

Analysis as an Expedition

Membership Categorisation and Scientific “Objectivity”

Iva Pecáková

Abstract

The reader is kindly invited to take part on an expedition into the world of interactional and especially language games. As these games may be even fatal in their consequences, all participants are recommended to be well armed and keep their eyes open. The basic rules of the games shall be revealed to the participants just after the departure and they shall be demonstrated in detail on the classic example of the “Liptákov expedition”. Then, the functioning of these rules shall be investigated within a chosen narrative of a man taking parental leave. Furthermore, the analysis of the narrative shall itself become object of deconstruction and consequences of this activity are briefly discussed later.

Please notice: Safe way home cannot be guaranteed.

Expedition Liptákov

prof. Vondruška: ...the second group led by doctor Svěrák, let's call it again just for simplification group B – in this I don't want to say, that it is somewhat second-class, you know, it is just a differentiating label. So the B g-

[murmurs and gestures between dr. Svěrák a dr. Weigel]

prof. Vondruška: *[nervously]* Doctor Svěrák, do you again have something, doctor?

dr. Svěrák: No, no, really not.

prof. Vondruška: Well, you were just telling yourselves something, weren't you? So say it what you were murmuring there.

dr. Svěrák: *[aggrievedly]* Now, I'll say it then. Well, you yourself state, that it is purely a differentiating label, don't you.

prof. Vondruška: Yes.

dr. Svěrák: So why it's us to be the B group?

*(Jára Cimrman Theatre: Posel z Liptákova)*¹

“It's all the same, isn't it”, replies prof. Vondruška “I will correct it here, if you want”. Nevertheless, the humour of the scene is based on the fact that it is *not* all the same. It is not all the same concerning who went to Liptákov as group A and who went as group B. Svěrák's last reply as a result is a point of a joke, while everybody knows that this “purely a differentiating” labelling of the groups is not neutral.

¹ Liptákov is a small village in the mountains of North Bohemia.

I have prefaced this text with a joke, yet in the very beginning I have to warn the reader that this text shall not deal with humour, joking or anything like that.² I shall focus on a somewhat different topic – one the introductory scene is actually playing with explicitly and turning it into a joke. It is “pigeon-holing”, scholarly said *categorisation*, or placing into categories.

But do not let ourselves be mistaken, categorisation does not apply only to similarly explicit situations like dividing groups (or e.g. school classes...) to A and B. Categorisation is an activity, which follows all social interaction, it is a part of everyday life – it is one of the ways we people “are doing” the world around us. When we act socially (and it does not have to be only about speaking as such), we place the world around us into categories, somehow classify it and bring order into it. At the same time, no one of us can do this independently – we cannot categorise the world arbitrarily since we are always among other people. The way in which the world will be categorised and organised is constantly subject to negotiation – it is constantly being negotiated and adjusted as activities and interests of other people around us are being projected into this activity. This way, the meaning we attach to the world is always provisional and constantly being adjusted – and shared.

The categories we organise the world into are culturally at our disposal. We were not born into vacuum but into a society which has already created some ways of categorisation of the world.³ In this sense, categories and categorisation practices act as resources available as well as constraints for a free categorisation activity of every man or woman. This way, range of categories rather successfully manage to look as complete and invariable artefacts, which the world is only to be squeezed into somehow. At this moment, we may also happen to somewhat forget that the categories are our “piece of work” and are not objectively given. Socially constructed categories “...come to take on a life of their own that appears to exist outside of language, ... become objects of experience” (Gubrium and Holstein 2000: 86). This process was described by many authors in different words; Berger and Luckmann have started to call it fittingly *objectivation* (Berger and Luckmann 1999).⁴

Categorising the world in some way and not another results in what world we are going to be situated in. In other words, organisation of the world into categories is constitutive of it; by organising the world somehow, we create it at the same moment, constantly socially construct and re-construct it. That which is socially defined and social definition as such are not separated, they are parts of the same reality. By attaching meaning to the parts of the world, placing them somewhere and relating them to something, we create them *socially* at the same time. It might then happen that the results of this constructional activity turn as “objectively given facts” back against us. On the grounds of certain social definition of us and our activities we can be for example arrested and put to death.

Thus, categories as sources for the categorisation activity function as constraints. However, they are not static given facts that do never change. They are socially created and in the process of constant negotiations about the ways of categorisation of the world they are ceaselessly being changed and adjusted. Sometimes, similarly to the scene cited above, effort to change and re-construct the categories or rules of their use may be expressed even directly and *explicitly* – for example in the claims for the so called “politically correct” representation of minorities, women etc.

