modern in the sense of alterity, on the idea of separation of the private and public self, and the uniqueness of one's self). When listeners tune their ears into the psychoanalytic listening genre outside the clinical setting, they are performing a modern subjectivity, where ideologies about a

private and unique self, become evident. By listening psychoanalytically, listeners are reproducing this particular modern episteme.

*3.1. Reported speech as the creation of alterity*

The most distinct practice in which the turning of the ear into a psychoanalytic genre becomes apparent is, as the example of the taxi driver shows, by a very particular form of reported speech; where what it is reported is not a direct or indirect form of reported speech, but instead a new narrative centers on unconscious practices. The following example illustrates this point.

Inside a coffee shop four friends, three men and one woman are talking about a written note in the national newspaper *Clarín* (I was also present but did not participate in the conversation). In the text, a book critic is praising a book recently published by Darío, one of the three men participating in the conversation. The writer states that Darío is 39 years old. Carlos, another participant, asks Darío about his age:

C= Carlos 40 years old
D= Darío 35 years old
A= Andrés 39 years old
L= Lorena 39 years old

(1) C: Hey, it says here that you are 39 years old, but you are not 39.
*[Ey, acá dice que tenés 39 años, pero vos no tenés 39.]*

(2) D: No
*[No]*

(3) L: How old are you?
*[¿Cuántos años tenés?]*

(4) D: Well, my analyst says that I am 15 years old; this guy says that I am 39, and my document says that I am 35. So I don't know. [laughs]
*[Y mi analista dice que tengo 15 años; este tipo dice que tengo 39, y en mi documento dice que tengo 35. Así que ¿qué se yo?]*

(5) A: At least your analyst says that you are 15, mine says that I am 11! [laughs]
[*Por lo menos tu analista dice que tenés 15, el mio dice que tengo ¡11!*]

(6) D: The next time that Andrea [the analyst] tells me: "Darío, it seems as if I am listening to my son Manu, when I am listening to you." C'mon, the kid is around 15 years old! I am going to send her this note. [laughs]
[*La próxima vez que Andrea me diga: "Darío, me parece que estoy oyendo a mi hijo Manu, cuando te escucho a vos," ¡no me jodas, el pibe tiene como 15 años! le voy a mandar esta nota (risas).]*

(7) A: No, what your analyst is telling you is that she thinks of you as her child, so she is not available to fuck. [laughs]
*[No, lo que tu analista te está diciendo es que te ve como a su hijo, así que no te la podés garchar.]*

(8) D: What a big moron you are! Andrea is my mother's age!
*(¡Pero qué gran pedazo de pelotudo! ¡Andrea es de la edad de mi vieja!)*

(9) C: Oops, here comes the complex. [laughs] [Complex here refers to the Oedipus complex.]
*[Huy, ahí se sale el complejo*]

(10) A: Congratulations dude! You are great!
*[¡Felicidades chabón! ¡Sos re-grosso*!]

(13) C: She [the analyst] was generous, I would have guessed 3 years max. [Laughs]
*[Y fue generosa, yo te daría 3 años a lo mucho (risas)]*

A significant way in which "self" and "other" are differentiated, is through the exploration of reported speech (Bakhtin 1981; Voloshinov 1973). Voloshinov discussed the attitudes and social values that have shaped the ways in which speakers report on someone else's speech. His most important contribution is that different kinds of reported speech crystallize different sets of values and purposes with respect to discourses of others (1973:116-119). He developed a classification of reported speech as: 1. Direct (*oratio recta*), which evokes the original speech situation and conveys, or claims to convey, the exact words of the original speaker. 2. Indirect (*oratio obliqua*), which adapts the reported utterance to the speech situation of the report in indirect discourse. The reporter in this form relates the event from her point of view. 3. The third form and the more difficult to define, since there have been many different attempts to create a nomenclature for this form (see Florian 1986), is quasi-direct reported speech, or quasi-direct discourse. Quasi-direct speech is phrased from the point of view of the narrator, but content wise it belongs to the character's speech, thought, or perception.

Reported speech in any of its forms is very useful for the examination of how alterity is being brought to light and the analysis of listening genres because it points to *how* the listeners are listening to each other's words. When we use indirect discourse, we do not just apply a grammatical rule, instead we need to analyze and respond to the reported utterance and show a dialogic relationship to it; listening is key to this process. In Bakhtin's own words:

> A word (or in general any sign) is interindividual. Everything that is said, expressed, is located outside the 'soul' of the speaker and does not belong only to him. The word cannot be assigned to a single speaker. The author (speaker) has his own inalienable right to the word, but *the listener* has his rights, and those whose voices are *heard* in the word before the author comes upon it also

> have their rights (after all, there are no words that belong to no one). [Bakhtin, 1986, pp.121-122, my emphasis].

When people in Buenos Aires use the phrase "what you really mean is" they are reporting the speech of the other person's utterance. But what kind of report is happening? The type-token relationship in this form of quotation becomes complex, because many different tokens of the same type can emerge (e.g. when more than one listener interprets different meaning out of the same statement). The problem of the appropriation of one speaker's discourse by another, who may employ it in a manner either directly or obliquely opposed to the original intention, is fundamental in psychoanalytic listening. In the example above, this form of quotation becomes evident. There are three different forms of reporting happening; the first two can be easily assimilated to Voloshinov's categories of indirect and direct speech. Analyzing the third, however, prompts me to propose a new category, one that I will call "what you really mean."

In the opening line of the exchange (1), Carlos is indirectly reporting what he read in the newspaper: "it says here that you are 39 years old." The deictic word *here* behaves much like a demonstrative, which in conjunction with the physical gesture that Carlos is performing by pointing to the newspaper article, is used not only to identify the source of the narrative but to indicate the referent's spatial and temporal location; it also generates a collective orientation in the conversation to the newspaper text. In this case, the quotation is happening in the present. Likewise, in fragment (4) Darío is quoting indirectly three different sources: "my analyst says that I am 15 years old; this guy says that I am 39; and my document says that I am 35." The difference with Carlos' quotation—even though both are speaking in the present tense—and Darío's first quotation, is that the lacking of the deictic *here* does not provide a specific timeframe. Since the analyst is not present at the moment this exchange happened, the implication is that Darío is indirectly quoting what the therapist told him sometime in the past. Darío's second quotation introduces another deictic: *this* in reference to the literary critic. In this case, the deictic helps to contextualize not only the source of the utterance, but reducing the scope of interpretation to a particular individual and in a particular timeframe, since he, like Carlos, is pointing directly to the newspaper. In both cases, Darío is bringing into the present context the images of two different absent social actors.

On paragraph (6) a direct form of quotation appears when Darío straightforwardly quotes the words of her analyst: "The next time that Andrea tells me: "Darío, it seems as if I am listening to my son Manu, when I am listening to you." In this instance, Darío does not claim authorship for a part of his utterance, which he ascribes to another speaker, the analyst. This part of his utterance does not serve a regular referential function; rather, it refers to words, not to any arbitrary words, but purportedly to those words that the analyst uttered at some other time thus collapsing different timeframes. By drawing on the analyst's words, Darío is also bringing in a reference about listening, making explicit that the analyst is positioning her ear in reference to symbolic sounds. There is a discrepancy difference between Darío's first instance of indirect quotation (line 4) where he transforms the analyst's speech through subtle changes in deictic, tense, or pronoun change, in the second example (line 6), in which he quotes directly the speech of the analyst. In the first quotation we have:

(a) "My analyst says that I am 15 years old,"

We could infer that the original statement was:

(b) Andrea said: "Darío you act/look/remind me/sound/ as if you are 15 years old."

Yet, Darío did not exactly listen to option (b), instead, the direct quotation that he brings up states that the analyst said that there is a *sonic* relationship between Darío's speech and the analyst's son who is "around 15 years old." He is making an inference derived by the proposition made by the analyst. We do not have enough context to understand what the analyst meant when she uttered "it seems as if I am listening to my son Manu, when I am listening to you." But what we know is that Darío heard: "you are 15 years old," presumably in terms of his level of emotional maturity. We can assume that this exchange happened inside the clinical setting, since one of the most important stipulations of psychoanalytic philosophy is that the analysand and the analyst should not have any social relation outside the clinic. Their relationship is purely therapeutic (Freud 1971). What the discrepancy between what was actually said and the interpretation that Darío is making of his analyst's statement is showing us is that in psychoanalysis, what is quoted is far from being a direct or indirect quotation, but a new reconfiguration of the words, a new grammatical form.

In line (7) we see a formulation of the "what you really mean" form of quotation when Andrés says: "No, **what your analyst is telling you is** that she thinks of you as her child." This belongs to the same group of expressions as the one uttered by the taxi driver: "I think that you mean something else." From one perspective, reported speech may be viewed theoretically as a reconstruction of a past utterance potentially affording new present significance, accomplished by virtue of its being incorporated within a new dialogical context, where reported speech makes the past once again present by revivifying and vitalizing it with the present significance, which prompts its renewed evocation in the first place. But contrary to such a theoretical standpoint, the "what you really mean" form of reported speech affords a new "hearing/listening" in a necessarily different context and as essentially deprived of the words' original significance by the author's current interpretation. In "when you say x I hear y," the whole grammatical structure of the quotation changes since it is an entirely new statement. And it is not a quasi-direct form of speech, since quasi-direct discourse is a device, which simultaneously presents the third-person perspective of the reported speaker and the first-person perspective of the reported speaker. But in "what you really mean" quotation, this separation does not exist. What Andrés is doing, is telling Darío what the analyst really meant with her words. We already analyzed Darío's explanation: "the analyst thinks I am 15 years old," but Andrés has a different interpretation: the analyst is bringing the figure of her son to therapy, to indicate to Darío that she sees him as a son, thus stating clearly that she is not available for any sexual encounter. While this statement is meant as a joke, Andrés is clearly reproducing, if artificially, how to listen psychoanalytically, disregarding the words of the direct quotation brought up by Darío, and bringing a different analysis. What had been taken essentially at face value as authoritative speech in

the past (the analyst's words) but again, not necessarily projected as such initially, is diminished in the present. The one voice has been replace by a series of new statements.

Perhaps Bakhtin's idea of double-voiced discourse could help us understand this particular form of reported speech. In *Discourse and the Novel*, Bakhtin presents the novel as complex sets of "several heterogeneous stylistic unities" (1981:261). Rather than a single unified form, he states that the novel as a genre subsumes several sub-genres. He also pointed that the novel, unlike lyric poetry (being monological) does not express a single voice or point of view traditionally assumed to be the author's. Instead, the novel is dialogical or heteroglot, that is, expressive of a multiplicity of points of views, what he called voices; these include but are not limited to, the author's. Such speech constitutes a special type of double-voiced discourse. It serves two speakers at the same time and expresses simultaneously two different intentions: the direct intention of the character who is speaking, and the refracted intention of the author. In such discourse there are two voices, two meanings and two expressions. These voices are "dialogically interrelated, they—as it were—know about each other (just as two exchanges in a dialog know of each other and are structured in this mutual knowledge of each other; it is as if they actually hold a conversation with each other" (1981:324). Double-voice discourse, Bakhtin tells us, is internally dialogized. So one way in which "what you really mean" quotation can be interpreted is as representing a double-voice discourse where there is a particular intentionality (therapeutic) in which different ideas of what has been quoted represent different beliefs and principles.

