Gee, J. P. (1999) *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*, London: Routledge pp. 49–50, 68–69, 78 (extracts)

. . . thinking and using language is an *active* matter of *assembling* the situated meanings that you need for action in the world. This assembly is always relative to your socioculturally-defined experiences in the world and, *more or less*, routinized ('normed') through cultural models and various social practices of the sociocultural groups to which you belong. [p. 49–50]

Cultural models

...we can distinguish (at least) the following sorts of cultural models:

- *Espoused models*, that is models which we consciously espouse;
- *Evaluative models*, that is models which we use, consciously or unconsciously, to judge ourselves or others;
- *Models-in-(inter)action*, that is models that consciously or unconsciously guide our actions and interactions in the world.

Cultural models: conscious models, models we use to evaluate, models that influence our interaction with other people

Furthermore, cultural models can be about 'appropriate' attitudes, viewpoints, beliefs and values; 'appropriate' social, cultural and institutional organizational structures; 'appropriate' ways of talking, writing, reading, and communicating; 'appropriate' ways to feel or display emotion; 'appropriate' ways in which real and fictional events, stories, and histories are organized and end, and so on and so forth. Cultural models are complexly, though flexibly organised. There are smaller models inside bigger ones. Each model triggers or is associated with others, in different ways in different settings and differently for different socioculturally defined groups of people. And we can talk about 'master models', that is sets of associated cultural models, or single models, that help shape and organize large and important aspects of experience for particular groups of people, as well as the sorts of Conversations we discussed... [pp. 68–69]

Cultural models deal with what is 'appropriate' and they can influence each other.

Cultural models as tools of inquiry

J.P. Gee

Cultural models . . . lead us to ask, when confronted with a piece of talk, writing, action,orinteraction,questionslikethese:

- What cultural models are relevant here? What must I, as an analyst, assume peoplefeel,value,andbelieve,consciouslyornot,inordertotalk(write),act,and/orinteractthis way?
- Are there differences here between the cultural models that are affecting espousedbeliefs and those that are affecting actions and practices? What sorts of culturalmodels, if any, are being used here to make value judgments about oneself andothers?
- How consistent are the relevant cultural models here? Are there competing orconflicting cultural models at play? Whose interests are the cultural modelsrepresenting?
- Whatotherculturalmodelsarerelatedtotheonesmostactivehere?Arethere'mastermodels'at work?
- Whatsortsoftexts,media,experiences,interactions,and/orinstitutionscouldhavegivenri setotheseculturalmodels?
- How are the relevant cultural models here helping to reproduce, transform, or createsocial, cultural, institutional, and/or political relationships? What Discourses andConversationsarethesecculturalmodelshelpingtoreproduce,transformorcreate?[p78]

When we are involved in communication, we can try to analyse the cultural models involved and see how they influence the discourses and conversations occurring.

Cultural models: conscious models, models we use to evaluate, models that influence our interaction with other people

Cultural models deal with what is 'appropriate' and they can influence each other.
Some models are more important than others (master models)

When we are involved in communication, we can try to analyse the cultural models involved and see how they influence the discourses and conversations occurring.

Commentary

Fairclough (1992:28), "'Discourse" is language use as a type of social practice'; discourse, too, is 'shaped by relations ofpower,andinvestedwithideologies'.

UNITB1.4

IDENTITYANDLANGUAGELEARNING

The learning of a second or additional language, especially when it is 'forced' upon an individual by a (permanent) move to a new-language-speaking community is a process

which is inextricably linked to issues of culture and identity. Schumann (1976), two factors are significant in learning an additional language:

social distance '. . .. The degree of 'social solidarity'

'psychological distance' how the individual feels in the process of learning the second language.' The autobiographical study, written in 1989, is Lost in Translation: A Life in a New Language by Eva Hoffman, and the interpretation by Aneta Pavlenko and James Lantolf (2000)

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Pavlenko, A. and Lantolf, J. P. 'Second Language Learning as Participation andthe (Re)Construction of Selves' in Lantolf, J. P. (ed.) (2000) *Sociocultural Theoryand Second Language Learning*, Oxford: Oxford University Press pp. 162–174(extracts)

The initial phase of loss can be segmented into five stages:

■ loss of one's linguistic identity ('careless baptism', according to Hoffman 1989)

■ loss of all subjectivities

■ loss of the frame of reference and the link between the signifier and the signified

■ loss of the inner voice

■ first language attrition.