² By the way, all texts devoted to humour and joking I have read so far were rather boring.

³ In this context, notion of “membership” is used – in the sense of individual’s competence as a member of certain community (see e.g. ten Have 2003; Nekvapil 2001). In the same sense Andrlé (2001) speaks about “a shared sense of cultural co-membership”.

⁴ In this, authors continue in the tradition of sociology of knowledge where, within various conceptions and under miscellaneous terms, the concept of objectivation had already been present before (see e.g. Hubík 1999; Ritzer 1988).

The claims for political correctness lead us to a very important feature of categorisation. Organisation of the world into categories is not only constitutive in its nature, but moreover, it is never neutral, categories are connected with one another and it is only just in their mutual relations that they make sense. Group B makes for a point of the joke only if there is also group A at the same time. Relations between categories are multifarious, it can be shown, that they are organised hierarchically, form “families”, are bound with certain activities, attributes etc. (see Silverman 1998; Nekvapil 2001). Yet, they are always connected with what is “right” and what is “wrong” – what is and is not acceptable or “morally admissible” in a given society.⁵

“For instance, it may be acceptable for a parent to “punish” a child, but it will usually be unacceptable for a child to “punish” a parent. Notice that, in both cases, “punish” serves as a powerful picture of an activity which could be described in innumerable ways. Social life, unlike foreign films, does not come with subtitles attached. Consequently, how we define an activity is morally constitutive of it.” (Silverman 1998: 85)

When people around us become objects of our categorisation, it is termed *positioning* (see e. g. Davies and Harré 2002). By talking about people around us in a certain way, acting towards them in a certain way, classifying them and relating them to certain other objects, we place them into certain positions – towards one another and also towards ourselves. Positioning is always relational; by placing other people into certain positions, we also position ourselves. Actually, I have touched upon positioning already by mentioning “political correctness”; placing of certain minority into a certain category (just that category and not another), connecting it with certain features and activities – these have a range of consequences including in what position this minority will fetch up in relation to further segments of society (which can have, as I have indicated above, even fatal consequences such as effort to physically eliminate members of this minority).

Positioning is clearly apparent within mini-interactions of small numbers of people who within the flow of interaction constantly negotiate and re-negotiate their positions (as well as positions of many other people not physically present in the current interaction). Everyone tries to influence his or her position; nevertheless, the positions make sense only in their mutual relations and therefore, through such an activity one shall always influence the positions of other people as well. Similarly, everyone can see the situation of interaction only just from the point of view of his or her position. Within the introductory scene, some members of the “Liptákov expedition” are included into group A and others into group B – this way, certain relationship between members of both groups is being created; they get into positions which mutually define them – just by the simple fact, which group they were (purely for differentiation) placed into.⁶ Davies and Harré give another example:

“By treating a remark as, say, “condolence”, in responding to that remark a second speaker positions themselves as, say, the bereaved. The first speaker may not have so intended what they said, that is,

⁵ For more to this point see e.g. McCarthy et al. (2000), a text devoted to a morally binding nature of categories “adult” and “child” and the ways narratives of divorced parents can be read as “moral tales”. Relationships between ethnic categories and their conjunction with certain language as a category bound activity/feature are handled by Nekvapil (1997). Stokoe (2003) focuses on categorisation activity in neighbour disputes from a gendered perspective.

⁶ Certainly, it is possible to develop this point further and go on to contemplate about mutual differentiation of groups, negative stereotyping etc. – nevertheless, this would lead us away from the core of the text.

they may not wish to be positioned as one who would offer condolences on such an occasion.”
(Davies and Harré 2002: 264-265)

Expedition to the World of “Mammies”

For illustration, I shall take a text – a transcription of a semi-structured interview with a man taking parental leave, whom I shall call Tomáš in this text. In the time of the interview, Tomáš had just finished parental leave with his little daughter Terežka and started to work. The whole interview took place in a restaurant near to Tomáš’s home. Tomáš was relaxed and it was obvious that he liked to take an opportunity to chat with someone with a glass of beer in hand – moreover, his parental leave was a topic he much liked to talk about. Most of the time, he spoke fluently without me stimulating him very much; thus, an extensive and elaborate narrative of Tomáš’s parental leave had arisen. Dictaphone lying all the time on the table in front of him was rather out of Tomáš’s attention. Spontaneously, in the flow of the interview we even started to be on first name terms with one another.