From a related perspective, the internal dynamics differentiating the original level of discourse from its re-enactment with "what you really mean" reported speech may be further explained by Bakhtin's distinction between what he terms "the internally persuasive voice" as opposed to the "authoritative voice" (1981:346). The former represents an open expression of ideas seeking some response in search for a philosophic truth, articulated by a speaker already convinced of her ideology, while the latter is closed off to further dialogue and possible dissent. In "what you really mean" form, we see the predominance of the internally persuasive voice, but also how it becomes an authoritative voice when the interpreter/listener states that she/he know the real meaning of a particular statement.

### *3.2. Alterity inside one's own self*

In psychoanalysis, as stated in different chapters, there is a radical form of alterity: the unconscious, what Derrida called an "intruder" or the other in you that is internal but gets expressed externally through our actions and different kinds of behaviors (Derrida, *On Touching* 2005). The recognition that there is something that we cannot control that is represented by our drives, our fears, our repressions, etc. is a modern idea that, as exposed, is performed in many casual encounters in Buenos Aires. But unlike other forms of alterity, the idea of the unconscious does not necessarily need another person to recognize that it is there (although most of the times it happens inside an interchange). It can happen inside one's own dialog.

As exposed in chapter three, psychoanalytic listening functions through aural residues that little by little will give sense to an incoherent group of sounds (or perhaps it superimposes one set of ideologies and practices of listening over others). This is the

main reason that temporality is a crucial element in psychoanalytic listening, and one of the reasons that "justifies" the fact some therapies last many years. Listening can happen at any point in time as Juan's and Roberto's examples showed in chapter three.

I want to turn now to another example in order to show that listening psychoanalytically, and thus the emergence of particular ideologies, can occur at any time and does not necessarily surface through a dialog, and how alterity can be expressed through listening to one's self. Special attention is placed in quoting one's own speech, as well as instances of metalinguistic awareness.

43 years old, Adriana is a theatre teacher who lives in the neighborhood *Caballito,* a middle/upper-middle-class neighborhood located right in the geographical center of Buenos Aires. She has been in and out of therapy for approximately 30 years. She calssifies her therapies as "important" and "unimportant;" what she calls "important" therapies lasted approximately between 7 to 10 years each. She has had three important therapies. There were some smaller therapies between the important ones that lasted just a few months and didn't even make it to one year. Adriana told me why she started going to therapy, explaining that the first one—which started when she was just ten years old—was not her decision but her mother's. She then continued to talk about the bad relationship that she and her mother developed throughout the years, influencing her decision to continue therapy once her first "important therapy" ended. The problems began when her grandfather bought Adriana a house to live, so that in the future she would have some financial stability. But her mother, having separated from her husband, and not making enough money, was living in that house. Adriana told me that this situation created a lot of friction between mother and daughter, forcing Adriana to leave the house when she was 21, which, according to her account, was very hard because she felt she had to leave *her* house, and she had to find odd jobs in order to be able to provide for herself.

She was telling me about her last important analysis, which ended in 2007, when the following monologue ensued:[66]

1. Estuvo buenísimo, porque yo me di cuenta de que todo lo que yo había
2. venido a buscar lo estaba resolviendo. Entonces en una sesión le dije [a
3. mi analista] que "creo esto y esto…" y fue justo, contemporáneo a que
4. me compré el departamento. Me compré mi casa, no la del abuelo en
5. donde vive mi mamá. Y ese fue un tema, que si yo la verdad lo tengo que
6. decir …

[long pause, 48 seconds].

7. ¡Mirá qué loco, por dios! ¡Mirá qué loco!

[another long pause, 34 seconds].

8. Cristina [la analista] me decía "esa casa es tuya," y yo me peleé mucho
9. tiempo con mi mamá por esa casa, y en un tiempo la quería vender y que

66 The English translation is at the end of the chapter.

repartiésemos la plata, y finalmente no la vendimos, mi mamá estaba sin trabajo. Fue todo un conflicto, y **ahora me doy cuenta, hablando con vos** que en el 2007 cuando me compré MI casa, se cerró algo. **Lo que estoy diciendo es que recién ahora me doy cuenta de algo muy importante**.

[Pause 13 seconds]

Bueno mi mamá también se sentía culpable y responsable porque veía que yo, laburaba un montón para pagar mis alquileres, y ella sintiendo que vivía en mi casa. Pero ella también sin un mango, sin laburo, con una casa que es muy pequeña en el conurbano que la vendés y no te podés comprar dos casas más chiquitas. Porque no. Entonces, como una situación muy tensa con mi mamá. Yo creo que ahora nuestra relación mejoró, porque esa situación se resolvió. Y mi mamá, cuando yo me compré la casa, mi mamá no lo ¡podía creer! Y me dijo: "yo me podía imaginar que vos te ganaras el Oscar, pero nunca que te compraras una casa."

[Pause 24 seconds]

**y me doy cuenta ahora hablando con vos, mirá qué loco… hablando de eso. Es como que estoy escuchando algo, es como que estoy cerrando un círculo incompleto ahora que estoy diciéndote esto**.

[Pause 38 seconds]

**La verdad es que yo nunca había reparado en el hecho que te conté**: que justo empecé terapia a los 10 años justo cuando me compraron nuestra/la/mi casa, mía y de mi mamá. Mía, y después termino digamos cuando me compré mi casa… **nunca había hecho ese recorrido**. Sin embargo eso me atravesó me pasó, y estuvo circulando en el inconsciente, e hizo que nos lleváramos como nos llevamos con mi mamá, que yo sintiera la inestabilidad y la falta de parámetros, hasta que algo cierra. Y eso está, está atravesado, me recontra atravesó y atravesó nuestra relación, y cuando… ¿entendés? **Y digo**, **nunca lo llevé a la conciencia, hasta ahora después de contártelo, y escucharme decírtelo**, pero sin embargo determinó mi hacer."

Adriana's example, illustrates a woman who has been to therapy for almost thirty years. She has talked for many years to her different therapists, she has talked to her friends about her feelings; consequently she has listened to herself for many years. Through all of this exposure, she is capable to uncover different aspects of her own utterances, ones

that are not self evident to the neophyte listener. If we compare Adriana's listening with the taxi driver's example, the first thing to notice is that he does not possess an aural accumulation about the woman he is trying to interpret. He might have that accumulation with other people that he is closer to and with his own self, but the interpretations that he is bringing up, may or may not resonate in the psyche of the woman she is addressing. In Adriana's case, on the other hand it was her own aural accumulation that facilitates not an interpretation but a discovery. She was able to listen to something that was circulating inside her psyche, but was never put into words before. An aural accumulation of 30 years finally found a form a process happened by listening to her own words.

Adriana, through a variety of metalinguistic remarks (lines 11, 13, 24, 26, 27, 36) is pointing to how she is listening. It is by listening to herself, she tell us, that she has discovered something important: *I never brought it to a conscious level until now, after I told you and listened to myself while telling you* (line 36). Adriana is bringing to light an unconscious self. This interesting discursive formation of the emergence of a new self resonates with Benveniste's (1966) view that subjectivity depends on a speaker's ability to posit herself as a subject in language. In his view, subjectivity emerges through dialogue and the performative and indexical properties of language: "Consciousness of self is only possible if it is experienced by contrast. *I* use / only when I am speaking to someone who will be a *you* in my address. It is this condition of dialogue that is constitutive of *person*, for it implies that reciprocally *I* becomes *you* in the address of the one who in his turn designates himself as *I*" (Benveniste 1966:224-25 emphasis in the original). Although focused only on pronominal usage, this dialogic perspective may be extended to narrative practices generally and to the manifold ways in which communicative acts create subject positions linking speakers (or authors), texts, and audiences (real or imagined). For psychoanalytic listening as a genre, the contrast that Benveniste is describing, emerges within a dialog with one's self. The position between the pronominal *I* and *you* in Adriana's case remain inside of her internal discourse. When in line 27 she is saying "the truth is that **I** never paid attention to the thing **I** just told you." The *I* is an *I* that is coming from her unconscious self, as is the word *myself* in line 36. My presence serves the function of an external depositary—probably the same function that an analyst holds—but the dialog is not between me and Adriana, the dialog is happening inside her own self(s). The creation of an alterity in this example, is not the equivalent of imagined voices of the school-girl talk that Japanese intellectuals are constructing; it is a particular form of alterity that inhabits one's own self, and that it only comes to life through putting into words, and *listen* to those words.

As Adriana's example presents, not all dialogues are between physically embodied voices. Even when the "other" I address appears to be a physical person standing in front of me, I may well be addressing and listening to a particular cultural voice. For example if I am talking about my owns research, and my interlocutor brings up concepts that I associate with a particular aspect of my research, I might find myself engaging with that particular concept, rather than my interlocutor as a concrete person. This is why listening in genres is of so much importance. The way we turn the ear into a particular genre reduces and creates particular cultural context. Since I am listening to a particular discourse, independently of who is uttering it.

One way in which we could interpret the dialogic relationship between an individual and her own self, is through the concept of super-addressee coined by Bakhtin.

He tells us that the author of a particular utterance and the addressee can have a dialog only because the author,

> with a greater or lesser awareness, presupposes a higher super-addressee (third) whose absolutely just responsive understanding is presumed, either in some metaphysical distance or in distant historical time (the loophole addressee). In various ages and with various understandings of the world, this super-addressee and his ideally true responsive understanding assume various ideological expressions (God, absolute truth, the court of dispassion at human conscience, the people, the court of history, science and so forth)…
> Each dialogue takes place as if against the background of the responsive understanding of an invisibly present third party who stands above all the participants in the dialogue (partners). [Bakhtin 1986:126].

The super-addressee is an ideal listener who is able to understand the "real" meaning of what we, as authors, want to say and not be limited by the audience's own interpretations. The way I interpret Bakhtin's ideal listener is that when I talk and listen to my own words it is as if I am another person listening to them and then I naturally assume the position of a witness or "third." Bakhtin points that in different times, the super-addressee has been imagined differently: God, the community of science, the court of dispassionate human conscience, etc., which to me resonate with Freud's (1923) idea of unconscious practices in its social form (i.e. the super ego, or the punitive form), or Herbert Mead "generalized other" (1934) referring to an individual's recognition that other members of their society hold specific values and expectations about their behavior. The super-addressee is thus a representation that dialogues are never fully situated on the outside (e.g. a conversation between two social actors) but also a dialog with one's own self, as Adriana example is pointing to.

