Introduction

I.1   A dialogical turn

Dialogue has become a central concept in various theoretical perspectives in human and social sciences as well as in professional practices such as education, health, therapies and counselling, among others. Since the concept of dialogue dominates the discourse in these fields, they usually call themselves 'dialogical'. Some scholars have even suggested that we are witnessing a 'dialogical turn' not only in human and social sciences but in society at large. The main presupposition of dialogical perspectives is that the mind of the Self and the minds of Others are interdependent in and through sense-making and sense-creating of social realities, in interpretations of their past, experiencing the present and imagining the future. Such multifaceted social realities are situated in history and culture, and dialogical approaches study them in diverse fashions. Some approaches focus on the development of peaceful relations among humans, their intersubjective understanding and aspirations for harmonious relations in daily life, politics and professions; others explore clashes among participants and groups, and strategies in which they negotiate their positions. Still others are inspired by the new media, such as the various Internet genres. All these forms of communication express heterogeneous voices and ideas – all contributing to the appeal of the 'dialogical turn'. This appeal is being helped by tremendous technological advances that enable the high-quality recording of voices, making videos of interactions and the digitalisation of recorded and video data. These advances also contribute to refining investigations in conversation analysis, in various kinds of discourse analyses, studies of interviews, narratives and focus groups, among others. Moreover, translations into many languages of Lev Vygotsky's studies of language and thinking, and of Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogism, have inspired international interest in dialogical approaches.

I.2   What are dialogical approaches?

All approaches that, today, call themselves 'dialogical' place emphasis on language *as* dialogue (rather than as a system of signs), conversation and

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communication (rather than as a transmission of information), and they fore-ground interaction between the Self and Others. Beyond this, they are widely divergent. They originate from numerous theoretical traditions, and they direct attention to a range of distinct issues. To my mind, among these, the most significant approach is based on 'existential dialogism' and the 'dialogical principle'. It derives from the tradition of neo-Kantian philosophy that was instigated by Christianity, Hegelian philosophy and Judaism (e.g. Buber, 1923/1962; Cohen, 1907/1977; Rosenstock-Huessy, 1924; Rosenzweig, 1921/1971). According to this approach, the 'dialogical principle' is established and main-tained through speech and communication. It expresses life experiences of people, their emotions and concerns, as well as creates their sense of social reality.

Other dialogical approaches stem from ancient Socratic and Platonic dialo-gues (e.g. Hart and Tejera, 1997). Bernard Williams (1985) expands on the thesis of Socrates that through dialogue humans are guided towards rational and ethical living. Still other dialogical ideas make appeals to phenomenology and hermeneutics of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They emphasise the role of daily experience, multivoicedness of language in dialogue, the study of the Self, ethics and interpretations in examining socially shared knowledge. Dialogical approaches have been also inspired by pragmatism, for example, by William James's focus on the Self–Other relations, and by George Herbert Mead's conversation of gestures and intersubjectivity. Habermas's (1981/1984; 1981/1987) communicative rationality and communicative action, too, moti-vates dialogical perspectives (e.g. Jovchelovitch, 2007).

Considering the range of traditions from which dialogical approaches origi-nate, it is not surprising that scholars have developed diverse views as to which of these should, and which should not, be called 'dialogical'. While some researchers take a broad perspective, others restrict dialogism to specialised positions. For example, in *Rethinking Language, Mind, and the World Dialogically* Per Linell (2009, p. xxix, also pp. 8, 420) explicitly states that he takes an ecumenical approach in relation to dialogical theories. His perspec-tive includes several related, as well as not so closely related, approaches to language, cognition and communication. These comprise phenomenology, pragmatism, symbolic interactionism, various kinds of discourse approaches and sociocultural theories; some of these refer, while others do not refer, to dialogical approaches. Despite this broad range, Per Linell argues that these outlooks share certain views on activities and processes of sense-making and sense-creating. This in itself justifies linking together scholars ranging from Vygotsky and Mead to Merleau-Ponty and Gibson, among many others, even if they do not focus primarily on social interaction. Since dialogism has a strongly empirical basis, Linell maintains that approaches such as conversation analysis, ethnomethodology, sociocultural semiotics, among others, have a great deal to

offer to dialogism. What matters here is the division between monologism and dialogism. Linell characterises monologism as information processing theories of cognition, which conceive communication as transfer of messages from sender to receiver. Monologism further includes conceptions of language as consisting of static signs and fixed meanings, while contexts are viewed as external to language and language use, thinking and communication (Linell, 2009, p. 36). Providing a deep analysis of these issues, Linell's perspective implies that if a theory cannot be characterised as monological in the terms he proposes, it can offer, both theoretically and empirically, something to dialogical approaches.