I conducted the interview with Tomáš in context of several more interviews in 2004 (see Pecáková 2005), recorded it on a dictaphone and transcribed into the form of text. Later, I analyzed the whole interview with special attention devoted to what is being “done” by speaking of something in a certain way and not another within the interview. Below, I shall present to the reader only a part of the interview and part of the analytical text which relates to it. I shall show how Tomáš, other people and also other objects are placed into different positions and how certain relationships emerge among them within the interview. Thus, it shall not be only about me, Tomáš or the dictaphone. It shall be about more people as well as other objects which, little by little, *organised themselves* in a certain way in the flow of the interview. I shall show the way in which they organised themselves and above all *what effect has arisen from such (and not another) an organisation*.

This means also that within the following analysis I shall not be concerned, whether what Tomáš is saying is true, if it corresponds to “reality”, if it “really happened that way”. Tomáš’s narrative interests me *as a way of Tomáš’s self-presentation*; it interests me as such, as a reality *sui generis*, which is worth investigation. I shall be interested in what is happening in the narrative, in what light Tomáš is shown in the narrative, what effect arises by narrating in a certain way and not another, what is being “done” by this. A preliminary question which has led me to this kind of analysis was my interest in how a man taking parental leave, that is, in a position in which women are usually situated in our society, manages to present his situation as a legitimate masculine activity. In what ways it is shown in the flow of the interview that Tomáš is still a hundred-percent man – although doing “women’s work”.⁷

Before we (finally) begin to investigate the interview, I have to make several specifying notes. I have already mentioned above that categorisation is an activity peculiar to social life, it is an activity every one of us does all the time – whether we are aware of it or not. During the interview, Tomáš may try to influence the way in which his self-presentation would sound in front of me – and not only me but also in front of himself or the dictaphone, behind which potentially very wide as well as vague audience is hidden. However, no narrator can certainly have the effect of his or her narration absolutely under control and similarly, it is not accurate to view the narrator simply as a strategist who by carefully chosen expressions and words consistently forms the resulting shape of the narration and thus also the final effect of it; who in a controlled way transfers his or her interests into the way the narration shall work. Beside

⁷ For a detailed discussion of these presuppositions and of their relation to the method of analysis as well as for the results concerning the preliminary question indicated above, see Pecáková (2005).

the fact that probably no one can manage this – I think that such a narrative might cease to be gripping for all involved.

The second point is that Tomáš is by no means alone for his narration. I am here as well as the dictaphone – behind which great uncertainty is hidden concerning who else can actually listen to Tomáš;⁸ I have also mentioned briefly the context of the narration, little tavern where Tomáš feels comfortable and where he is also familiar with the staff etc. All this enters the narration and takes part in it – co-creates it, narrates together with Tomáš. Simple differentiation of “Tomáš and the audience” or “the narrator and the audience” is in this sense misleading.⁹

Within the analysis, Tomáš’s parental leave is being called “maternity leave” – which derives from presuppositions and direction of the analysis. The essential (and thoroughly discussed) presupposition is that Tomáš has come to be situated in a position women are usually in our society and which is also socially defined as a “feminine” sphere. Additionally, parental leave as a matter of social policy is not the only possible way a man can get into such a position – that is to stay home with a little child (see Pecáková 2005).

Analysis, which I shall present to the reader, is bound with investigation of Tomáš’s narrative as a whole (when the narrative is a context to itself), which more or less influences the analytical passage presented below.¹⁰ Moreover, it had been written as a first analytical output which was later further processed together with other interviews in relation to certain theoretical ideas as I have indicated above. For the results of the analysis of the whole interview and for their generalisation in context of the other interviews, again, please refer elsewhere (Pecáková 2005). The purpose of this text is not to summarise the whole indicated process of analysis but to demonstrate – by this preliminary phase of analysis – the ideas I have delineated above. This shall lead us in a completely different direction, as we shall see later. At the very end I shall then reveal, if prof. Vondruška had to correct the (purely differentiating) division of the Liptákov expedition into the groups or not.

Text

Within Tomáš’s narrative women bring up children differently from men. Men’s upbringing is rougher, from their nature men and women are different – Tomáš as a man gives different love to the child, rougher – and he brings Terežka up in his way. Gradually, as the narrative evolves, I increasingly come to know that the exceptionality of Tomáš’s “maternity leave” is not that much due to the fact that he is a man as the fact that it is right he, Tomáš, who forms and shapes his “maternity leave” at his will. In Tomáš’s narrative Terežka is clear evidence that his effort is oriented in the right direction, that his “maternity leave” was successful. Terežka is pictured as “somewhat different”, she differs from other children, she is “more rough”, bold.¹¹ This is exactly due to Tomáš’s upbringing, which gave Terežka space for independent self-development. Tomáš did not bother Terežka with fiddle-faddles but enabled her to concentrate only on things that matter and to develop without needless interventions. Terežka apparently prospers thanks to this.