❧

When Theodor Reik explained that psychoanalysis consist "not so much a heart-to-heart talk as a drive-to-drive talk, an *inaudible* but highly expressive dialog" (1948:144, my emphasis) he was making reference to the importance that listening holds in the psychoanalytic setting. Once defined as the talking cure, psychoanalytic emphasis was placed on the verbal utterances produced by the analysand. But focusing on the attention to listening practices prompts us to ask: how is the listener interpreting sounds symbolically? How do speakers who are undergoing therapy speak in ways that anticipate psychoanalytic forms of listening? These questions helps us to appreciate the enormous display of different contexts that emerge by positioning the ear inside a particular genre. By understanding how listeners listen, we are also able to witness the emergence of different ideological constructs that, just as utterances do, help to anchor a particular interaction inside a specific interpretative framework. For example, in this chapter I have demonstrated how listening psychoanalytically has become a social practice in Buenos Aires by pointing to specific ideologies about how *porteños* are listening. By focusing on how social actors talk about themselves and psychoanalysis outside the clinical setting, we were able to see the performative aspect of this listening genre and how it points to the emergence of modern subjectivities by reproducing a radical form of alterity.

The next and last chapter's focus is on the circulation of psychoanalytic listening through its dissemination across different media outlets. Special emphasis is placed in Gabriel Rolón, a famous psychoanalyst who has been invited to several television shows, to analyze different television personalities as well as important sports figures. By analyzing how television advertisements create a particular rhetoric about the idea of the "psychologist," we gain additional insights into how psychoanalytic listening creates subjects both within and beyond the walls of the clinic.

Appendix to Chapter 4

English translation of Adriana's example:

1. It was great because I was able to notice that everything that I had
2. come to look for, I was beginning to resolve. So in one session I told [the
3. analyst] "I believe so and so…" and it was just, contemporary to when
4. I bought my apartment. I bought my home, not the one that my grandfather,
5. where my mom lives. And that was a subject that if in reality I have to tell you
6. about it…

[lomg puse 48 seconds

7. Oh my god, this is crazy! This is crazy!

[another long pause of 34 seconds]

8. Cristina [the analyst] told me "that house is yours," and I fought for a long
9. time with my mom for that house, at one point I wanted to sell it and that
10. we share the money, but at the end we didn't sell it, my mother didn't have
11. a job. It was a big conflict, and now I realize, talking with you
12. that in 2007 when I bought MY own house, something got resolved.
13. What I am telling you is that just now, I am realizing something very important.

[Pause of 13 seconds]

14. Well my mother also felt guilty and responsible because she witnessed
15. that I worked a lot in order to pay the rent, and she felt that she was
16. living in my house. But she didn't have any money, and no job, and
17. the house is very small and in the suburbs, so even if we would have sold
18. it you can't afford to buy two smaller ones. No way. So, a very
19. tense situation generated between me and my mom. I think that right now
20. our relationship is better, because that issue was resolved. And my mom, when I
21. bought the house, my mom could not believe it! She told me: "I could
22. imagine that you would win an Oscar, but never that you would by
23. a house."

[Pause of 24 seconds]

24. And I realized now talking with you…this is crazy…talking
25. about that. Is as if I am listening to something, as if I am
26. closing an incomplete circle now just by telling you this.

[long pause of 38 seconds]

27. The truth is that I am just now realizing the meaning of what I told you:

28. that I started therapy at 10 years old right after they bought me
29. ours/the/my house, mine and my mom's. Mine. And then it ended
30. when I bought my house…I have never made that connection.
31. Nevertheless, that affected me deeply, and was circulating in my
32. unconscious. And it made my relation with my mother hard,
33. that I felt the instability, the lack of parameters, until
34. something finds a closure. And that affected me, it really, really affected me and it
35. affected our relationship. Like when…do you understand?
36. And I say, I never brought it up to a conscious level, until now after I
    told you about it, and hear myself telling you.
37. But never the less, it determined the way I acted.

Chapter Five

# The Circulation of Psychoanalysis Outside the Clinic

*"Hoy voy a ser sujeto, no persona"*
(Today I am going to be a subject, not a person)
Gabriel Rolón, famous psychoanalyst in the TV show
*Animales Sueltos*

*"…and instead of only asking oneself about the content of thoughts, one has to analyze the way texts are made."*
(Derrida 1981, *Positions*)

## 1. Introduction

"In Argentina, psychoanalysis has expanded beyond the clinic, you can find it everywhere!" These were the words of a young psychoanalyst who was explaining that psychoanalysis, more than just a therapeutic technique, became a way of interpreting the world for many Argentines, especially *porteños*. While there is no doubt that psychoanalytic discourses are used outside the clinic (as exemplified in the previous chapter) it is important to define what does it mean that psychoanalysis has expanded beyond the clinic. What part of psychoanalysis has migrated outside the clinic? Does it mean that information about psychoanalysis (i.e. psychoanalytic theories) is available to everyone? Or that psychoanalysis is accessible and provided almost everywhere? What does psychoanalysis mean in the context of its circulation?

To begin answering these questions, it is essential to remember how psychoanalysis emerged as a therapeutic tool and in what context. In its inception psychoanalysis borrowed terminology from medicine, both because it gave it prestige, and also because most of the early analysts were doctors themselves (Balán 1991; Frosh 2010). The consulting room became the model of psychoanalysis since the latter was designed as a treatment. The professionalization of psychoanalysis followed the structure of medical settings (e.g. a certain duration of the sessions, restrictions on emotional involvement with the patient, a disposition of the space that assigns specific places to the patient/analysand and the analyst, etc.). Since psychoanalysts were already doctors who provided medical care, the figure of the psychoanalyst consolidated as that of a therapist (Roudinesco 1990).

So in a very concrete sense, the therapeutic clinic became the source of psychoanalysis' exercise, and its theories and practices were developed to be applied inside the clinic (Dagfal 2009, Roudinesco 1990, 2003). However, the "clinic" in psychoanalysis extended beyond its original physical space and became a metaphor for a practice that involves the presence of an analyst and an analysand, in which the analysand's aim is to uncover the hidden (repressed) source of a particular ailment, and learn to live a life where her suffering would not necessarily disappear, but kept at bay. The analyst helps in this process by being both a *listener* and a bear witness to the

presence of meaning in what for the analysand is meaningless or unspeakable (Edelson 1975). This process happens within a very specific framework that involves transference (the unconscious way in which a patient relates to or "uses" the analyst to advance her treatment), countertransference (the analyst's response to the transference of the patient), and most importantly, the certainty of unconscious practices.

Under this definition, psychoanalysis is a *live encounter* that necessitates face-to-face interaction in order to exist: "without analyst and patient, both being together in their transferential relationship, interpretation in the psychoanalytic sense cannot take place." This phrase was uttered by analyst Fabián Naparstek in his class "Psychopathology" at the University of Buenos Aires (UBA), an introductory class for first year psychology students. The point that Naparstek was trying to get across was that in order to have an analytical session, very specific steps and processes need to be present, otherwise there is no psychoanalysis taking place, but rather an intimate conversation with a friend or acquaintance. He was arguing against the generalized idea that psychoanalysis is anything that implies a psychoanalytic interpretation. According to Naparstek, the lack of the physical encounter that defines the clinic, along with its theoretical specificities, impedes any form of doing psychoanalysis.

If we consider the idea that psychoanalysis only exists as an interaction between an analysand and an analyst, how could we define all the psychoanalytic interpretations that use a psychoanalytic framework but that do not conform with face-to-face interactions? For example, anthropologists, philosophers, historians, and political scientists, among many other scholars, have used psychoanalytic frameworks. Would Naparstek's comment suggest that they are doing some kind of psychoanalytic analysis? If so, what kind of analysis? According to analyst and historian of psychoanalysis Stephen Frosh, they are not:

> [W]hen a literary author's work is interpreted in terms of childhood trauma, it is not psychoanalysis; or when a political commentator draws on ideas about unconscious national impulses, it is not psychoanalysis; or when a social psychologist philosopher uses the idea of intimacy and stability of selfhood to understand identity conflicts, it is not psychoanalysis" (Frosh 2010:4).

Frosh agrees with Naparstek and many other psychoanalysts in that what defines psychoanalysis is the therapeutic encounter, which implies co-presence of both, analysand and analyst. Whatever social theorists do when using psychoanalytic explanations is not psychoanalysis. What they are doing instead is using a particular framework to explain a collection of different social phenomena.

Frosh explains that Freud and his early students (e.g. Carl Jung with his archetypes theory) are somehow responsible for this crossover since Freud himself published studies of long gone creative artists, in which he used psychoanalysis to bring to light aspects of their psychology.[67] In *Civilization and its Discontents* (1962 [1929]) Freud expanded his interests to society as a whole to try to make sense of the bleak aftermath of the First World War. Consequently, psychoanalytic interpretation in its beginnings served as a framework to interpret social behavior partly because "its rich

67 See for example Freud's *Leonardo Da Vinci and a Memory of his Childhood*, 1964 [1910].

account of unconscious processes inserts an appreciation of the "irrational" into theories that otherwise find the unexpected, self-destructive or fanatical eruptions of social disorder hard to fathom" (Frosh 2010:67).

But this is not the solely reason of using psychoanalysis for social analysis. The fact that in psychoanalytic theory there is *no truth but interpretation* (of particular people in particular contexts) has opened the door to an array of different ways of using this framework, especially for the so-called post-modern theorists: feminist studies (Mitchell 1974; Spivak 1987; Butler 1990), critical theorists (Marcuse 1955; Adorno 1967; Althusser 1971), art (Ogden 1999), literature (Kristeva 1984, 1987), and post-colonial studies (Bhabha 1991; Chakrabarty 2007), among many others. All of these studies use particular aspects of psychoanalytic theory, from different schools of psychoanalysis, in very different directions.[68] What makes possible that these interpretations take place, in all their different expressions, is the plasticity of psychoanalytic theory, which has been transformed into a text, once it was lifted from its interactional and institutional origins, through the process of entextualization, or "the process of rendering discourse extractable, of making a stretch of linguistic production into a unit—a *text*—that can be lifted out of its interactional setting" (Bauman and Briggs 1990:73), and also through the process of contextualization, the accommodation of those texts to new institutional surrounds (Urban and Silverstein 1996; Bauman and Briggs 1990).

Returning to our original question, what does it mean that psychoanalysis in Argentina has moved beyond the clinical setting, having infiltrated contexts that do not necessarily comply with the clinical setting? We can say that what circulates outside of the clinic is an entextualized form of psychoanalysis that takes different shapes depending on the context in which it has been placed (e.g., the university, radio and television shows, or advertisements). Consequently, when we hear declarations that state that psychoanalysis is everywhere in Argentina, what has become ubiquitous is not necessarily the clinical practice of psychoanalysis (although the number of people who attend analysis is high compared to other countries) but particular texts that are de-centered from its interactional and institutional origin, and re-centered into different contexts.