The phase of recovery and (re)construction encompasses four critical stages:

■ appropriation of others' voices

■ emergence of one's own new voice, often in writing first

■ translation therapy: reconstruction of one's past

■ continuous growth 'into' new positions and subjectivities.**Secondlanguagelearning:phaseofloss**

..The first step on the route to self-translation, identified by Hoffman (1989:105), is a name change, often imposed. Due to this 'careless baptism' from Ewa and Alina, the author and her sister become 'Eva' and 'Elaine'. What follows is a shattering loss of their linguistic identity:

Nothing much has happened, except a small, seismic mental shift. The twist in our names takes them at a tiny distance from us – but it's a gap into which the infinite hobgoblin of abstraction enters. Our Polish names didn't refer to us; they were as surely us as our eyes or hands. These new appellations, which we ourselves can't yet pronounce, are not us. They are identification tags, disembodied signs pointing to objects that happen to be my sister and myself...[They] make us strangers to ourselves.

At stake in the renaming process is, as Hoffman's commentary especially makes transparent, not merely a phonological problem to be overcome with some practice. It is about the conversion of subjects, actively embedded in their world, into objects no longer able to fully animate that world. In other words, it is about loss of agency in the world – an agency, in large part, constructed through linguistic means.

...Loss of agency is not only about severing one's union with the world inhabited by others, it is, and perhaps more profoundly so, about losing the connection to one's own inner world – the world of the mind. This is attested in several of the writers we examined, but it is most explicitly, and painfully, evidenced in the words of Hoffman (1989:107)

Deconstruction: they had to change their names.
Not only a matter of pronunciation
Loss of our name= agency: from EWA TO EVA

I wait for that spontaneous flow of inner language which used to be my nighttime talk with myself...Nothing comes. Polish, in a short time, has atrophied, shriveled from sheer uselessness. Its words don't apply to my new experiences, they're not coeval with any of the objects, or faces, or the very air I breathe in the daytime. In English, the words have not penetrated to those layers of my psyche from which a private connection could proceed.

In the above passage, Hoffman seems to be in a semantic twilight zone in which her inner speech in Polish has ceased to function, while the inner speech sparked by English, her new language, has yet to emerge. From a sociohistorical perspective, then, she has no way of organizing and making sense of her experiences.

Her Polish cannot be used for her new experiences, her English is not good enough yet.

...For a time, Hoffman's heroine is forced to live in a split universe, where the signifier has become severed from the signified. Eva deeply mourns her inability to describe the world around her; her new words are simple referents without any conceptual systems or experiences to back them up:

The words I learn now don't stand for things in the same unquestioned way they did in my native tongue. 'River' in Polish was a vital sound, energized with the essence of riverhood, of my rivers, of my being immersed in rivers. 'River' in English is cold – a word without an aura. It has no accumulated associations for me, and it does not give off the radiating haze of connotation. It does not evoke (Hoffman 1989:106).

Her English is without 'connotation' (river)

Often, the inability of the ‘new’ language to intimately name the world (both inner and outer) is accompanied by a deterioration of that same ability in the native language....

...The impact of the unraveling of a self is forcefully captured in Hoffman’s words:

Linguistic dispossession is a sufficient motive for violence, for it is close to the dis-possession of one’s self. Blind rage, helpless rage is rage that has no words – rage that overwhelms one with darkness. And if one is perpetually without words, if one exists in the entropy of inarticulateness, that condition itself is bound to be an enraging frustration (Hoffman 1989:124).

A world without words leads to frustration.

Recoveryand(re)construction:secondlanguagebecoming

Recovery and (re)construction: second language becoming

The initial step toward recovery and reconstruction of a self, . . . is the appropriation of others’ voices. We observe the beginnings of the recreation process in the following excerpt from Hoffman (1989:219–220):

All around me, the Babel of American voices, hardy midwestern voices, sassy New York voices, quick youthful voices, voices arching under the pressure of various crosscurrents. . . . Since I lack a voice of my own, the voices of others invade me as if I were a silent ventriloquist. They ricochet within me, carrying on conversations, lending me their modulations, intonations, rhythms. I do not yet possess them; they possess me. But some of them satisfy a need; some of them stick to my ribs. Eventually, the voices enter me; by assuming them, I gradually make them mine.