⁸ I dare say, even though Tomáš and me had agreed that the record would be used solely by myself and no one else was going to hear it.

⁹ For criticism of this established and often non-reflexive categorisation of participants in the interaction described see e.g. Goffman (2002).

¹⁰ Furthermore, the interview was conducted and the analysis written originally in Czech. The following text as a translation thus may not be able to reflect certain aspects of the original language.

¹¹ This is repeatedly expressed even explicitly in other parts of the narrative.

Thus, Tomáš is telling me that he manages the “maternity leave” his own way and that this proves its worth. Such a presentation of Tomáš is being created in contrast to (the other) mothers with little children – “mammies from the sandpit”.

Tomáš: [laugh] Well. And she’s I think somewhat different a little bit, well, than those, than those other children because, like, from my experience, you know, when we for example started to go to the sandpit or that, well, that was always, women who were around me, you know, it was like, take this, aren’t you cold, (unclear), I mean they bothered them awfully, yeah, I always told myself that they bother them that the children absolutely

IP: The children could not play really.

Tomáš: Yeah, yeah, yeah, absolutely, like, they disturbed them all the time, you know and that. And Terežka was playing and when she came that she was thirsty I gave her a drink, you know, like that. When she was hungry she asked for a roll, yeah, when she was cold I perhaps even recognised it [laugh]

IP: [laugh]

Tomáš: That I was, I was touching that nose of her, you know, if she doesn’t have it cold, this basic, that, point,

IP: Aha

Tomáš: so this way I did, like, you know mm like, yeah, that I simply let Terežka evolve in some her own way and did not influence her more with some such things like it was are you cold and are you thirsty and similarly. I say, she could concentrate on the responsible sandpit work [with a smile]¹²

Tomáš tells me that he does not “bother” Terežka, does not “disturb” her from the “responsible¹³ sandpit work”; he gives her space so that she could concentrate on things that really matter. He brings up Terežka in a different way than (other) mothers bring up their children and he brings her up his own way – and better way. Terežka then functions in the narrative as a clear evidence of the right direction of Tomáš’s upbringing. At the same time we come to know Tomáš, who concentrates on the essential and important, does not occupy himself with fiddle-faddles, does not bother Terežka. He is not like (the other) mothers from the sandpit.

In the narrative, a presentation of Tomáš through a contrasting comparison, through difference from others, puts itself forward increasingly. We come to know what other people are like and what exactly Tomáš is not like. Mammies from the sandpit are one of the groups which Tomáš is put in contrast with in the narrative. Tomáš tells me that he manages the “maternity leave” his own way; he has his own methods, does not delay himself with fiddle-faddles but concentrates on the essential. It is possible to spoil “maternity leave” anyway, but nothing should be taken to extremes. Unlike him, mammies from the sandpit waste time on trifles, bother their children with exaggerated care, “slaver” at the boutique shopwindows and

¹² IP stands for Iva Pecáková.

¹³ Moreover, this is being described with humour, from a detached point of view which further strengthens image of Tomáš as someone who is in control of things and has his “maternity leave” fully under control.

occupy themselves with unessential things. Due to this they do not manage to do everything needed so quickly like Tomáš.

Tomáš: Well, and moreover, like, I for example got acquainted with many, many mummies, you know, on those sandpits, you know, whatever else one can do there, so, so one talks to them, yeah, and when I like went out with the pram, well, I simply made horrible many kilometres, I completely destroyed the pram, the little wheels simply just

IP: [laugh]

Tomáš: [laugh] (hey) they, after a half of a year they were gone, yeah, and I was once talking with those women later, when we used to go to the sandpit and they say, we saw you all the time with the pram somewhere and I say, well, why not, after all the child likes it and the shopping, you have it ready in twenty minutes and, like you're walking with the pram by the boutiques all the time and slaving at the shopwindows and [laugh] what your husband will buy you if he's in a good mood and so I, like, you know, well and, and the housework, that they also did, I did it as well, but it seemed to me that I did it somehow faster probably, well,

IP: [laugh]

Tomáš: because, I really had time for the pram, to walk around

IP: Yeah.

