

Listening in the analytical clinic¹

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Abstract

This article deals with the use of a life story in the author's research on the individuality process. In analysis and research, the life story is the method that favors listening. Anthropology and deep psychology can enrich it. Rousseau conceived of ethnology in the XVIII century with **the other** as the main motive of the theory. The "pitié" allows for identification with the suffering of fellow man. Merleau-Ponty considered anthropology through its **way of thinking** when the object is the "other" and demands our transformation. We have created interfaces between anthropology and analytical psychology, because otherness is the Jungian matter. Jung evaluates the conscious exercise of withdrawing from any projection of the external world as a necessary condition for a true encounter. Second interface: analytical listening. It seeks to reach the unconscious fantasies and to facilitate the rising up of unconscious layers. For Merleau-Ponty, the perception is selective, perspectivist, like deep psychology listening. Third interface: the experience of the intersubjectivity. The interactive field between the storyteller and the listener of a life story bears a third element, the product of the encounter between the two subjectivities: the subtle body. In this harmony, we speak according to this constituted field of sensitivity. The clinic is also present in study with students, or in human sciences research, based on narratives. It has a role in the world and can produce a refined methodology. The words of my interviewee belong to the domain of the "third included". Jung deeply expounded on this **symbolic copulation**.

Descriptors

psychoanalytical listening, alterity, Jungian psychology.

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A escuta da clínica analítica

Resumo

O artigo trata do uso da história de vida em uma pesquisa da autora sobre o processo de individuação. Na análise e na pesquisa, a história de vida é o método que favorece a escuta e ele pode ser enriquecido pela antropologia e pela psicologia profunda. Rousseau concebeu a etnologia no século XVIII por ter **o outro** como motivo primeiro de sua teoria. A “pitié” permite sua identificação com o sofrimento de seu semelhante. Merleau-Ponty se voltou para a antropologia pela sua **maneira de pensar** quando o objeto é o “outro” e exige nossa transformação. Criamos interfaces entre a antropologia e a psicologia analítica, uma vez que alteridade é a questão junguiana. Jung avalia como condição necessária para o verdadeiro encontro o exercício consciente da retirada das projeções sobre o mundo externo. Segunda interface: a escuta analítica. Ela procura alcançar as fantasias inconscientes e facilitar que camadas inconscientes aflorem. Para Merleau-Ponty a percepção é seletiva. A escuta da psicologia profunda é seletiva, perspectivista. Terceira interface: a experiência da intersubjetividade. O campo interativo entre o narrador e o ouvinte de uma história de vida pode comportar a constituição de um terceiro elemento, produto do encontro das duas subjetividades: o corpo sutil. Nessa sintonia, falamos de acordo com esse campo de sensibilidade constituída. A clínica também está presente quando se estuda com alunos ou na pesquisa em ciências humanas a partir de narrativas. Tem uma função no mundo, pode produzir uma metodologia refinada. A fala de meu entrevistado pertence ao domínio do “terceiro incluído”. Jung explicou profundamente essa **cópula simbólica**.

Descritores

escuta analítica, alteridade, psicologia junguiana.

La escucha de la clínica analítica

Resumen

El artículo trata sobre la utilización de la historia de vida en una investigación, hecha por la autora, sobre el proceso de individuación. En el análisis y en la investigación la historia de vida es el método que favorece la escucha. La antropología y la psicología profunda pueden enriquecerla. Rousseau concibió la etnología en el siglo XVIII por tener **al otro** como principal razón de su teoría. La “pitié” permite la identificación con el sufrimiento de su semejante. Merleau-Ponty pensó la antropología por su **forma de pensar** cuando el objeto es el “otro” y requiere nuestra transformación. Creamos interfaces entre la antropología y la psicología analítica porque la alteridad es una cuestión Junguiana. Jung evalúa que el ejercicio consciente de la retirada de las proyecciones sobre el mundo exterior es condición necesaria para el verdadero encuentro. Segunda interfaz: la escucha analítica que busca alcanzar las fantasías inconscientes y facilitar que las capas inconscientes salgan a la superficie. Para Merleau-Ponty la percepción es selectiva. La escucha de la psicología profunda es selectiva, de perspectiva. Tercera interfaz: la experiencia de la intersubjetividad. El campo interactivo entre el narrador y el oyente de una historia de vida puede implicar la creación de un tercer elemento, producto del encuentro de las dos subjetividades: el cuerpo sutil. En este sentido, hablamos de acuerdo con ese campo de sensibilidad constituida. La clínica también está presente cuando se estudia con los alumnos, o en la investigación en humanidades, a partir de narrativas. Tiene una función en el mundo, puede producir una metodología refinada. El discurso de mi entrevistado pertenece al dominio del “tercer incluido”. Jung explicó profundamente esta **cópula simbólica**.