Eventually, a new voice and with it a self gradually emerges. At first, the voice is often captured in writing, in many cases in a diary, a private activity conducted in a public language, which grants ‘the double distance of English and writing’ (Hoffman 1989:121). For Hoffman, her diary is a crucial stepping stone toward recovery of agency. It bestows upon her a new, English, ‘written self’ (ibid.). Because this self exists primarily in writing, it is experienced not as a fully agentive self, but as an ‘impersonal’ and ‘objective’ self, and even though Hoffman remarks that ‘this language is beginning to invent another me’ (ibid.), she is at first unable to deploy the quintessential indexical pronoun of agency, ‘I’. Instead, she is ‘driven, as by a compulsion, to the double, the Siamese-twin “you” (ibid.).’ Although at this point in her story, she acknowledges Eva as her public persona, she has not yet identified Eva with ‘I’ in her private mental domain.

Step by step, Hoffman's Ewa/Eva discovers and inhabits the new cultural space, learning to preserve appropriated distances, read subtle nuances, and act according to new cultural scripts. Slowly, Ewa's second voice acquires increasing strength.

EWA is being 'invaded' by English voices> EWA starts writing in English> Eva becomes a public persona> Eva becomes 'I'

Eva becomes a person in her own right, arriving at the realization that this goddamn place is my home now. I know all the issues and all the codes here. I'm as alert as a bat to all subliminal signals sent by word, look, gesture. I know who is likely to think what about feminism and Nicaragua and psychoanalysis and Woody Allen.... When I think of myself in cultural categories – which I do perhaps too often – I know that I'm a recognizable example of a species: a professional New York woman. If it, and my surroundings fit me (Hoffman 1989:169–170).

. . . With regard to the bilinguals' narratives considered here, we believe that the problem confronting these individuals is the conflict that arises when they attempt to bring their past into the present. Their personal narratives and, consequently, their 'self' were constructed in a time and place constrained by conventions that differ from conventions of their present time and place. Thus, they have no way of making sense of the present and this, in turn, gives rise to the cognitive and affective dissonances reported in the narratives. To overcome this difficulty, they are forced to reorganize, and, in some cases, organize anew, the plots of their life stories in line with the new set of conventions and social relationships sanctioned by the new community in which they find themselves. The result is the formation of new ways to mean (i.e. make sense of their experiences and of who they are). Without this restructuring, these individuals would remain on the margins of the new community in which they reside (but do not live)....

Moving to another language means to reconstruct yourself, otherwise you'll just 'reside' and not 'live' in the new country.

.. At one point in her story Hoffman writes that her parents, in their new Anglo cultural setting, express their frustration at no longer knowing how to rear their own children:

They don't try to exercise much influence over me anymore. 'In Poland, I would have known how to bring you up, I would have known what to do,' my mother says wistfully, but here, she has lost her sureness, her authority. She doesn't know how hard to scold Alinka [Eva's sister] when she comes home at late hours; she can only worry over her daughter's vague evening activities (Hoffman 1989:145).

At another point, Hoffman talks specifically about her loss of past and being trapped in the present and thus being unable to make full sense of her world and her place in it:

I can't afford to look back, and I can't figure out how to look forward. In both directions, I may see a Medusa, and I already feel the danger of being turned into stone. Betwixt and between, I am stuck

and time is stuck within me. Time used to open out, serene, shimmering with promise. If I wanted to hold a moment still, it was because I wanted to expand it, to get its fill. Now, time has no dimension, no extension backward or forward. I arrest the past, and I hold myself stiffly against the future; I want to stop the flow. As a punishment, I exist in the stasis of a perpetual present, that other side of 'living in the present', which is not eternity but a prison. I can't throw a bridge between the present and the past, and therefore I can't make time move (Hoffman 1989:116–17).

Eva is stuck in between.

The initial phase of loss can be segmented into five stages:
■ loss of one's linguistic identity ('careless baptism', according to Hoffman 1989)
■ loss of all subjectivities
■ loss of the frame of reference and the link between the signifier and the signified
■ loss of the inner voice
■ first language attrition.
The phase of recovery and (re)construction encompasses four critical stages:
■ appropriation of others' voices
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■ translation therapy: reconstruction of one's past
■ continuous growth 'into' new positions and subjectivities.

Her Polish cannot be used for her new experiences, her English is not good enough yet.
Her English is without 'connotation' (river)
A world without words leads to frustration.
Moving to another language means to reconstruct yourself, otherwise you'll just 'reside' and not 'live' in the new country.
Eva is stuck in between.

Task B1.4.1

➢Have you had any experience of being in an unfamiliar cultural context in which a language, language variety, or dialect unknown or unfamiliar to you was the normal language of communication, and which you needed to learn?

➢If so, did you:

■ experience the same feelings Eva Hoffman describes
■ experience the need to 'reconstruct' an identity, and, if so, did this involve the two phases described in the text by Pavlenko and Lantolf?