## 2. Psychoanalysis and the Public Intellectual

When discourses of psychoanalysis are inserted in different context, the boundaries between expert knowledge, lay reception and the later replication of this knowledge begin to conflate. As the example of the taxi driver in the previous chapter shows, in Buenos Aires, the direct and indirect exposure to psychoanalytic discourses, either through having gone to analytic sessions for many years, or through information given by family members or close friends who are analysts, and more recently through media shows, has created a lay audience that feels compelled to provide psychoanalytic interpretations in different situations. While this is not as problematic as concerns with self-medication among consumers of bio-communicable models of health news (Briggs and Hallin 2007), the circulation of psychoanalysis in Buenos Aires created an

68 An important fact to underline since Freudian, Lacania, Kleinian, Miller's, Laplanche's, etc. Schools of psychoanalysis, vary greatly among them (see Gay 1988, Frosh 1999, Stolorow 2006).

interpretative framework that has become part of the cultural and social life of the city. It has become a social fact that creates personal identities, and conceptions of citizenship that are rooted less in the performativity associated with speaking, than in particularly forms of listening based on psychoanalysis. Hence, it is worth looking at how psychoanalytic texts circulate, and how the boundaries between expertise and lay consumers get intertwined.

To understand this process, it is essential to recognize the historical relation that psychoanalysts have had in academic circles through which theories of psychoanalysis impacted other fields, becoming an accepted interpretative tool for the study of an array of social phenomena. Through this relationship, some analysts have become public intellectuals, generating enough cultural capital that is transformed into a sort of "cultural authority" (Zelizer 1992) that endows analysts with the right to talk about almost any cultural phenomenon. This happened in several countries. In France, for example, Lacan (arguably one of the most influential and "famous" analysts since Freud) began in 1951 to hold private weekly seminars in Paris in which he urged students to study what he called "a return to Freud" that would concentrate on the linguistic nature of psychological symptomatology (Marta 1987). Due to its popularity, this seminar became public two years later in 1953 and lasted for 27 years, ending when Lacan's health and life were in their final stages. These seminars surpassed the clinical setting, becoming highly influential in Parisian cultural life and not only inside psychoanalytic circles. Lacan was famous for his difficult prose and entangled propositions, but nonetheless, he appeared in televised shows to talk about many aspects of everyday life experience, being sometimes recognized more as a public intellectual than a practicing psychoanalyst (Roudinesco 2003). But Lacan followed a trend that was already in place when he emerged as a public figure. In the United States, for instance, it was the publication of books and magazines intended to lay audiences in the 1940s and 1950s what prompted the circulation of psychoanalysis outside the clinic. In his book *The Fifty Minute Hour: a Collection of True Psychoanalytic Tales*, Robert Lindner (1954) quotes historian Max Lerner saying that "one of the by-products of the post-Freudian age has been the emergence of a new genre of American writing—the work of the writing psychiatrist or psychoanalyst, who applies his insights to he problems of the day or tells of some of his adventures with his patients" (Lindner 1954: ix).

In Argentina, this genre of "psychological writing" reached a peak of sorts in the mid-twentieth century, when books written by psychiatrists and analysts were frequent bestsellers, and articles penned by these same authors could be found on the pages of newspapers and popular magazines (Plotkin 2002). Historically, this phenomenon is related to two factors: on the one hand, to the explosion of mass media, and on the other, to the professionalization of the psychologist (Dagfal 2008). The professional border-crossers who created the genre staked out cultural authority for themselves, in a sense acting as public intellectuals putting professional ideas up for popular consumption (Park 2004).

Traditionally, in Buenos Aires there have been three main areas of circulation and reception of psychoanalytic theory: the medical establishment, the avant-garde literary circles, and the social sciences (introduced through the public university system) (Vezzetti 1996, 2009). As psychoanalyst Eduardo Mandelbaum (senior analyst from APA and co-organizer or the MFSPT sessions) told me when I interviewed him, "since the

1920s there has been a growing perception that psychoanalysis was not only an innovation in psychology and psychiatry but also an essential component of cultural modernity." The association of psychoanalysis with cultural modernity has been related to the strong French cultural influence in Argentina. Psychoanalysis was read in French, through French sources, or more commonly through French commentators, and also interpreted through the lens of French theory (Damousi and Plotkin 2009). What Argentine intellectuals did in the 1920s was to exalt their European-oriented cosmopolitanism in a moment of unparalleled economic prosperity through the inclusion of psychoanalytic theory in the day-to-day analysis of economic, political, and social investigations.

Nowadays, in Argentina the popularity and circulation of psychoanalysis outside the clinical setting is ample and has grown to conquer different media outlets. For example, most newspapers include a daily or weekly column written by a prominent psychoanalyst explaining either a particular ailment (e.g. bulimia, anxiety, interfamily violence, etc.) or a psychoanalytic analysis of a political problem (Damousi and Plotkin 2009). The image of the analyst as an important intellectual figure has grown steadily throughout the years. For example, during the economic crisis that Argentina suffered in 2001, the media constantly requested the opinions of psychoanalysts. This phenomenon facilitated the movement of psychoanalysts from a position of "experts" to that of "intellectuals,"[69] meaning authorized individuals legitimated by having a cultural capital which allows them to intervene in broader issues in the public sphere (Bourdieu 1986). During the crisis, the media (especially print media) contributed to the dissemination of psychoanalysis as a framework to understand the economic crisis. Journalists who did not belong to the *psy world* ("mundo psi") were constantly using words and phrases borrowed from psychoanalysis, and continuously cited psychoanalysts as authorities qualified to talk about different aspects of the crisis (Plotkin and Visacovsky 2008).

A good example of this overlap (between psychoanalysis and the public intellectual) can be seen in the book "*Dolor País" y después* (2007), one of the most popular books written by an analyst for a lay audience, where Silvia Bleichmar centers the attention on the process of the de-humanization that emerged during what she calls extreme situations (*situaciones límite*). A process of social disarticulation that began during the last Argentine military dictatorship (1976-1983), reached a brutal peak with the experience of the 2001 economic crisis, with its "decomposition of the notion of the social whole, the fracture of the responsibility towards the other and of compassion and solidarity ties, which created a state of alienation in which not only human life, but also any notion of collective purpose, lost their value" (2007:22 my translation). Bleichmar formulated her analysis crosslinking psychoanalytic theory and political action. True to her epistemic roots, her analysis is centered on the operations of subjectivity where there is a "re-signification of a symbolic configuration, generating new psychic spaces" (2007:25). Her analysis prioritizes the transformations of the self, leaving on a second

69 See Neiburg, F. and Plotkin, M. "Intelectuales y expertos. Hacia una sociología histórica de la producción del conocimiento sobre la sociedad en la Argentina," in Neiburg y Plotkin (eds*.), Intelectuales y expertos. La constitución del conocimiento social en la Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2004.

place the political and economic explanations that gave birth to one of the worst economic crises of the country's history.[70]

An interesting aspect of the psychoanalytic reading of the economic crisis is that it reached the foreign media. On January 2002 the BBC in London issued a special program about the Argentina crisis in which prominent local psychoanalysts from the Argentine Psychoanalytic Association (APA) were interviewed to provide their views on the crisis from a psychoanalytic perspective. One analyst offered the following explanation when asked why the crisis was not foreseen: "the negation originated in the traumatic experience from that period [referring to the last military dictatorship] is what explains why people took so much time to realize the tragic consequences of the politics developed by Carlos Menem and De la Rúa" [two Argentine ex presidents that have been pointed as responsible for the crisis]. Another psychoanalyst of APA in the same documentary explained that the origin of the crisis should be examined from the constitution of guilt feelings (*sentimientos de culpa*). Feelings that, according to the analysts, most of the Argentine people experienced, and that were also the result of the last military dictatorship. In general terms, the interpretations of the analysts with respect to the crisis were limited to explain the roots of the crisis on broad generalizations about the idiosyncrasy or personality of the Argentine people (Plotkin and Visacovsky 2008).

Analytic interpretations of political and economic concerns are not new, and have been present throughout Argentina's history. Gino Germani, the father of modern scientific sociology in Argentina, and one of the most influential scholarly figures in the country, in the 1940s and 1950s (after having been in prison through the Italian fascist regime, finding exile in Buenos Aires) became worried about the origins and possibilities of totalitarianism (Adamovsky 2009). For Germani, psychoanalysis (in its culturalist version) could provide the social sciences with a subjective dimension to analyze the problem of authoritarianism, thus inaugurating the conflation of psychoanalysis and the social sciences in Argentina, which later developed in the figure of the analyst as a public intellectual (Plotkin 2003).

More recently, since the late eighties, and up until today, psychoanalytic discourses and jargon have permeated different spheres of mass media. It is not only the political and economic field what is filled with psychoanalytic interpretations, but popular televised shows, including the live analysis of celebrities, analytic interpretations of the behavior of soccer players, shows dedicated to talk about specific social behaviors, and more recently, a show named "In Therapy" (*En terapia)* a remake of a popular Israeli show that dramatizes analytic sessions and that, unsurprisingly, became a huge hit. As a result of this new genre, in Argentina there is another crossover of the figure of the analyst, as not only an expert in his or her fields and a public intellectual, but as a celebrity that appears in a variety media shows.

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70 See also Acha, O. and Marsilli-Vargas, X. "Usos y fronteras de la interpretación psicoanalítica: reflexiones a partir de Silvia Bleichmar y sus escritos sobre la crisis argentina," paper presented at the *III Encuentro Internacional Giros Teóricos "Fronteras y perspectivas del conocimiento transdisciplinario,"* Buenos Aires, 2010.

## 3. Psychoanalysis and the Media

A great example of the conflation between analysts and their new identity as celebrities is Gabriel Rolón, a psychoanalyst who recently became "one of the most influential celebrities in Argentina" (*La Nación* newspaper, October 7, 2013). Rolón is an Argentine psychoanalyst (53 years old) that has become a famous interlocutor between psychoanalysis and lay audiences. He works as a clinical psychoanalyst (has his own practice), has written five books about psychoanalysis, accessible to any reader who has no training or has never been exposed to psychoanalysis before, with no esoteric jargon, and written in a fine prose that is easy to read (all his books have become best-sellers). He also gives talks about psychoanalytical concepts on Saturday mornings at *Clásica y Moderna*, a traditional bookstore and coffee shop in Buenos Aires' fancy neighborhood *Barrio Norte*, in which he educates people from different backgrounds on psychoanalytic theory (it is open to the general public at a cost of $35 dollars per session, and reservations have to be made weeks in advanced due to its popularity). These sessions last two hours and Rolón picks up a general theme (e.g. perversion) and reflects about its meaning, how this particular concept has been developed by different psychoanalytic schools, the meaning that Freud and Lacan proposed, etc. These talks are intended for people who are not experts, and even though there are some psychologists/analysts present, most of the people in attendance are just curious to learn more about psychoanalysis.

Rolón has also appeared in different TV shows (*Va X Vos, Siempre Listos, Todos al Diván, ¿A vos quién te ama?* and *Animales Sueltos* to mention just a few); and has produced and conducted three radio shows. In his show *Terapia - Única Sesión* (One-Session Therapy) Rolón invites television celebrities to tell personal stories, while he gives feedback about their childhood, their relationship with the "figure of the mother," phobias, etc. One of the characteristics that make these shows attractive is the fact that they are interactive. On his radio show *Noches de Diván* (Couch Nights), people call the radio cabin, expose a particular problem or situation to the audience, and Rolón gently "analyzes" the situation in psychoanalytical terms, suggests some outcomes, and advise the ailing caller. On the TV shows, he will go from "analyzing" a whole group of people working as hosts of a late night show, to have a celebrity lie on a couch and perform a conventional clinical session, to guest star on an ESPN show discussing the phobias of the guests, who are famous sports players. This engaging format—the fact that Rolón is "analyzing" people in public—allows the audience to enter into one of the most ritualized and private spaces: the therapeutic session.