Descriptorios

escucha psicoanalítica, alteridad, psicología Junguiana .

Introduction

Years ago I completed a study (Perrone, 2003) on the **process of individuation**, based on two life stories. The study involved two people who had traveled a long path: a 79-year-old woman and an 88-year-old man. We met several times. The universe unveiled through such research involves notions of **narrative** and **experience** formulated by Walter Benjamin (1994). Therefore, I used social sciences methodology for oral communication as a source of knowledge, since sociology is aligned with qualitative research techniques, and considers narrative the richest means for obtaining data. The systematization of the methodology of data collection through oral communication was developed by Maria Isaura P. Queiroz (1988), who differentiated the types of narratives.

For Queiroz (1988), such a narrative involves just a single sphere of the subject's life, what is told and what he attests to as something known or lived. Generally, the narrative is not extensive. The interview is directed at a topic previously defined by the researcher, who also guides the conversation and, therefore, the information provided. The interview can be open, semi-open or closed. Its interface with the third type of narrative, life history, is based on the fact that the interview presupposes an extension of the interview between interviewer and interviewee, in addition to that the content being found within the scope of the life history of the interviewee.

In the United States, life history has long been used as a qualitative methodology, due to the disappearance of indigenous tribes there, with the goal of preserving the memory of their organization and customs; this was also the case in Europe, especially in France, since the 19th century, in research on the peasant way of life, in order to register its comportment and thinking. In Brazil, it only appeared as a research instrument in the middle of the 20th century, but was diminished by a preference for statistical techniques; it was also considered subjective by scientists, who feared they would be led to misinterpretations based on data provided by the subjects. For more than two decades, however, narratives reappeared under the name of "oral history," occupying a privileged position as a technique for collecting material used by social scientists.

According to the historian José Carlos Bom Meihy (1998), in an oral history of life, subjectivity predominates over objectivity and precisely therein lays its power. Davi Arrigucci Junior (1987), the literary critic, also discusses the work of the narrator. He sees research as the precursor of a pathway that demands a surrender of the researcher to the material collected and, when working in a qualitative perspective, it is necessary to uncover what is covered, to bring out the obscure, the unknown. It refers to a dimension less logical than the poetic, as enriching and expanding the scope of science. According to him, the researcher must remain silent in order to listen to the subject and allow him to configure himself in front of him, as well as to

establish his version of the interpretation. We, psychologists, have in the **other**, and therefore in the life history of the other, our object of work and, in subjectivity, our matter. Jung saw in subjectivity the starting point for achieving objectivity. In subjectivity lies the value of life history for research or for the psychological clinic.

The research work featured **analytical listening**, an approach on which I develop my psychological clinic, since I am a Jungian analyst by profession. Before introducing this question it seems opportune to remember why word and listening have become important in psychoanalysis. In so-called 'primitive' societies and pre-capitalist traditional societies, kinship or other social criteria placed men in social exchanges and secured them a place and value in the social context, whose collective rules were clearly established to which they submitted without subjecting themselves to subjectivity. Quite different is the situation of the modern subject who, deprived of these types of socio-cultural relations through which he is located and oriented, has to create his psyche, which was previously formed by social formations, and which is now outside of him. The modern subject is destined to create himself. From the end of 19th century, listening in psychoanalysis came to provide tools for him to practice self-listening. When Freud discards hypnosis and suggestion, he does so by recognizing their therapeutic ineffectiveness, since the contents revealed were not integrated into the patient's consciousness, although they provided etiological clues to the physician. The summoning by the analyst of speech via free association produced an appreciation of the speech of the analyzed. From there, he is led to approach his unconscious dimension, which was extinguished until then. The demand for the analyst's word to be the vehicle of his self-knowledge has shifted "responsibility" of treatment to the patient, from what he says, according to the combined rule. He is forced to communicate everything that he perceives, even if without meaning or connection to what is being treated, without any coercion, with total freedom. Based on this, Freud developed his studies on resistance, deciding to interpret it and place it in the field of transference, which he considered the nucleus and the driving force of analytical treatment and proposing its foundation and resolution with the analyst. Giving a voice to the other and being in a passive listening position was a revolutionary act. This movement, in itself, promotes a revelation.