At the other pole of this wide concept of dialogism are contemporary approaches in the French dialogical linguistics, building on and developing Bakhtin's ideas. Applying a dialogical approach in grammar, these dialogical linguists analyse utterances and discourse. For example, they make a linguistic distinction between locutor and enunciator (Bres, 1998; 1999; Bres and Verine, 2002; Salazar Orvig, 2005; Vion, 1998; 2001), that is, between the one who utters 'I' and the one who presents the point of view of others, respectively. Through the use of various grammatical structures such as modalisations, positioning, deontic concepts and other means, speakers can take distance from, or closeness to, what they are actually stating (Salazar Orvig, 2005; Salazar Orvig and Grossen, 2008). But even within these linguistically based approaches there are vast differences. For example, while Bres and his colleagues stick to the grammatical analysis of utterances, Salazar Orvig and Grossen combine dialogical linguistics with the analysis of social psychological phenomena such as trust (e.g. Grossen and Salazar Orvig, 2014), and with therapeutic and clinical practices (Grossen and Salazar Orvig, 2011).

I.3 Dialogical approaches as an alternative to the study of the human mind

The wide conception of the 'dialogical turn' encompassing a broad range of dialogical approaches and epistemologies can be seen as a response to at least two powerful tendencies.

First, we may consider the 'dialogical turn' as an alternative to the narrow perspective of individualism and cognitivism dominating many areas of the human and social sciences and attempting to imitate natural sciences. This perspective has been developing over two or three centuries, but in the aftermath of the Second World War it has become even more pronounced. Hans-Georg Gadamer (1975, p. 3) observes in *Truth and Method* that as the natural sciences, human sciences became concerned with establishing similar and regular patterns in human behaviour that would conform to rigid laws and thus allow predictions of behaviour. The inductive method became the chosen method for the study of

many domains of human sciences: 'One only has to think of social psychology' (Gadamer, 1975, p. 4). This approach also assumes that social phenomena should be treated as ahistorical and a cultural. Studies of society, just like studies of nature, must be repeatable; repeatability defines their scientific reliability. Above all, confidence in the power of science has been related to the view that on its historical journey, humankind will shake off irrational ways of thinking, myth and superstitious beliefs, and will progress towards rationality: logos will substitute mythos (Chapter 1). The British philosopher Bertrand Russell expressed his confidence in the power of sciences by stating that, one day, they will develop 'a mathematics of human behaviour as precise as the mathematics of machines' (Russell, 1956, p. 142).

The second tendency that seems to have encouraged the 'dialogical turn' has been the reaction against the technological dominance invading all areas of human life. It places emphasis on efficiency, markets and money, and on quantification of phenomena such as life-satisfaction, feelings of injustice or trusting others. Within this trend, technological advancements in neuroscience, physiology and medical sciences have brought about a powerful influence on technicisation and bureaucratisation of social and human sciences. Anonymity of numbers, hiding behind the façade of precision and giving bureaucratisation a scientific appearance, has become offensive to those who insist on the uniqueness and wholeness of humans.

In contrast to perspectives fragmenting individuals into elements and studying detached cognition, 'neutral' and 'objective' knowledge, dialogical approaches focus on interaction and interdependencies among the Self and Others, and on their engaged experience, knowledge and communication in ordinary life.

I.4   The dialogical mind

The perspective taken in *The Dialogical Mind: Common Sense and Ethics* endorses the general contention of dialogical approaches foregrounding the interaction between the Self and Others as a point of departure. More than that, the dialogical perspective presented in this book presupposes that the nature of the Self–Other interdependence is ethical and that ethics is embedded in common-sense thinking and socially shared knowledge. Let us explain.

A large amount of literature on common sense refers to the opposition between common-sense knowledge and scientific knowledge, vigorously defending and disputing the merits and drawbacks of one versus the other. Common sense, we shall see, can involve different kinds of daily knowledge, which can be concerned with physical, biological and social phenomena. My focus in this book is not primarily on the opposition between common sense and science; instead, I emphasise common sense as a dialogical sense,