The fact that these therapeutic performances are successful—there is an audience (a market) that consumes these mediated forms—points to the different ways in which psychoanalytic knowledge has circulated. When specific knowledge travels, the disseminators and consumers play different roles in the process (Briggs and Hallin 2007). As we will see in the following example, the separation between expert and consumer is not a direct separation, but a negotiation involving shifting roles. People become experts not simply by forming asymmetrical relationships with others, but rather by learning to communicate knowledge from an authoritative angle that is always performed. Expertise is intensively citational, expert actors use linguistic and metalinguistic resources, such as jargon and acronyms to structure the interactions (Bauman and Briggs 2003).

Subsequently, expertise requires a mastery of verbal performance including the ability to use language to index and instantiate states of knowledge (Silverstein 2003).

***Example 1:***

This example is taken from the TV show *Pura Química* (Pure Chemistry), transmitted by the sports network ESPN. The show combines sports journalism and live interviews with sports figures and also with celebrities that do not necessarily have any connection with sports. The show is hosted by a young journalist named Germán Paolosky, who is accompanied in each episode by the ex-soccer player José Chatruc, the tennis player Eduardo Zabaleta, the comedian Mex Urtizberea, and a different actress per show (in the case analyzed here, Laura Azcurra). The structure of the show is informal, all the participants make jokes, and the goal is to create a relaxed atmosphere where the guests feel compelled to speak and tell personal anecdotes. In the example presented, the guest was Gabriel Rolón, and it was his first appearance in the show (he became later on a regular guest). He was invited to talk about psychoanalysis in general, but also to help to analyze some of the people who had been previously guests on the show. The segment below began at the minute 24 after introductions and other topics have been discussed. After a commercial break, the following exchange took place:[71]

H= Host (Paoloski)
F= Football player (Chatruc)
T= Tennis player (Zabaleta)
M= Actor (Mex Urtizberea)
FA= Female Actress (Laura Azcurra)
R= Gabriel Rolón (psychoanalyst)
NV= Nelson Vivas (ex-soccer player)
A= All (when everyone is speaking at the same time, mostly laughing)

Excerpt I

1. **H:** And we are here with psychoanalyst Gabriel Rolón, to talk a little about what is
2. going on with people, what is going on with the famous people that have been here and
3. have sat in that couch. I want us to start with the most serious case, the most critical
4. case. A man that we can practically say that he has no cure.
5. **R:** oh that's interesting
6. **H:** yes, yes, yes, and I am not a professional, imagine when you
7. deconstruct the guy. Mmmh, Nelson Vivas, you know who Nelson Vivas is right?
8. **R:** yes, of courses, yes, yes

71 The Spanish version is located at the end of the chapter.

9. **H:** Soccer player, today he is a coach
10. **R:** yes, yes
11. **F:** Oh right, I have forgotten!
12. **H:** Well, what did Nelson Vivas said; let's listen to him.

[Cut to a previous show where Nelson Vivas is talking]

Excerpt II

13. **NV:** I am very orderly. Since I was born, and with the passing of time, what was a
14. personality trait, ended up becoming an obsession, and well, now I order absolutely
15. everything I see. The underwear by colors, the t-shirts, pants, the cushions in my
16. house…
17. **H:** Your wife super happy
18 **NV:** every time I park, the wheels of the car
19. they have to be parallel to the sidewalk.
20. **A:** what!!! Get out of here [laughs]
21. **M:** Is it true that every time you get out of your car you vacuum the car?
22. **NV:** yes
23. **A:** Unbelievable!!! [laughs]
24. **NV:** Yes, for example, I took my little girl to school
25. **M:** yes
26. **NV:** and when I left the house the car has been vacuumed, obviously right?
27. **F:** [strong laugh]
28. **NV:** My little girl sat on the front seat, and when I was coming here, I could see that
29. there were crumbs on the front seat [left by the daughter]
30. **A:** Nooo!!! Terrible!!! [laughs]
31. **NV:** So I have to stop, clean the carpet, and then I could continue driving.
32. **A:** [loud laughs]
33. **NV:** It is as if there are two people inside me, is like I am a divided subject, one that
34. says "leave it, nothing is going to happen keep driving," and the other that says "no,
35. stop, and clean it," "stop and clean it," "stop and clean it."
36. **H:** and the obsessive always wins!!!

[Cut back to the actual show with Rolón as guest]

Excerpt III

37. **H:** Sorry, I didn't lie; this is the most critical case we have had

38. **R:** It is a very interesting case, we'll see that/well, and I'm allowing myself to say
39. something because he himself said it, right? That he feels as if he was two persons
40. **F:** two guys inside him
41. **R:** one that says "there is
42. nothing," and another that says "I can't," "If I don't do it, if I don't fix it, I can't."
43. This is precisely what happens with compulsive obsessive neurosis. You have
44. something as=imagine that you always leave this cup in this position [he moves the
45. cup in front of him] and someone comes and unintentionally makes this [moves the
46. cup in a different direction]
47. **A:** noooooo!!!
48. **R:** and you start the show
49. nervous, but really anxious. And one part of you says "it doesn't make any sense,"
50. but the other part, and that is why we talk about compulsive obsessive neurosis, and
51. not only as obsessive behavior, like when you say "I am obsessive about cleaning…"
52. No, I am a compulsive obsessive neurotic, why? Because if I don't clean it or fix it, I
53. get anxious, and that's where anxiety comes into being, and as Freud, and later Lacan
54. would tell us, neurosis is the representation of repressed memories or feelings, that
55. take the shape of a particular symptom that produces suffering.
56. **W:** ahh, ok [nodding very attentive]
57. **H:** Now, as a psychoanalyst, what is one supposed to do? Try to, hmmm, that he
58. won't suffer if he doesn't clean, or that he continues with that because he founds
59. satisfaction in doing it? One should break that pattern?
60. **R:** No. One never should touch the symptom because it is too dangerous. If you only
61. want to change the symptom of a person, in that act, in the act of being orderly, there
62. is/
63. **F:** there is something in the back

64. **R:** he can unload the anguish that comes from a different place. This way he has it
65. more or less under control, even if with some pain. If you take that away from him
66. without solving it, that anguish would come out in another way, and we don't know
67. which way.

Expertise is inherently interactional because it involves the participation of objects, producers and consumers of knowledge (Briggs 2005; Brigg and Hallin 2007). It is always ideological because it is implicated in semi-stable hierarchies of value that authorize particular ways of seeing and speaking as experts. Expertise is the model of what Silverstein calls "second order indexicallity" (1992, 2003) that is, historically constituted and contingent metadiscoursive practices (e.g. rationalizations, evaluations, diagnosis) that mediate between would be experts and some set of cultural goods. These practices are routinized and organized as institutional boundaries, and are forged between different ways of knowing the very same thing, spawning the social configuration we call profession, craft, and discipline (Gal and Irvine 1995).

The performance of expertise also entails registers and the process of enregisterment (Agha 2007), the conditions for different segments of a population to share knowledge of particular social types and their associated sign(s). This suggests that linguistic features (e.g. lexicon, morphology, syntax) are not just indexes but also qualities of activities. Certain members of a given community are linguistically marked as distinct and worthy of special respect only in certain types of interactions and only when they locate themselves in certain places. The variability found in the use of, for example, honorifics in spontaneous interaction highlights the fact that participants have opportunities for negotiation and manipulation of social differentiation through the linguistic resources they have available to them. All such behavior is metalinguistic in nature since it informs the particulars and properties of linguistic form, either by decontextualizing the forms and describing their properties, or by evaluating their effects while the forms are still in play (Silverstein 2003). The social existence of a register is therefore not a static fact. The cultural enregisterment of speech repertoire is itself a social process, "varying in degrees of completeness of consensus, in the social domains of language users who subscribe to a given set of enregistered values (vs. those who engage in counter valorization)" (Agha 2000:218).

In the example presented, we see many linguistic strategies that create boundaries of expertise but by which, at the same time, through the process of enregisterment, the non-experts are able to participate and become part of an informed community. In the first line of excerpt I, the host introduces the speaker as a psychoanalyst, thus identifying Rolón as an expert, placing a communicating order in respect to regimes of expertise, and thus organizing the exchange relative to a division by indexically signaling Rolón as having specific knowledge. But in line 4, the host changes the context that he previously created by adventuring a diagnosis on his own: *we can practically say that he has no cure*, taking the role of an expert and being able to make an informed diagnosis replicating a medical register. He uses the pronoun *we* instead of *I* to share some of the responsibility of this assertion: there is a community backing up this claim. In lines 6 and

7 there is a self-repair on the part of the host by stating that he is not a professional, and thus switching back to the previous configuration of roles. He continues to endow Rolón with the trope of expertise by saying that he cannot imagine what is going to happen when Rolón—the expert—makes the interpretation. The intervention in line 11 of the football player helps to anchor and reinforce the previous stance supporting the host's evaluation about the critical state of this particular clinical case.

The first excerpt exemplifies the movement of knowledge through the process of enregisterment. The host performs an enregistered form of expertise through the use of particular lexical components. This process does not emerge unmediated from the speaker: it is continuously modulated as it is accomplished, co-produced by audience, addressees, and referees, as well as by particular contextual factors. In the example presented none of the participants of the show challenged his diagnosis. The self-repair produced by the host, exemplifies that the process of enregisterment can be extremely self-conscious, but at the same time they can be habitual and routinized (Agha 2003). They prove that the access to information in the form of language is dictated by social position, and this access has intrinsic value (as linguistic capital), mapping of specific utterances of social groupings. By focusing on the enregisterment of medical talk presented in the example, we can see how psychoanalytic jargon travels and gets to be used by different social actors.

In the second excerpt we hear the testimony of the "incurable" subject, Nelson Vivas. While there are many linguistic strategies presented in this exchange, I want to analyze a particular feature: the familiarity and use of psychoanalytic jargon that Vivas portrays throughout the exchange. For example, in line 33 he uses the phrase *divided subject*, to explain the contradictory sentiments that he experiences when taken by an obsessive impulse. This phrase is taken from Lacan's conceptualization of the subject. For Lacan (1988) the subject can never be anything other than split (i.e. divided, alienated from his/herself) and there is no possibility of synthesis.[72] Consequently, when Vivas is bringing this lexical form to describe his discomfort, he is indexing himself as a certain demographically identifiable kind of person, a person invested in knowledge about psychoanalytic theory. There is, again, an entextualized form of psychoanalytic talk. But Vivas, as the show's host, is not embedded in the networks of institutional authorization that Rolón enjoys. When the enregisterment of entextualized forms of psychoanalysis travel from "expert" to lay people, how is identity negotiated?