Due to its very nature, life history, as research material, asks the narrator and the listener to take a very careful posture. A life story has a definite character; even if it transforms, there is no way to erase what has been lived. It concludes what the individual most strongly has to share: his experience and his personality, strongly intertwined, practically translated in what Jung called destiny. Being faced with material of such magnitude is quite different from picking up a statement about some specific area of the subject's experience. This is simply just any interview. The two parties involved somehow know that what they have in hand is pregnant with subjectivity. This is what governs the listener's posture. What makes this care necessary is not the content of that

narrated life, but the meaning that any life story has for those who live it. Now this listening is very close to clinical listening, where subjectivity is the raw material, while what is narrated is the life story.

During the meetings with each of the research subjects, a magical atmosphere was created between us through the interviews. The narrative was communicated with emotion and with feeling; this involved me and made my listening accurate and deep. We were walking down a path together, new to both, where what was known was the facts offered by the narrator. But what we experienced in those moments, their importance to each of us, as well as, in many cases, the meaning of what was narrated, was built at every step and we did not know where it would end. We were both intensely interested in what we were doing, and by the way I felt, undertaking a flight through an unfamiliar and unfathomable dimension, I knew that something similar was also happening with my interviewee. There was exchange, trust and acceptance. On these occasions, I also knew that there was no difference between the clinic and research, because the fundamental elements of the clinic were present. Our interaction was the result of the encounter between our subjectivities. We ventured onto the sacred ground of intersubjectivity.

I involved myself with the images produced by the narrators in our meetings and later I interpreted them when writing a dissertation, elaborated by means of a slice of Jungian theory. I worked with the theory of **complexes**, the **psychological type** and the **process of individuation**, attending to what, in my eyes, the material asked for, that is, from what the images gave rise to. Finally, from all collected material, I collected the fantasies, I was left with the experience, which often does not belong to the record of consciousness, a result of **involuntary memory**, a Bergsonian concept known by Proust.

During the research, I realized that life history, a method from the social sciences, could be enriched at the interface of two other sciences: deep psychology and anthropology. With deep psychology, the method of life history would widen from the dimension of **listening** and from the **analytic third**. With anthropology, life history could be enriched by the notion of **alterity**.

According to Lévi-Strauss (1989), Rousseau founded the human sciences when he conceived of and announced ethnology, a century before it arose, by electing men and customs of other lands as privileged objects of study. He built the place of the **other** and of **alterity** as the first motive of his theory in the second half of the 18th century. Rousseau discovered the necessity of the refusal of oneself as a condition for the acceptance of his different, or, rather, his similar. It is through the recognition that “I am the other” that one can discover himself in the other. The key piece of his theory, the *pitié*, is empathy for his fellow man without leaving the place, moving out of himself. The *pitié* is a natural passion that belongs to the man in the state of nature, an innate capacity that allows identification with the suffering of his neighbor through

the transport of the imagination. This mechanism of getting so close to the other has been obscured in the course of civilization, the *pitié* is weakened and the suffering of the other no longer touches the civilized man. A degeneration is processed in man, self-love is established, and narcissism explodes: incapable of compassion, man sees only himself. Therefore, deep psychology owes to this master of nature and of human relations the origin of the notion of alterity and that of its near opposite, narcissism.