Tomáš: I spent the whole mornings and whole afternoons by pushing the pram around, always and, here around the place and, they not, they were all the time, almost all the time they were at home, like, it seemed to me when I talked to them

It is increasingly apparent that Tomáš manages the housework, shopping, stay at the sandpit and even long walks with a pram – he has simply his own methods of “maternity leave”, his own conception. His “maternity leave” is in all respects rougher and more dynamic; he for example “destroyed” the little wheels of the pram. Whereas mummies taking maternity leave waste their time at boutique shopwindows and do not manage housework promptly, Tomáš even cannot understand, what they are doing all the time. And at the same time he knows what he is saying, he got acquainted with many mummies taking maternity leave and we can therefore believe him. It is not his dream to chat with mummies taking maternity leave, but when he is once with them at the sandpit, anyway he talks with them. What else shall he do there after all.

The whole presentation of Tomáš is filled with evaluation – Tomáš manages his “maternity leave” *better* than (the other) mummies, he manages everything faster and there is also more of it – definitely he is not so down in his luck to “slaver” at the shopwindows. In this point, Tomáš is sharply placed above the mummies from the sandpit, he is even *morally* above them, he does not demean himself alike. Tomáš, unlike the mummies, has plenty of time during his “maternity leave”, he is not stressed, he manages everything promptly. At the same time it is important that Tomáš's “maternity leave” is just as demanding as the maternity leave of the mummies he is compared to – he also goes shopping, he also does housework. Thus, by no doubt, that which is comparable is being compared within the narrative. Better management of “maternity leave” is then unambiguously due to Tomáš's capabilities, not to someone's help. Tomáš is shown as a person who manages his “maternity leave”, for whom the

“maternity leave” is no big deal, it does not get out of his hand – thanks to concentration only on things that really matter his performance of “maternity leave” is incomparably better than performance of anyone else.

Tomáš: That it was also such a difference, well, I found [clears throat] after the counselling at the sandpit I found that

IP: [laugh]

Tomáš: they said all the time that they do not manage in time, well I said what is it you do not manage about it, that, I had to get up to school with little Pete, you know, to get him ready to go, now I don't have to any more, anyway now I have to get up for work [with smile], well, that's worse, and, Terezka was dossing, you know, she frolicked at night so she dossed in the morning, so I might have crawled to her bed for a while when I needed, so we were yet sleeping together, but, well, I had a little coffee, when I did not go to sleep in her bed, quiet on the balcony [clears throat], a cigarette, and we went, I went to tidy up, so I went to tidy up the bathroom, you know, well kitchen, you know, all that, I made the beds, and then when she got up I hoovered so that we could go, we came back for dinner, you know, we made dinner for Pete, he didn't yet then, but now he helps me already, we did the dinner, Pete had a meal, well, and either Pete went with us or, or with the boys somewhere, you know but, well and we went out again, like to meet mammy, or to meet granny.

The centre of Tomáš's “maternity leave” within the narrative is Terezka – thanks to his capability to manage the “maternity leave” better than others Tomáš has time to do what he wants to and what his little daughter needs, what she likes. Although Tomáš says that he has to do something, that he is constrained by the needs of the child, he immediately weakens the limitation of himself pointing out that at work he would have to do the same or something similar. In Tomáš's narration, “maternity leave” is not presented as a source of enormous constraint and limitation. Tomáš is not a captive of his “maternity leave”; he is much more its “manager”.

Tomáš in the narrative shapes “maternity leave” in accordance with his ideas; it is even with little exaggeration his “piece of work”. He has his own methods for coping with “maternity leave”, his own procedures. He arranges and manages his “maternity leave” so well that he has time even for activities which mummies from the sandpit do not even dream about. But, this does not mean that Tomáš saves time for himself. Terezka guides his “maternity leave” and activities he manages are thus oriented towards Terezka – which shows Tomáš as a *morally responsible* parent in the narrative. The saved time gives a possibility of choice to Tomáš in the narrative – he can focus on activities he wants to do with Terezka – with those he has to do he does not spend too much time, he does not “fiddle with them”.

Thus, “maternity leave” does not get out of Tomáš's hands, he has it under control, he keeps detached point of view, he shapes and directs it in a certain way. He has his own ideas about the way his “maternity leave” should look like and the way he wants to affect Terezka. Presented this way, coping with own “maternity leave” shows Tomáš as an active factor. Tomáš is not a victim of his “maternity leave”, he does not sit passively at home like mummies from the sandpit, does not “slaver” at boutiques, does not snivel because of housework. On the contrary, Tomáš we come to know directs *actively* his “maternity leave”, creates it in his own image – and equally Terezka. Actually, right in this sense Tomáš is pictured as a “manager”.

One Step Further

I have tried, at least within the limited space of the previous pages, to show the ways in which individual people as well as other objects are gradually being organised within the narrative, certain relations are being created among them and they, little by little, arrive at certain positions. I have also tried to capture what effect this all has for Tomáš's position within the narrative – in what light Tomáš is shown consequently.