To answer this question I want to focus on Goebel's (2012) three different forms of community creation, or kinds of people, that emerge through the process of enregisterment. The first one includes members that share knowledge of enregistered signs. In this sense, they may be able to recognize and evaluate authenticity of signs used in particular contexts (this definition is closer to Lavov's speech community). The second includes those that not only share knowledge of enregistered signs in the first sense, but also actively use these signs in daily interaction to situationally display community amongst others who consider the sign user as an "authentic member of the community being dialogically displayed" (2012:E2-E3). The third type includes those who are crossers and "adequators" (e.g. migrants, newcomers, novices), in which they share

72 The split or divided subject is one of Lacan's main contributions to psychoanalytic theory, and is usually represented with by the bar, which strikes through the S to produce the barred subject ($).

knowledge of enregistered signs, and also actively use their knowledge of these signs in daily conversations to situationally constitute community, although "they may not be considered authentic members of the community being dialogically displayed" (2012:E3). It is safe to say that all the enregistered forms of lay psychoanalytic interpretations and diagnosis occupy the third form of community making presented by Goebel. In this form there is some mastery of expert knowledge, but there is a lack of institutional backup of authorized speech. The repetition of psychoanalytic jargon creates speech chains, which are authorized to varying degrees but depend on their association with experts and institutions (Briggs 2005). Vivas' example of the use of psychoanalytic jargon and self-diagnosis, exemplifies how expertise is performed and negotiated throughout specific context, and how the boundaries of expertise—but also of psychoanalysis—are porous and create space for negotiation through engeristered forms of particular discourses.

The last excerpt is centered on the performance of Rolón as an expert. In line 38 he begins by analyzing Vivas' story in psychoanalytic terms. He does not wait to be asked to provide an interpretation, but jumps into the analysis by saying "we see that…" with authority and without hesitancy, contextualizing the communicative exchange and indexing his utterance as knowledgeable of what is happening. This statement is immediately followed by a self-repair (38-39), with a metapragmatic utterance excusing himself for the abrupt display: "and I'm allowing myself to say something because he himself said it, right?" Through the use of the lexical interjection *right*?, Rolón wants to make sure that everyone is on board, and that everyone witnessed the exchange. He then explains that he is allowed to make an interpretation because Nava already talked publicly about his personal disorder. This abrupt self-repair indicates that Rolón's first impulse is to act as an analyst and give an informed opinion about the "case" exposed. But he is quick to realize that he is not in a clinical setting, but in a TV studio where any comment provided will be broadcasted throughout the country. Also, Nava is himself a public figure so he needs to carefully contextualize his diagnosis.

The next contextualization cue comes in lines 41 and 42 where he produces a quasi-direct quotation of Vivas' speech, through the decontextualization of his story and its entextualization into a discourse with a more controllable set of truth-values, and a recontextualization of this discourse within a communicative frame set up to legitimize it (i.e. Rolón is an analyst). Through reported speech, Rolón not only animates the story but gives clear indications about his attitude toward the situation, using the recontextualization of Vivas' speech as the legitimate background to make a diagnosis provided in the next line: "this is precisely what happens with compulsive obsessive neurosis."

In lines 52 and 53, Rolón brings Freud and Lacan indirectly, citing their work in order to provide more credibility to his diagnosis: "as Freud and later Lacan would tell us." Citationality is a strong component of the performance of expertise. The performative force of citationality is immense; for example, in the study of shamanic expertise Hanks (1996) explains that expertise in this context in enacted during exorcism events that are achieved through the citing and reworking of shaman's prayers. Bauman and Briggs (2003) present another example of citationality in portraying social scientific expertise, by demonstrating that that metadircursive nature of late-seventeenth-century European regimes of intellectual authority, were constituted by ways of speaking about

ways of knowing. Rolón, in his role of an expert, became intimate with culturally valuable discourses attached to psychoanalytic theory, some of which may be inaccessible to lay people. By quoting the work of Lacan and Freud he is successfully portraying expertise, and in the following lines he continues to use psychoanalytic language and terminology to reinforce his expertise.

Rolón's performance was successful; he was able to establish himself as an expert. At the end of this last excerpt, the host asks direct questions, and Rolón answers with direct responses: "No. One never should touch the symptom because it is too dangerous" (line 60). Through citationality, reported speech, and other contextualization tactics he intentionally staged and performed expertise, and was able to shape the course of the interaction and lead people to follow such course. For the rest of the exchange, there were no more interruptions, and no more lay interpretations. What we see in this example is that all speakers, including those with institutionalized tropes of expertise, need to perform their expertise, to stage the speech acts able to convey their own interactional power. In so doing, interactional power allows for a dynamic and flexible structure of power relations, where a skillful performer in a weaker structural position with respect to expertise, could still achieve his or her agenda.

***Example* 2:**

Another form in which psychoanalysis circulates in mediatized outlets is through televised advertisement campaigns, where the figure of the analyst is represented as both an *Other* characterized with stereotypical features (beard, glasses, smoking a pipe, wearing a blazer, using a particular register) and at the same time as a figure that one can easily relate to, to the point of being able to occupy his/her space. An example of this process can be seen in the Andes Beer advertisement campaign. This company produced a handful of advertisements that followed the same structure. The commercial starts with a question presented in white letters with a black background. A man, that we never see, reads the question as if asking for advice. The questions are about problems or misunderstandings that the man is having with his girlfriend ("I think my girlfriend is cheating on me, what should I do?" "My girlfriend's sister is flirting with me and I don't know what to do," etc.). The question fades off and we see a male analyst in his office looking at the camera, as if addressing the man who posed the question, and answering it (figure 1). Using very formal language and long sentences, the analyst advises the troubled man what he should do in order to improve his relationship. After the analyst finishes the first intervention, there is a cut and we see a friend of the man, also sitting in front of him and looking straight to the camera, not in a clinical space but at a bar, beer in hand or on the table, answering the same question (figure 2). The friend is casually dressed (in contrast with the analyst) and answers the question using just a few words through informal and colloquial language. We see a couple snips of the analyst long and complex response compared to the friend's sharp one (there is a back and forth), and at the end, the friend gives the concluding advise, then sips the beer and the following slogan appears, with opera music playing in the back: "A friend is a psychologist without a title. It's just how we are" (figure 3).

There are many interesting features that can be examined through these commercials. We can see once again the crossover between expert knowledge and lay

interpretations that, as we have discussed in previous chapters, are so common when psychoanalytic discourses get reproduced. If we look closely at one of these commercials, we could understand the semiotic process of fractal recursivity that I believe are useful for the understanding of how the figure of the analyst and that of the lay reproducer of analytic discourses, coexist.

*Andes* beer TV ad: [73]
"My girlfriend doesn't turn me on anymore"
What should I do?"

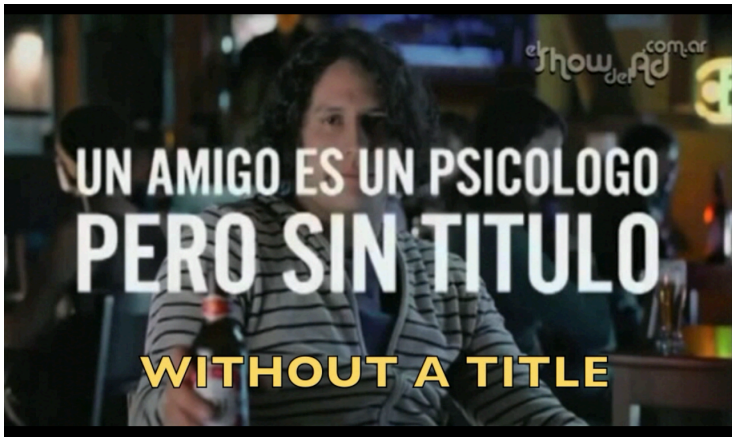
| **Psychologist** | **Friend** |
|---|---|
| Stress at work and the daily routine threaten a couple's relationship. The important thing is to nurture the relationship.<br><br>(*El estrés en el trabajo, la rutina, atentan contra las relaciones de pareja. Lo importante es, alimentar la relación*) | Leave her<br><br>(*dejala*) |
| Have intimate moments, look for new things, play more<br><br>(*Tener momentos íntimos, buscar cosas nuevas, jugar más*) | Bye, reptilian<br><br>(*fuera bagarto*) |
| Reunite with each other<br><br>(*reencontrarse el uno con el otro*) | It's simple: is she doesn't turn you on, replace her<br><br>(*corta: no calienta, se cambia*) |

"A friend is a psychologist without a title"

"It's just how **we** are"

Figures 1, 2 and 3 *Andes* beer TV ad.

73 You can access the video following this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQ95Zu4cERE (accessed November 2013)


The semiotic process of fractal recursivity[74] explains the making of oppositions that have been iconized (Gal 2002). This process is constituted through the schismogenesis of two social groups or entities that are close but also in conflict, and that will often propagate and increase the difference in the cultural material produced (Irvin and Gal 2000). These distinctions, however, only make sense within a particular interactional framework and the stress lies in the making of these differences. In my view, the process of fractal recursivity is exactly what is at play in the separation of the two registers presented in the commercial: in one hand we have the more refined, educated, and institutional discourse voiced by the figure of the analyst, and in the other the colloquial and spontaneous talk of the friend.

Because any distinction can potentially be reproduced within either side of the opposition, this process is fractal. The fractal system allows for constant movement. In the commercial presented, a semiotic and ideological process leads to the common understanding of those who have received formal training—psychologists—as more informed and qualified to help with personal issues, as opposed to a friend who can only provide a personal opinion. But at the same time—and this is the fractal move—there is

74 Integral to the idea of fractal recursivity is that the same oppositions that distinguish given groups from one another on larger scales can also be found *within* those groups. Operating on various levels, fractal recursivity can both create an identity for a given group and further divide it. Within each group or subgroup, then, there is a schismogenesis (or creation of differences), whereby speakers can be divided further according to those same principles (see Irvine and Gal 2000).

the claim that a friend *is* a psychologist, albeit one without a title, making possible that the distinction can potentially be reproduced within either side of the opposition (Eksner 2006).

These fractal recursions take place during individual interactions, creating thus differentiated forms of speech and specific ideologies of communication, which in turn produce particular subjectivities. These oppositions are possible because there are already in place *linguistic repertoires* distinguished as socially recognized register forms. Register formations are cultural models of action where individuals often establish the relative social value of linguistic behavior by linking it to typifications of speakers (Agha 2007; Silverstein 2003). Attributing value or ascribing identity through characterizations of speech and speakers effectively positions social actors and their actions (both real and imagined) across discursive events. This interdiscursive process locates available, socially recognizable, metasemiotic[75] resources by which social evaluations of speech are justified. Agha (2003) asserts that individuals can interdiscursively "ground the epistemic force" of their talk in prior discourses or events, thus locating their assertions within a "chain of authentication" (2003:260). Individuals bolster their speech style characterizations by adjusting their attitude in reference to this authority.