Merleau-Ponty (1980) also thought about anthropology and said that it is not a specialty defined by a particular object – “primitive” societies - but by its **way of thinking** that imposes itself when the object is the “other” and that requires our own transformation. As Merleau-Ponty (1980) says, we become ethnologists in our own society if we distance ourselves from it. In his words, anthropology has a unique method: “It is about learning to see what is ours as if we were foreigners and as if we were foreigners”. Merleau-Ponty (1980) teaches that in taking the **alterity** as object, **reason is extended** and develops the capacity to co-exist with incompatible; it is a matter of settling into a common space where both us and others are intelligible. Out of the sphere of careless reduction or transposition, this space emerges when presided over by the symbolic function that “finds the real advancing it in the imaginary.” If psychoanalysis and analytical psychology intend to reach the world, it is necessary to keep in mind this anthropological perspective that creates distance, which treats what is foreign as if it were ours and what is ours as if it were foreign, that is, the identification with the **other** asks for the dis-identification with the self. It is in this sense that we can approach or create interfaces between anthropology and deep psychology. Anthropology, in a Merleau Pontian reading, emerges as the subsoil of all human sciences and as an instrument of extended rationality.

Nor is it necessary to construct this approximation in regards to analytical psychology, since **alterity** is a Jungian issue; achievement of this demands the withdrawal of the projection of one’s own fantasies on the external world. Jung sees the conscious and permanent exercise of removing projections as a necessary condition for a true encounter with the other, otherwise the individual is not able to see anyone in his or her individuality. At this core of his theory, Jung very nearly approaches Rousseau, for whom the subject is able to conceal the world through veils. The process of the two thinkers is the removal of the veils. From this emerges the objectivity of the world or what can be imagined as the truth of the subject, insofar as it reintegrates his outwardly directed personality.

Analytic listening is another possible interface between the life history technique and deep psychology. In analytic listening, in deep psychologies and in psychoanalysis, the analyzed one speaks “a” and we hear “a” plus “b” or “b”. In this dual listening, we try to reach the unconscious fantasies. The movement is always dual and the goal is to create a facilitator for the unconscious layers to emerge. It is always a dual perspective, a double

listening; we try to capture what is not said. Why do we do this? Because it is assumed that the analyst was analyzed and has learned to do this dual listening, as he or she recognizes the foundations of word and consciousness in another instance. In terms of psychoanalysis and analytical psychology, but especially for the latter, listening is not restricted to the individual, but it is also the “listening of the species.” The history of complexes is the history of family complexes, across generations. The history of archetypes is the history of mankind.

In the book “*A fenomenologia da percepção*” (“The Phenomenology of Perception”), Merleau-Ponty (1971) states that we look at everything before us, but we do not see everything. Such a view is selective, because in order to see, we must focus our vision. We see something particular in the midst of everything that is looked at. It is one thing is to look, it is quite another to see. You look, but what do you see? Perception is selective. We can think of listening in deep psychology in the same way. We hear everything, but we only listen to what we can hear. That is, we only listen to what our **mental state** allows us to hear. Merleau-Ponty (1971) insists on perspectivism, since it shows that all perception is selective. Perception then depends on point of view, the perspective, the vertex, the mental picture. Listening to deep psychologies is also perspectivist. Having included in the method of life history the anthropological gaze that cultivates the **other** and the perspectivist listening of deep psychology, I hope to have brought the scope of this method and presented how it can expand in itself. Let's turn this over: what is social research without concern for distance? What does it mean to do a life history without being aware of selective listening? If we do not see the other, the world, as different from us, do we run the risk of projecting our contents and fantasies? We listen to what we can, what is allowed by our perspective, dislodging the universal.

Finally we arrive at the third interface between the life history technique and the deep psychologies: the experience of intersubjectivity. In the relationship between the narrator and the listener of a life story, an **interactive field** is formed which can include the constitution of a third element, product of the relationship of the two present subjectivities, the **third analytic**, as it is called by psychoanalysis, or the **subtle body**, as it is called by analytical psychology. It is created by the meeting of the two individuals in a context of clinical listening, which takes place at the vertex of the past and the present and allows the re-creation of the past or the creation of new possibilities, a prospective meaning. When we attune the tuning of the **subtle body** we speak what we never think, according to this field of sensibility constituted. The clinic is broad. When studying with a group of students, this is considered the clinic, as paths come up. The same is true for research in psychology, social sciences, pedagogy, anthropology, architecture, in the area of human sciences in general, based on narratives.