While I have indicated above that categorisation is an inseparable part of social life, that it is one of “methods” *all* people use when they “are doing social reality”, whether they are aware of it or not, now I shall go one step further. That means to investigate how it is actually with *my* categorisation activity – namely right within the text I have just presented to the reader: in the part of Tomáš's narrative and in the analytical text which relates to it (that means chapter *Text*). As my analysis itself is an expression of the same categorisation activity like the narrative I have analysed, I shall now try to view this text in the same way I did Tomáš's narrative within it. This time, I shall try to show the way *I* was playing with categories – or rather categories were playing with me (in a text about which a dare say it is mine – which itself is not unproblematic; to the issue of authorship, which I leave open here, see an excellent text: Paleček 1998). This shall be by no means easy for me and the reader themselves shall consider to what extent I have succeeded in this “reflexive exercise” and what I was not able to “see”.

Attempt at a Reflexive Exercise

This time, the object of analysis shall be the text summarised in chapter *Text*. For better orientation, I shall from now on refer to the contents of the whole chapter as *Text*. Obviously, this delineation of the object of analysis is rather artificial - the *Text* cannot be in such a simple way removed from its context, it cannot cease to be a part of this article. The following analysis shall certainly reflect this situatedness of the *Text*. Together with this I ask the reader to apply on the *Text* the notes devoted above to the interactional nature of narrative or to the issue to what extent the narrator is a strategist fully controlling his or her narrative.

Two very well recognizable and significant agents appear within the *Text* – *Tomáš* and the *Narrative*. Between both of them, a relationship is being created, which is by no means simple; it has multiple layers.

First of all, Tomáš is pictured as a *narrator* of the *Narrative* within the *Text* – the *Narrative* is coming from him, he “tells me” and the *Narrative* is also precisely his – it is talked about “Tomáš's *Narrative*” in the *Text*. He is out of the *Narrative* and actively shapes it from the outside. Nobody else figures as a narrator in a comparable way within the *Text* – the share of further agents on the *Narrative*, in the sense I have emphasised above, is thus pushed to the background and the established differentiation of “Tomáš-narrator and audience” is being maintained implicitly. For example, IP's activity of narration is recognizable only within quotations, but analytical passages of the *Text* do not deal with it. The *Narrative* is never product of anyone else than Tomáš within the *Text*.

Nevertheless, activity of Tomáš-narrator is constrained to a certain extent within the *Text*; the *Narrative* becomes independent of Tomáš and lives its own life. Suddenly, it is no more about Tomáš's *Narrative*, it is no more about Tomáš “saying” something. The *Narrative* asserts itself also without any attribute – and something is “being created” in the *Narrative* within the *Text*, something is “being done” in it. Not only that the *Narrative* disconnects itself from

Tomáš and acts autonomously within the Text, but at the same time it emerges as a *space* wherein something is happening, wherein something is “being done”. The Narrative thus is not primarily an activity of Tomáš-narrator in the Text (although it appears in this role as well), but above all, an autonomously self-forming space wherein something is being created. What does Text place into the Narrative? Firstly, it is again Tomáš – this time not as a narrator of the Narrative but as a *character* of the Narrative – the narrated Tomáš. Or, within the Text, Tomáš is the character of the Narrative as well as the character of the Text (as a narrator); Tomáš-narrator narrates Tomáš-character – and all this within the Text.

Tomáš-character of the Narrative acts as an active element within the Text – his activity and capability to shape *in the Narrative* his “maternity leave” his own way is repeatedly being dealt with in the Text. This way, the activity of Tomáš-narrator and Tomáš-character of the Narrative is being interconnected within the Text. This makes for comprehension of Tomáš as a single subject, despite his being torn between the narrator of the Narrative and the character of the Narrative (see Bourdieu 1998) – similarly as the Narrative of Tomáš is based on identification of Tomáš-narrator and Tomáš-character. The positive portrayal of the character can then be related to the narrator, who presents himself or herself not with what he or she is doing (see Goffman 1999) but with speaking about what he or she is doing. What the Text thus refers to is the fact that portrayal of Tomáš-character in the Narrative as a subject actively shaping his “maternity leave” relates through *illusion* of unity of Tomáš-character and Tomáš-narrator to Tomáš-narrator. It is similar in many other instances, e.g. in the case of superiority of Tomáš-character over mummies from the sandpit – through the same mechanism this superiority is being transferred to Tomáš-narrator. The act of narration is act of self-presentation.

