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From feeling to naming:
A sensitive approach to managerial newspeak through bullying at work*

Abstract: By accessing language, an individual is granted the means to represent experiences and to share meaning. However, ill-being resulting from workplace bullying makes it hard for the subject to put his/her experience into words. I explored this uneasiness through qualitative research conducted through an interdisciplinary approach. My fieldwork led me to raise questions about the influence of modern managerial discourse on the individual and his/her relation to language. After conducting in-depth interviews with individuals confronted with bullying at work and crossing their narratives with information from organisational websites, I suggest that modern managerial discourse hinders the expression of emotions and thereby the understanding of subjective experiences (both the informants' understanding of their own subjective experience and the understanding of their experiences by others). I argue that this process is rooted in an internalization of managerial discourse, which weakens the subject as it diminishes his/her enunciative autonomy and limits his/her ability to make sense of his/her emotional experiences. This article considers these findings. Through excerpts from organisational communications, the first part calls on the heuristic dimension of knowing via the senses to question the subjective influence of managerial discourse. The narrative of an experience of workplace bullying then allows for display of the ambivalence of managerial discourse. It appears to be a tool both enabling and hindering subjective expression, as it allows sharing of facts at the expense of sharing emotions. Considering my argument that the internalization of managerial discourse by the subject turns this discourse into "managerial newspeak", the third and concluding part of the article addresses the issue of sharing understanding of psychosocial processes in scientific work.

Keywords: clinical sociology, emotion, language, management discourse, managerial discourse, newspeak, workplace bullying

Introduction

By accessing language, the individual is granted the means to represent experiences and to share meaning (Aulagnier 1975). But ill-being (such as stress, fear, depression, illness...) related to workplace bullying (such as violent or undermining demeanours from one or more colleagues) seems to make it hard for an individual to put his/her experience into words. Following the "linguistic relativity" (or Sapir-Whorf) hypothesis, i.e. "the claim that culture, through language, affects the way in which we think, and especially our classification of the experienced world" (Gumperz & Levinson 1996), I first wondered if the language we speak could have an influence on the way we experience violence and ill-being at work. Addressing this question requires a pluralist perspective, both socio-anthropological and linguistic.

After starting qualitative research in France in 2009, I moved to Ireland, thus gaining access to a new linguistic field (2010–2014) and introducing a distance, which facilitates keeping a critical perspective in anthropological study of emotions and language (Crapanzano 1994). The people I interviewed in Ireland described various misbehaviours that they had been confronted with, as well as emotions such as fear, shame, disgust or anger, and some underlined the difficulty of finding a word to label what had been happening to them, whereas I had thought that the word "bullying" would be at hand since it was in the public arena. Their narratives, what they showed and described in English as regards their emotions and doubts seemed to me to be very similar to what I had heard in French. This led me to adjust my research and to focus on questioning the relationship of the individual to management or managerial discourse, understood as the use of language that has expanded since the 1970s to serve managing human resources in economic organisations and legitimizing power relations, and now crosses linguistic and organisational boundaries[1].

In order to do so, I adopted a clinical approach, which is both comprehensive and interdisciplinary and whereby it is assumed that processes can be studied through singularities based on specific cases. Clinical sociology has developed as a scientific discipline in the past several decades, being institutionally recognised in 1992 through the creation of research committees on Clinical soci-

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[1] On the definition of managerial (or management) discourse and its relation with neoliberal capitalism, see inter alia (Boltanski & Chiapello 1999), (Both 2007), (Boussard 2008), (Vandevelde-Rougale & Fugier 2014). In particular, drawing on the analysis of management texts, the sociologists Eve Chiapello and Luc Boltanski suggest that "from the middle of the 1970s onwards, capitalism abandoned the hierarchical Fordist work structure and developed a new network-based form of organization which was founded on employee initiative and relative work autonomy, but at the cost of material and psychological security" (Boltanski, Chiapello 2007).

ology at *the AISLF (International association of French-speaking sociologists – CR19)* and the *IAS (International Sociological Association – RC46)*. Its theoretical framework is rooted in the complementarities between psychoanalysis and sociology, taking into account three aspects and their articulation: "the unconscious; the relative weight of social and psychic determinations; the work that can be done by somebody on his/her own history in order to modify its course" (Gaulejac 2008). The subject is considered in the plurality of his/her dimensions (embodied, moved by unconscious drives, determined by personal and collective history, but also actor, contributing to producing society, capable of reflexivity and resistance) and is seen as a locus for understanding social life. By focusing on change practices in organisations, clinical sociology meets psycho-sociology, while by looking at existential questions in contemporary societies, it shares anthropology's objective to seek a critical understanding of human beings in the world.

The pervasiveness of managerial discourse[2] makes it increasingly difficult to question. However, emotions can be a key to unlock thinking, if a suitable framework enables to express them and to reflect on them. I used two main research methods on my fieldwork, both fostering narrativity: in-depth research interviews conducted in English in Ireland with individuals confronted with bullying at work; and "organidrame" (research workshop centred on a role play within a group)[3] conducted in French in France. My approach to understanding social and psychosocial facts is one based on co-constructing understanding with the people taking part in my research, both by taking into account what they say or show, and also what I feel or think when interacting with them. My countertransference[4] was thus also part of the data that I took into account to interpret individual and managerial discourses and the influence of the latter on the subject in society. Anthropologist Howard F. Stein pointed out, by drawing on the

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[2] In this regard, an interesting account on the spread of managerial discourse in Eastern Europe since the 1990s is given in (Kuzmanic *et al.* 2005): the authors stress that "everybody is getting used to look on organizational issues from the exclusive point of view of managers, without any consciousness of that exclusivity". Through examples drawn from Slovene publications, they show the diffusion of managerial discourse to other spheres of social life, where, they say, "we are advised to run our own life as if it were a business".