that is, common sense as a vital feature of social interaction and communication underlain by the ethics of the Self–Other. I have argued elsewhere that the Self–Other interdependence is the basic *thema* of common sense in social interaction (Marková, 2003a). Originally, *thema* and *themata* were defined as historically based preconceptions in science, as dyadic oppositions such as atoms versus continua, analysis versus synthesis or simplicity versus complexity (Holton, 1975). Holton argued that such dyadic oppositions in science explain the formation of traditions in specific schools of thought in physics. However, not only scientific thinking but also daily thinking is underlain by dyadic oppositions. Humans understand their relationships as well as daily events as good or bad, moral or immoral, just or unjust, and so forth. Such *themata* are historically and culturally established as the basis of common sense. They can be implicit in daily thinking and perpetuate themselves in and through socialisation across traditions and cultures (for a discussion of *themata* see Marková, 2003a; Moscovici and Vignaux, 1994/2000). During socialisation the child learns quite naturally to distinguish between moral and immoral conduct, whom to trust and whom not to trust. In human societies, such *themata* are part of implicitly adopted common sense; they appear vital for survival and for the extension of life. For example, it is essential to humanity that people treat each other with dignity, that they have choices with respect to their activities, style of life, that they distinguish between what is good for them and what to avoid. This assumption, to which I shall keep returning throughout the book, contrasts common sense embedded in dialogical thinking with thinking that is founded solely on the mental capacities of the individual. Those who adopt this latter perspective, usually attribute thinking of the individual with the capacity for being 'objective' or 'rational'.

Ethics and morality are fundamental concepts of philosophies, human and social sciences as well as of professional and daily life. Often used interchangeably, ethics and morality mostly refer to an individual's duties to think and act morally. These duties are commonly derived from universal imperatives that apply to all humans capable of rational thinking. These universal imperatives are normative and prescriptive. They are customarily related to the idea that humans are equipped with the inborn intuitive capacity to directly apprehend what is good and what is morally reprehensible, and to what ought and ought not to be done in a given situation. In Western philosophies, ideas focusing on universal rationality have been maintained throughout history from ancient Greek philosophy to Immanuel Kant and to contemporary intuitive ethics and morality. In other words, according to this position, each human is born with the capacity to apprehend basic moral imperatives due to his/her *individual rationality*.

While acknowledging that each individual is capable of ethical and moral judgement, I presuppose that this capacity does not arise in the mind of a sole

individual due to his/her innate cognitive rationality, but that the nature of this capacity is dialogical. It has been acquired throughout the historical and cultural development of human species *as* humans. Therefore, ethics discussed in this book is not based on *individual rationality,* but on *dialogical rationality.* It is of vital importance to acknowledge that when referring to individual and dialogical rationality we are dealing with two different forms of thought which determine the kinds of questions we pose about humans and their mental capacities. The concepts of individual rationality and of dialogical rationality have fundamental implications for questions about the nature of language, thinking and knowing, about the individual and social action, and about ethics and morality.

The concept of dialogically based ethics has been firmly established both in theoretical and empirical studies. Philosophically and theoretically, the ethics based on the interdependence between the Self and Other(s) as an ontological (existential) point of departure can be traced to the eighteenth-century philosopher Giambattista Vico (Chapter 2) and then to the ethical thought of German dialogical philosophies (Chapter 4). Empirically, during the last sixty years there has been an abundance of psychological studies into the very early life of infants on face recognition, imitation, communication, interactional rhythm and recognition of voices by neonates. These studies provide evidence for rich capacities for social interaction with which the neonate is endowed at birth. Research literature has shown that infants relate to a human face immediately after birth. In his classic study on pattern recognition in infants Fantz (1963) stated that although the mechanism underlying infants' preferences for faces over other objects is not known, this fact should facilitate the development of social responsiveness, because 'what is responded to must first be attended to' (Fantz, 1963, p. 297; see also a comprehensive review on the selective attention to faces in infants by Otsuka, 2014).

A response to a human face is not 'disengaged', 'neutral' or 'objective' but the human face obliges the Self and Other to get involved in a dialogical action (see Part II of this book). A dialogical action arising from the dialogical capacities of the mind to engage with the Other ranges from unconscious social activities transmitted by tradition and common sense to self-reflective social interactions. It affirms that humans act in order to promote what they consider as good, just and worthwhile, even if what some consider as good, just and worthwhile, others judge as misery, injustice, worthlessness and even terror. Whatever the meaning of good, just and worthwhile, ethics based on the dialogical capacities of the mind and on dialogical action is about the fulfilment of living (Taylor, 2011). It was Paul Ricoeur who emphasised the idea of ethics as 'good life'. He argued for the priority of ethics, that is, of the Self's search for the 'good life' with Others and with institutions based on justice, over what is habitually called normative morality. Normative morality, while indispensable

in social life, must be subsumed under ethics (Ricoeur, 1990/1992; see Chapter 5 of this book). Ethics based on the Self–Other(s) interdependence permeates all daily thinking, communicating and acting and it is therefore of major interest to social psychology. Ethics of the Self–Other interdependence contradicts the neutral and objectivist cognitive perspective and of information processing. This is why ethical relations provide the central concept for the dialogical mind and, equally importantly, for the dialogically based professional practices.