Tomáš-narrator within the Text is narrating to somebody; he has his audience within the Text – which is changing however. To capture the audience is probably the most difficult task for me, sometimes it is impossible to distinguish, who actually is – within the Text – being created as the audience of the Text. Tomáš-narrator repeatedly “tells me”, the audience is thus some “I”, which refers first to IP, who is a character of the Text and about whom the Text explicitly states that IP means Iva Pecáková, and the “I” refers also to the narrator of the Text. Behind this “I”, silently and rather inconspicuously the narrator of the Text is hidden – and at the same time the listener/participant of the Narrative, that is IP. This way again, the *illusion* of unity is created within the Text – this time (at least) among IP, the narrator of the Text and Iva Pecáková.

Simultaneously, the narrator of the Text is not very sociable – he or she is created inconspicuously within the Text, as if he or she almost was not present in the Text, but at the same time, he or she – within the Text – offers the Text as a way to read the Narrative, as its analysis, as interpretation of the Narrative. The Text says, how it is, determines, what we “come to know” and what Tomáš is telling “us”, what “is important”. The Text determines the effect of the Narrative; within the Text it shows up what the Narrative is and is not like, what is happening in it and what effect it has. The Text *re-constructs* the Narrative. Does not retell it in its own words. Does not analyze it with an objective analytical method, a result of which an unproblematic description of what is happening within the Narrative would be. *It creates the Narrative.*

Let’s turn back to the audience of the Text which is changing and apart from “I” also “we” appears here (e.g. in the third paragraph of the analytical passage “we come to know Tomáš...”). Thus, the audience is sometimes clearly “multi-headed”. It was hidden somewhere within the Text and suddenly it seems that this “we” might have been hidden here for all the time before. “We” includes “I”, but also the anticipated readers of the Text. The Text turns to readers which it anticipates – and thus *creates*. At the same time it turns to the narrator of the Text, who is included in the “we” of the audience. In the Text, the narrator of the Text is

being constructed who presents the Text to the readers as well as to himself or herself. The narrator of the Text is its audience at the same moment. The expected readers however do not participate on the narration of the Text – the narrator-audience dichotomy is thus disrupted from one side only.

Apart from Tomáš, other characters and objects appear in the Narrative within the Text as well – first of all Terezka, mummies from the sandpit, children, “maternity leave”... Various characters are within the Text placed only into the Narrative, do not step out of it – neither in the role of narrators like Tomáš nor in any other role. The narrated Tomáš (Tomáš-character) is related towards the other characters, placed in relation to them to a certain position. For example, he is counted to mummies from the sandpit on the one hand; on the other hand, he is defined over against them. “He is not like (the other) mothers from the sandpit.” He does belong to the mummies from the sandpit and does not. He belongs to the mummies from the sandpit, because Tomáš is also a parent from the sandpit. He does not belong to the mummies from the sandpit, above all because he is not a mother but a father. And also, because in the Narrative the differentiation of Tomáš from the category “mummies from the sandpit” is being achieved in many ways – as well as placing Tomáš above this category.

The Narrative has a continuous nature within the Text – it unfolds gradually, slowly, linearly and has a cumulative character. The findings and conclusions from the Narrative gradually cumulate within the Text, further and new findings are being added; the Narrative unfolds as a story, as a way that has a beginning and an end – though these “a beginning” and “an end” are not dealt with in the Text. Similarly linearly and cumulatively the Text flows. To what extent are the Narrative and the Text actually being interconnected and united? The Text and the Narrative in many ways penetrate and overlap with one another and in many cases it is not possible to separate what actually appears in the Narrative and what in the Text. However, at the same moment, the separation of the Text and the Narrative is being created within the Text – with certain consequences.

Visually, the Text is divided into two main parts – “quotations of the Narrative“ and “analytical passages”. The quotations act within the Text as cut-out pieces of the Narrative; they show that what is written in the Text has its foundations in another text, that is, in the Narrative. Or, in its transcription, respectively – however, this is not being shown within the Text, the Narrative, transcription of the Narrative or the record of the Narrative are not separated within the Text, the relations among them are not being formulated. On the contrary, impression of unity is being created within the Text, image of one component, which is simply “the Narrative” – whatever may be hidden behind it.