The clinic has a function in the world, it can produce a refined methodology. It is a clinic in the broadest sense as the analyst, and the one who is analyzed, will maintain a double perspective, a double listening, in all circumstances. Whenever working toward the understanding of the other, a deeper meaning of the clinic is created, which is to lean in, to care. If I do a sociological interview, I need to know that my interviewee's speech is not casual. It configures the intermediate domain, the domain of the "between" or "third included". According to Rezende and Gerber (2001), the first context of intersubjectivity is the inclusion of projections, or projective identification. It is the emergence of a first **we**, mixed, confused. The second context is the elaboration and transformation of what has been designed, which restores one's identity and institutes truth as a shared emotional experience. The truth in the relationship is ethics, as a truth of coexistence, where the presence of the other helps each one to be himself, for it creates opportunities to be given constituent responses of his or her personalities. It is also possible to recognize a third context, the presence of transcendent **we** in both, in such a way that both are in fact placed under the vertex of "we", or the synthesis of "I" and "you". At the vertex of the included third, the opposites join together without annulling the other. In this third "we", transsubjective, communicative expansion is instituted. It is herein that the analytical experience of intersubjectivity finds great challenge.

This **symbolic copulation** was best explained by Jung (1999) in "The Psychology of Transfer". In the Jungian approach the three "we" also appear: first with Mercury - the dark, living mass, fruit of the analytical encounter; then with the images of sexual intercourse of the alchemical brothers; and in the third moment, with the child as the fruit of the copulation, which, in this case, is the discourse itself. Jung chose Mercury, a messenger between different universes, the one who through his paradoxical or duplex nature is able to reveal, translate and link, to refer to the miracle of analytic experience, in which both gods and men coexist and converge, feminine and masculine, consciousness and unconsciousness, psyche and matter. In "The Psychology of Transference" (Jung, 1999) we read the deep dive present in the third element created from the field constituted in the analytic encounter, where for both the patient and the analyst the path and the point of arrival are unknown - and only revealed by the suggestive alchemical images, all under the aegis of Mercury. The third partner is the dimension of the unknown or, according to Jung, of the objective psyche.

The subtle body that, in the words of Jungian analyst Nathan Schwartz-Salant (1997), is the product of the interactive field, can be experienced in the imaginal scope as a kind of energetic field that expands from our physical being. Schwartz-Salant (1997) identifies three states of interaction of the subtle bodies in the context of two people in therapy: they may manifest in a state of fusion, separation or both can act on each other in the **coniunctio**. For this analyst and author, to discover and relate imaginably to an

unconscious and autonomous process that captivates the therapist and the patient is a means for the therapist to help the patient to experience the **numinous**.

The question is not whether the subtle body exists or not, but whether its existence can be perceived or not, for when we deal with the subtle body we are not interested in ordinary perceptions, but in imaginal perceptions. Those who can see summer; cannot remain skeptical. (p. 163)

The subtle body may also be present in a research interview and the deep psychologies offer the required care to warn of the dangers of projection, fusion, and projective identification. The subtle or third analytic body is a relatively new place of knowledge production, which is undergoing efforts so it may have its own status.

In “*O milagre da conversa*” (“The Miracle of Conversation”) a prologue the ends the book on the Brazilian soul, produced from a narrative in which he is the narrator, Dias and Gambini (1999) attest to the presence of the included third, the experience possible from a intersubjective interaction, or symbolic relation itself.

But these were not simply conversations one might find in a bar room, because my experience during those meetings was to realize that a conversation can be a miracle, and specifically: when Eros rules an interaction, there is a moment when such a range of attunement and sensitivity is create that the questions that Lucy asked me had the effect of making me say things that I had never said or explicitly formulated. I felt myself discovering as I reflected, ideas burst forth like water and flowed without interruption, stimulated by her interventions and by an internal ordering that I did not suppose to be so imperiously present. Not once did we feel lost, or have nothing to say, or needing to consult texts or notes. A focused conversation, directed at a meaningful quest, has this wonderful power to abstract time, distractions, second thoughts, and bring forth exactly what seems to have a desire to turn into a word. Even though I was tired after an intense week of office work, all we had to do was start our conversations so that I would suddenly feel full of energy, enthusiasm, and eloquence. (pp. 222-223)

The means of arriving somewhere is the method (*ódos*), **how** work is done, the selection of certain means, from a certain perspective, as refers to the researcher's position before the narrator or the analyst facing his patient in the office. In order to revive the soul of the world, as well as to develop critical reflection, it is important to have a method, to listen and to perceive the world in the way the analyst listens to and perceives his or her patient.

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