Each participant in the interaction presented masters one register, which gets negotiated through fractal recursivity. Bourdieu (1991) suggests that forms of communicative competence constitute symbolic capital, locating individuals and populations in social hierarchies, whose inequalities are reproduced by controlling the access to the acquisition of competence. By focusing on how psychoanalytic discourses are represented and disseminated recursively, we can see that this communicative process does not index people as producers, translators, and receivers of knowledge—or simply outsiders—but is open to constantly shifting roles. Psychoanalytic discourses in Argentina, thus, do not necessarily reproduce cultural hierarchies, but also question and subvert them.

## 4. The Argentine Exceptionality: Psychoanalysis and Nationality

Finally, one important way in which psychoanalysis circulates, is through the reproduction of commonsensical ideas that depicts Argentines as an imagined community, where *everyone* is somehow invested in psychoanalytic practices. In the analysis of the reception and circulation of news coverage on health issues in Cuba, Briggs (2011) proposes the model of *logros de la revolución*[76] as a possible counterpart of the communicable models of capitalist countries, where the consumer of health information is seen as a passive receptor following a patient-consumer model resulting in "doctor's orders/passive patient" standardization (p.1039). In Cuba, thanks to the *logros* model, unlike the doctor's orders model, laypersons are not recipients of knowledge but beneficiaries of the services it shapes (p. 1040). There is a part of the Cuban population who are avid consumers of health news, and very well invested in health information capable of making informed decisions about their own wellbeing; although not everyone

75 Metasemiotic activity: linguistic and non-linguistic signs that motivate icons or likeness among them (Agha 2007:17).

76 "Rather than projecting knowledge transfers from specialists to laypersons, the *logros* model maps knowledge as produced and circulating within biomedical institutions" (Briggs, 2011:1040)

seems to occupy this space. Some doctors in Cuba conceptualize health consumers as naïve treating health news uncritically and passively (p.1042). But what seems to be a general acceptance is that in Cuba there is a connection between the consumption of health information and Cuban national identity. The interest that "all Cubans" profess towards the consumption of health information creates a national ethos that defines a model of what does it mean to be Cuban (p. 1043).

In Buenos Aires there is a similar phenomenon: a link between the circulation and consumption of psychoanalytic discourses directly related to the national character, to the definition of being Argentine, or *porteño* if you are in Buenos Aires. A key difference between these two models of circulation and consumption is that whereas in Cuba health discourses and practices are promoted by state policies that have helped to position Cuba as a leading nation in the biomedical realm, the circulation of psychoanalysis in Argentina is driven by autonomous actors in the civil society, with no public policies promoting its practice (we need to remember that the public systems of education and health include psychology and psychotherapies, not psychoanalysis). In one case nationality is related to the circulation and consumption of particular discourses of *health*, while in the other those discourses relate to *wellbeing*. More interestingly, whereas in Cuba health became a symbol of national pride, in Argentina psychoanalysis became a framework of interpretation.

Another fundamental difference between biomedical and psychoanalytic discourses is that in the biomedical world, science is the backup for any assertion. And when science becomes the method to prove a particular discourse, it becomes a consistent and trustworthy technique for the development of our understanding of the natural world (Foucault 1970; Latour 1986, 2005). The dominant biomedical discourse produces and validates knowledge that values rationality, and this knowledge influences the discursive attitudes of health care, which favors naturalism, individualism, and objectivism, while marginalizing other ways of knowing or assessing experience (Briggs 2004). Recent scholarly works on medical discourses (Briggs and Hallin 2007; Anderson, 1998; Capra, 1982; Good, 1994; Kleinman, 1980) have demonstrated that these constructions never exist at a purely conceptual level; they are always applied through sets of material practices. The material understanding of human illness is thus reflected in the material practices of the medical profession, which has become a dominant discourse through the application of scientific knowledge. It is through such practices that the power of the biomedical discourse of health and illness has become socially embedded (Briggs 2003, 2004).

Psychoanalysis, on the other hand, does not have the legitimation that science confers. As explained in chapter two, the process of becoming an analyst is not a well-defined path that one follows; it entails a long and idiosyncratic process in which it is the aspiring analyst who legitimizes his or herself after a long process of personal analysis. In France, for instance, psychoanalysis—even though it enjoys a highly cultural prestige—does not possess the social legitimation that is expected from a university profession (i.e., the title of psychoanalyst is not recognized by the university) (Lézé 2006). Since the boundaries of psychoanalysis are porous, and the legitimation of the analysts is not always supported by a learning institution, the overlap between analysts and lay audiences becomes more evident than in the biomedical realm, where doctors assume the role of experts usually granted by institutional accreditation, and the authority linked to

diagnosis and medication (Briggs 2004). Consequently, the circulation of psychoanalytic terminology and lay analytic interpretations is less problematic than in the realm of biomedical interpretations.

But the use of analytic terminology and lay interpretations is not the only way in which psychoanalytic discourses construct a national identity. If we analyze the routine way of speaking that some Argentines use when referring to Argentina as a whole, we can see a geopolitical consciousness circulating not only in institutional and textual forms, but also in narrative practices, as the example that follows demonstrates. :

> *Example*
>
> In a casual conversation at a coffee shop in Buenos Aires, my friend Ana[77] (34 years old) responded the following when I asked her about her opinion on the proliferation of hybrid psychoanalytic forms like psycho-tarot and psycho-astrology; institutions that she did not opposed and was even willing to try.
>
> **Ana**: well, it is obvious that here we are very influenced by Freud's writings. I don't know any other place in which this is the case. We Argentines are different in this regard; we have gone through a lot of traumatic experiences, and we are trying to overcome that trauma by making sense of our history. In other places that may not be the case, they may be focused on finding the political and economic sources of their problems. We look inside ourselves, in our psyches. So any expression of self-knowing practice, takes aspect of psychoanalysis.

Studies that focus on what has been called "banal nationalism" (Billing 1995)—term that is borrowed from Arendt's famous study on the "banality of evil" (1963)—postulate that nationalism, through the representation of an oriental "other" (Said 1997) is dependent on daily reproduction. Inside this framework, the process of "othering" is not only established by institutions and regimes of knowledge, it is also centrally performed, practiced, and negotiated in daily life (Gregory 2004). The idea is that everyday practices produce national identity in ways so ordinary, so common place, that it escapes attention altogether. It may be in speech acts routinely using homeland phrases, or, as Ana's example shows, through the constant use of small and unnoticed linguistic markers as "we," "here," "other," "our," "they," "their," and "ourselves." These deictic forms unwillingly reproduce a national ethos that in Buenos Aires is motivated by ideas of the circulation of psychoanalysis as the producer of an imagined community (Anderson 1991). Thus, psychoanalysis circulates on entextualized texts and also trough everyday expressions that equips people with an identity and ideological consciousness, and encompasses and internalize them in a complex series of "us" versus "them."

In this perspective, psychoanalysis is a form of identity that is based on the *doxa* that Argentines have constructed through their own ideas about psychoanalysis and the

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77 I am using Ana's example because she is not parte of the *psy-world*. She is a scholar of ancient Greek, and has little experience with personal analysis (she went to therapy only once for 6 months after a painful breakup). All the analysts and students of psychoanalysis that I interviewed, reproduce this same structure of "we" versus "them." Ana is an example of how psychoanalysis creates and sustains national ideologies.

nation (Bourdieu 1994). In Buenos Aires it is evident that psychoanalysis has seeped into everyday life, into language, and into the understanding of the self. Psychoanalysis plays a role in the everyday thinking, in the way social meaning is established and negotiated, naturally appearing on a daily basis in the words of politicians, in media coverage and in the way the dominant discourse circulates in everyday narratives. The language and the hegemonic grammar of "us" and "them" is articulated, reproduced and naturalized in so many different expressions that it has become a natural part of everydayness.

❧

The circulation of psychoanalysis in Buenos Aires takes many different forms. This chapter provides a glimpse of the many different ways in which psychoanalysis circulates in its entextualized form. Psychoanalysis outside the clinical setting does not constitute clinical analysis, but an interpretative framework that in Argentina, but especially in Buenos Aires, has become a social fact. Many actors contribute to the circulation and dissemination of this cultural form. The right to talk about is subject of a constant negotiation that allows for the creation of speech chains that travel beyond the boundaries of expertise.

What role does the genre of psychoanalytic listening play in the circulation of psychoanalysis? Throughout this dissertation I exposed that what gets replicated is a listening practice that creates contexts and ideologies. Listening psychoanalytically allows for the circulation of psychoanalysis in its clinical form. Why? Because by listening psychoanalytically, one reproduces the actual clinical moment: one listens to something that goes beyond denotational and referential meaning. When listening psychoanalytically, the listener uses a frame of interpretation, but not in the same way that a literary critic uses psychoanalysis to analyze a particular text in its entextualized form. Listening, as an *embodied* practice, replicates in a particular way the clinical exchange. Thus, phrases like "what you really mean is" always imply co-presence (even if through the telephone), directly representing the clinical setting.

In this chapter I focused on entextualized forms of psychoanalysis. But listening is still present. The speech chains that connect experts with lay people are also cemented in listening practices that are not as evident as texts. But listening, I argue, is what connects all the segments of these chains together.

Appendix to Chapter 5

Original text in Spanish of the TV show *Pura Química:*

Parte I

1**. H.** Y aquí estamos con el psicoanalista Gabriel Rolón, para hablar un poco sobre qué
2. le pasa a la gente, qué le pasa a la gente famosa que ha estado aquí y
3. se han sentado en ese sofá. I quiero que empecemos con el caso más serio, el caso más
4. crítico. Un hombre del que podríamos decir que prácticamente no tiene cura.
5. **R:** a bueno qué interesante
6. **H:** si, si, si, y eso que yo no soy un profesional, imagínate cuando
7. vos deconstruyás al tipo. Ajá, Nelson Vivas, ¿lo tenés a Nelson Vivas no?
8. **R:** si, claro, si, si
9. **H:** jugador de fútbol, ahora es entrenador
10. **R:** si, si
11. **F:** ¡ah! Si, ¡se me había olvidado!
12. **H:** Bueno, ¿qué fue lo que dijo Nelson Vivas? Vamos a escucharlo.

[Corte a un programa previo donde aparece Nelson Vivas hablando]

Parte II

13**. NV:** Soy muy ordenado. Desde que nací, y con el paso del tiempo, lo que era un
14. rasgo de mi personalidad, se convirtió en una obsesión, y bueno ahora ordeno
15. absolutamente todo lo que veo. Los calzoncillos por colores, las remeras, los
16. pantalones, los cojines de mi casa…
17. **H:** Tu mujer chocha
18. **NV:** Cada vez que me estaciono, las ruedas del auto
19. tienen que estar paralelas al cordón.
20. **A:** ¿Qué? ¿en serio? [risas]
21. **M:** ¿Es verdad que cada vez que sale del auto, aspira el auto?
22. **NV:** si
23. **A:** ¡Increíble! [risas]
24. **NV:** Si, por ejemplo, hoy llevé a la nena al colegio
24. **M:** si
26. y cuando salí de casa, el auto estaba aspirado, obviamente ¿verdad?
27. **F:** [risa fuerte]
28. mi hija pequeña se sentó en el asiento de enfrente, y cuando venía para acá, podía ver
29. que había migas en el asiento de enfrente [creadas por la hija]
30. **A:** ¡Noooo! ¡Terrible! [risas]
31. **NV:** Así que tuve que parar, sacudir la alfombra, y así pude continuar manejando.
32. **A:** [Fuertes risas]
33. **NV:** Es como si hubieran dos personas adentro de mi, es como si fuera un sujeto
34. dividido, uno que dice "déjalo, no pasa nada seguí manejando," y la otra que dice "no
35. pará y límpialo," "pará y límpialo," "pará y límpialo."