The quotations signal that the Text refers to something else. At the same time the quotations do not act as reference to the transcription of the Narrative within the Text, but act as a personification of the Narrative itself – though it is the transcription what is then written into the Text. Within the Text, the quotations are being created as something through which the Narrative itself enters the Text. The quotations equally serve as evidence of the well-foundedness of the Text – they are kind of a window to *reality* which the Text is based on and which it is meant to be *about* first of all. Through this use of the quotations the Narrative is created as reality within the Text, which stands out of the Text and which the Text is built on.¹⁴

The quotations are part of the Text, nevertheless, rather a peculiar part – they are set aside from the flow of the Text, by the style they are edited or by quotation marks; they also differ in their language from the rest of the Text. It is well recognizable, what is a quotation and

¹⁴ Text as analysis of the transcription of the Narrative is subject to certain genre conventions. In texts of similar kind, qualitative analyses, quotations are usually cited in a similar way. The purpose which the Text was created with and conventions it was based on are not dealt with here. The aim pursued here is what effects just this (and not another) character of the Text has.

what is an analytical passage; it is not interchangeable. Mostly, the quotations have their own space within the Text and do not penetrate into the paragraphs of the analytical passages. The analytical passages as well as the quotations are thus shown as something inconsistent and separated within the Text, as two different things where there is a certain relationship between them – the relationship of reality and its scientific analysis.

The separateness of the quotations from the analytical passages indicates also, that if the quotations were left out from the Text, if someone took scissors and cut them out, it would not disrupt the analytical passages, in other words, that analytical passages could very well exist even without the quotations. And vice versa, the quotations could very well exist without the analytical passages – they even already had, as they come from the peculiar reality of the Narrative, which is external to the Text. The quotations and the analytical passages communicate with one another only to a very limited extent within the Text – sometimes the analytical passage “rebounds” from the quotation and continues it, other time the quotation conversely finishes certain analytical passage and actually validates it. In some instances, the analytical passages borrow little fragments of verbatim quotations; this way, the interconnection of them and the quotations becomes narrower and the referential nature of the analytical passages more obvious.

Thus, the quotations are and are not in the Text. They are in the Text as evidence that the analytical passages do not make up unjustified facts, that they rely on the Narrative the quotations in the Text are part of. In this manner, the analytical passages become scientific analysis within the Text and the quotations become evidence of its adequacy. The object of this scientific analysis is the Narrative as reality which is located outside of the Text. The quotations are separated from the analytical passages and could be left out. The quotations in the Text refer to what is being analyzed. The analytical passages are expression of this analysis.

Within the Text, the view on the Narrative “from the outside” is being created, like on an object of scientific interest, like on reality which is separated from the Text and which enters it in form of verbatim quotations. The Narrative thus becomes an object of the Text. The Text unmasks the Narrative, shows the way it is constructed, analyses effect of individual components. In this sense, the Text positions itself above the Narrative, as a reflexion superior to it which decomposes the Narrative by an analytical procedure and shows its functioning. *The Text thus does not show itself as a re-construction of the Narrative, but as an external reflexion of the Narrative which does not change it.*

The Point

At this moment we shall stop ourselves. Certainly, it would be possible to continue with the investigation of the Text further, such an analytical endeavour is always infinite from its nature, it is always possible to search and find new linkages, it is always possible to follow various directions and view the Text from innumerable perspectives. Or rather, it is always possible to find out new ways of *re-construction* of the Text – just like I have shown here that the Text is re-construction of the Narrative, the following analysis of the Text is the re-construction of the Text. The reader by no doubt expects that similarly, it would be possible to continue with investigation of the analysis of the Text which is concluded by this paragraph. And later by analysis of analysis. By analysis of analysis of analysis... (This reminds me a little of Monty Python’s “and our fathers’ fathers’ fathers”).¹⁵ In the interests of my mental health I cease from this. Nevertheless, if the reader were tempted to believe that this “infiniteness” was related solely to *certain* investigations, solely to *certain* realms of (not

¹⁵ Monty Python: The Life of Brian.

only) scientific endeavour and that for example various methods of what is called “quantitative data analysis” were free of such difficulties, then, may they try to view these analyses (just non-bindingly) as categorisation activities – just like I have tried here. And, may they try to imagine that the (purely differentiating) division of methods into “qualitative” and “quantitative” is the result of (still the same) categorisation activity – with all consequences for their mutual position.

“Correct it” dr. Svěrák closes the scene.

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PhDr. Iva Pecáková, *1980

pecakovai@volny.cz

Graduated in sociology from Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Social Sciences. In her doctoral studies she focuses on the interplay of discourses surrounding taking and not-taking parental leave by men. In this context she is interested in various ways of qualitative analysis inspired above all in ethnomethodology, social constructionism and deconstruction. She is attracted by dramaturgical metaphor, language games, ethnomethodological accountability, gender studies and actually everything which is dynamical, ambiguous and provoking. Occasionally, she also makes trips into the world where interplay of exchange rates matters most – she studies master programme International Trade at University of Economics in Prague.