**H:** ¡y el obsesivo gana siempre!

[Corte al show donde Rolón es invitado]

Parte III

**H:** Disculpá, no mentí; este es el caso más crítico que jamás tuvimos
**R:** Es un caso muy interesante, como vemos/bueno, y me atrevo a decir algo
porque él mismo lo decía ¿verdad? Que el siente como si fueran dos personas
**F:** Dos tipos adentro
**R:** uno que dice "no pasa
nada," y otro que dice "no puedo, si no lo hago, si no lo arreglo, no puedo."
Esto es precisamente lo que pasa con la compulsión neurosis obsesiva. Tienes algo
como=imagínate que siempre dejas la tasa en esta posición [mueve la tasa que está
frente a él] y alguien viene y sin querer hace esto [ mueve la tasa en la dirección
opuesta]
**A:** ¡noooo!
**R:** y empezás el programa
nervioso, pero de verdad ansioso. Y una parte de vos dice "no tiene sentido alguno,"
pero la otra parte, y es por eso que hablamos de compulsión neurótica obsesiva, y
no solo de comportamiento obsesivo, como cuando decís "soy un obsesivo de la
limpieza…" No, soy un neurótico obsesivo compulsivo, ¿porqué? Porque si no lo
limpio o lo arreglo, me pongo ansioso, y ahí es cuando la ansiedad aparece, como
Freud y más tarde Lacan nos dicen, la neurosis es la representación de las memorias y
sentimientos reprimidos, que toman la forma de un síntoma que produce sufrimiento.
**W:** ¡oh! Ok [moviendo la cabeza en afirmación]
**H:** Ahora, como psicoanalista, ¿qué se supone que uno debe hacer? Tratar de ¿qué, eh
de que no sufra si no limpia, o que continúe haciéndolo porque encuentra
satisfacción haciéndolo? ¿Romper con el patrón?
**R:** No, uno nunca debe tocar el síntoma porque es muy peligroso. Si solamente querés
cambiar el síntoma de una persona, en ese acto, en el acto de ser ordenado,
hay una/
**F:** hay algo que está detrás
**R:** él puede descargar una angustia que viene de otro lugar. Y es por eso que lo tiene
más o menos bajo control, aunque con un poco de dolor. Si le quitas eso
sin resolverlo, la angustia va a salir por otro lado, y no sabemos
de qué manera.

# Conclusion

This dissertation has examined the idea that listening can be categorized in genres. It suggested that the apprehension of auditory signs actively creates and reshapes contexts through the emergence of frameworks of relevance that emerge at the moment of reception. These frameworks are generic forms directed "towards something" (Husserl 1982), thus being intentional in their inception. The intentionality is what turns the multiple possibilities of the directionality that are accessible through "the naked senses" (Goffman 1964) at a pre-semiotic state subsequently into a generic form. An ontological as well as culture-specific intentionality thus shapes the moment of reception. This means that individuals listen intentionally as well as pragmatically. This dissertation then demonstrated the need to pay attention to listening practices as a way of creating contexts, social relations, and personal identities. By centering on the idea of genre, this work is opening a new site of inquiry by beginning to formalize listening *in the act* of listening.

Ethnographic research allowed me to analyze listening on the ground. I showed how certain forms of addressivity conceived as private and located inside the psychoanalytic therapeutic setting get embedded and displayed in everyday practices in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in ways that semiotically redefine the boundaries of the notions of private and public self of that specific culture. Psychoanalytic sessions were originally defined as a private contract established between an analyst and an analyzand. This private space, necessary to attain transference and where flows of ideas, free associations, and unconscious awakenings thrive, was paradoxically reified and mediated by psychoanalytic forms that have gone beyond the clinical setting and entered everyday ways of engagements. This study showed that the broadcasting of analytic sessions in popular televised and radio shows, for example, as well as advertisement campaigns and multi-family therapeutic sessions, foster a particular way of listening that is further reproduced in casual encounters. The listener looks for meanings that surpass the referential denotation of utterances, characterized as "the real meanings" of enunciations. This semiotic form of listening is based on the dichotomy of an unconscious and a conscious self. Throughout this work, we saw how this form of listening suggests new ways of thinking about addressivity—i.e. which self is being addressed? And how intimate and private spaces are embedded inside mediated and public spaces.

My ethnographic approach to listening thus constitutes an important epistemological intervention. By focusing on psychoanalytic practices inside the Multi-Family Structured Psychoanalytic Therapeutic (MSFPT), this dissertation proposed a new way of understanding the so-called "psy" disciplines, which generally encompass psychiatry, psychology, and psychoanalysis. These forms of expertise have played, according to some scholars, a crucial role in constructing and shaping "governable subjects" (see Foucault 1978, Rose 1990, 1998). In their view, "psy" disciplines are inherent to contemporary Western society in the sense that they adjust subjects to the ideals of autonomy, individuality, and liberty, forming a body of knowledge that comprises "special claims to truth" (Foucault 1978). While these notions have served to elucidate and understand particular forms of technologies of the self—diagnosis being a critical one—they fail to acknowledge certain representations of these technologies that

are not necessarily inserted inside a frame of domination. This dissertation, to the contrary, analyzes the roles, participation, and histories of this particular kind of multi-family psychoanalysis, thereby demonstrating that the binomial technologies of domination/ technologies of self, described as the nucleus of "governmentality," does not accurately represent crucial aspects of the 'psy world' in Buenos Aires. In this peculiar setting, knowledge is based on family stories that have different therapeutics effect on different individuals. In these sessions, the analyst become part of the audience and the members of the audience become "experts." This dialectic makes for a horizontal process in which power relations become negotiated and sometimes erased. It is through the performative capacity of speech that new forms of subjectivities emerge. These linguistic performances can come from a therapist, an analyst, a family member, or a fellow participant; all of them can create a healing effect. This makes everyone an equal participant who enjoys equal footing in the treatment of mental health disorders. Through analysis of the exchanges among the participants, this dissertation addresses the indexical order developed through the constitution of these stories and their healing power. It explores forms of social engagement towards mental health directly opposed to liberal assumptions about individuality, self-sufficiency, citizenship, and private agency, and centers instead on the performance, the passion, and the commitment of both patients and mental health professionals that do not resonate with power and domination.

This dissertation also moves away, once again, from conceptualization of power and domination inside psychoanalytic listening practices, by focusing on the idea of *listening genres*, rather than "habitus of listening" proposed by prominent ethnomusicologist Judith Becker (Becker 1993). While the concept of listening habitus is a useful instrument for the analysis of, for example, the pedagogy of developing a particular listening skill, I argue for the value of the concept of listening genre. Because of its dialectical relationship with the notion of field, the concept of habitus tends to treat linguistic phenomena as never universally available to all members of society and therefore as produced, circulated, and accumulated asymmetrically in a world of power relations and the commodification of linguistic resources (see Bourdieu 1977; Woolard 1985; Irvine 1989; Gal 1989; Silverstein 1979). There is no doubt that this is the case in a number of manifestations of listening genres; a perfect example is the doctor listening through the stethoscope and (arguably) exerting a power relationship throughout the whole auscultation process. My work centers, however, on how listening *creates context*, both ontologically and in its pre-semiotic inception. This dissertation demonstrates that the political economy of listening is an aspect of listening among others.

By developing a systematic account of the specific characteristics of psychoanalytic listening as a genre, this dissertation discovered that listening in psychotherapeutic settings defies the here-and-now of sound production. What this means is that the therapeutic effects that listening holds develop in an unpredictable period of time and manifest at an undetermined point in time. The patient listens to the analyst and to herself, but *when* this listening is going to result in a therapeutic relief and become a transformative form is uncertain. This work argued that therapeutic listening is not linear; while it develops in time, it possesses its own temporality. This discovery helps to rethink our understanding of the therapeutic encounter. Traditionally, psychotherapeutic models are thought of as involving face-to-face interaction between a patient and a therapist; language is theorized as providing an immediate and curative connection between

speaker and hearer. This dissertation showed how shifting focus from the "talk" in the "talking cure" to the act of listening challenges this traditional model both as a form of therapy and as a theory of cure. The focus on listening revealed that successful psychotherapeutic session transcends face-to-face interaction, since the resonance of the words heard will acquire a particular meaning only over time. These practices of psychoanalytic listening bring about new and uncharted issues of social presence, intimacy and immediacy when physical presence is no longer the site of interaction. Our understanding of the performative acts that listening entails could benefit by applying the theory of perlocutionary acts developed by J. L. Austin, which also sees the temporality of utterances (the way it happens, as I argue here, with listening) as defying the hear-and-now of sound production.

This dissertation explored the concept of genre and listening ideologies, but there are many other aspects of listening that need attention. It would be crucial to continue expanding studies of the semiotics of listening practices through the concept of "registers of listening." Registers are cultural models of action, stereotypic ways of performing 'social acts' of enormous range and variety—a variety exhibited not merely in their intelligible social consequences but also in the range of phenomenal behaviors in which they are embodied (Agha 2007). Register formations are cultural models of action, thus, where individuals often establish the relative social value of linguistic behavior by linking it to typifications of speakers. For example, one argument that can be made is that in Buenos Aires, everyone reproduced a psychoanalytic listening genre, but that such "expert" listeners as Gabriel Rolón master a particular register. Because being socialized as an expert involves establishing a deliberate stance in relation to a set of culturally valued or valuable objects, novices must master a register; consequently, a possible way of exploring registers of listening can help in current debates on the performance of expertise (see Carr 2010).

Psychoanalysis emerged as part of a bourgeois culture in which it was possible to have a private space between two people who share the same cultural traits. As analyzed in this dissertation, thanks to the circulation of mediated and massive psychoanalytic forms and to the universal health care system in Buenos Aires,, psychoanalysis became accessible and available to everyone. Through its dissemination, it created an "hermeneutic of suspicion," to echo Paul Ricoeur's (1986) words, about one's "true" motives, one that all *Porteños* seem to have access to. The lines between the expert listener, the analyst, and the common listener become blurred; and the private/public dichotomy becomes problematized. There is no passive reception of professional knowledge but a constant reproduction of it.

Listening practices, thus, should be an intrinsic part of the study of any mode of social engagement. The circulation of mediated listening forms and the diversity of forms of listening should be a key component to the understanding of the constant flow of people, ideas, messages, and stories that make our contemporary world. Accordingly, this dissertation has used the concept of listening genres and an ethnographic analysis of a range of contexts in which psychoanalytic discourse unfolds in Buenos Aires in contributing to linguistic anthropology, social/cultural anthropology, psychoanalysis, and any scholarly approach in which listening figures as a significant component of social life.

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