[3] For a presentation of this research method designed by Vincent de Gaulejac and inspired by Moreno's psychodrama and Boal's forum theatre, see (Vandevelde-Rougale 2012).

[4] The countertransference is a psychoanalytical concept coined to designate the uncouscious reactions from the analyst towards the analysed person, especially in reaction to his/her own transfer of feelings from important persons in his/her life to the psychoanalysit (so called transference). The researcher countertransference encompasses both the observer's emotional response to fieldwork and thinking about how we think (Stein 2000).

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works of psychoanalysts, historians and anthropologists, that "embodied feeling informs the researcher about deep, elusive social realities" (Stein 2000), both by distorting and heightening understanding. The importance given to emotions in my research, be it the emotions of the people I interviewed or my own feelings in relation to my fieldwork, participate in advocating for this heuristic dimension of knowing via the senses – i.e. taking into account the emotional response to the field, both through embodied feelings and images coming to the mind – provided that importance is also given to reflexivity – thinking on how we think, as underlined by ethno-psychoanalyst Georges Devereux (Devereux 1980).

Analysing my fieldwork, by, *inter alia,* crossing the individual narratives with information from organisational websites, has led me to suggest that modern managerial discourse hinders the expression of emotions and thereby the understanding of subjective experiences. I argue that this process is based on internalization of managerial discourse, turning it into "managerial newspeak", which weakens the subject as it diminishes his/her enunciative autonomy and limits his/her ability to make sense of his/her emotional experiences (Vandevelde-Rougale 2014). Since a virus uses the structure of the infected cell to replicate and thus spread, while weakening the infected body, I proposed viral infection as a metaphor in order to characterize the internalization process of managerial discourse by the subject and its effects. In this paper, I consider these arguments by first introducing managerial discourse and by sharing the story of a woman, Eryn, confronted with bullying at work in Ireland. I then consider the issue of labelling an experienced or observed phenomenon through showing how Eryn's narrative, which resonated with other narratives heard on my field, led me to use the term "managerial newspeak", opening ground for future work.

Feeling managerial discourse

Managerial discourse (or management discourse) encompasses discursive practices that convey a utilitarian view of the subject and human relations: its serves as a tool to manage human beings as resources that are used to maximize profit or limit expenses within organisations, not only private or public companies, but also NGOs, administrations, and universities, among others. Based on work from consultants and diffused through management literature as well as practices, managerial discourse expands with the globalization process. It does not stick to the boundaries of private companies nor to national boundaries, but spreads to various countries (be it through the translation of management literature, management practices in multinational companies or the work of multinational consulting companies) and various social spheres, even school where children are progressively taught to view themselves not only through

knowledge – what they know or not – but through competencies: what they are able to do or not, which prepares them to have what is deemed as "the right attitude" to look for a job.

Managerial discourse can be apprehended through managers' or employees' talk as well as through documents issued by organisations. It uses various rhetorical formulas and is changing over time. It can be viewed as a specific jargon contributing to hiding power relationships[5]. What interests me in particular is the effect it may have on an individual. To grasp it, I resorted to tools used by managers to sustain a critical approach to managerial discourse: as images used in persuasive communication (such as advertising) emphasize specific elements and are meant to allow for a kind of "immediate understanding" through feelings (Joffe 2007), I chose several visual examples[6] associating images and text in order to provide ground for apprehending managerial discourse not only through a cognitive approach but also through an emotional approach. The few excerpts from the public communication of multinational companies presented below help highlight some specificities of managerial discourse, namely its dominance in the discursive landscape, its influence on confusing and formatting thoughts inter alia through calling on the individual's need to belong and through limiting meaning.

Formatting and confusing thoughts

A brand marketing campaign conducted in 2010 and 2011 in international airports by a multinational company specialized in management consulting, technology services and outsourcing, used animal metaphors. One billboard displayed a very fuzzy sheep with thin legs in a green and blue cliff panorama. The central text in bold characters read as follows: "how do you get more out of the same resources"; on the bottom left corner, in smaller print, it said: "Grow your productivity without growing costs. Talk to us and find out how our capabilities can help you make the most of yours"[7]. I discovered this billboard when I took a trip to London in February 2011. It was displayed in one of the corridors at

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[5] Satirical examples of this jargon can be found on the Internet, with online dictionaries and automatic generators of "corporate gibberish", such as: Davidson Andrew, *Corporate Gibberish Generator™* (http://www.andrewdavidson.com/gibberish/); *Dictionary of management jargon* (http://dictionaryofmanagementjargon.yolasite.com/), which I consulted on 8th April 2015.

[6] In order not to contravene copyrights, I did not reproduce those visual examples in this article but I provide a short description for each of them as well as links to websites where they could be viewed in April 2015.

[7] The billboard can still be seen online: http://www.accenture-blogpodium.nl/latest-post/airport-advertising-refresh-schiphol/ (consulted on 15/04/2015).

the airport. When spotting it, I felt a mixture of emotions: from pity for the poor sheep that I saw as a metaphor for human resources, to bewilderment at the quantity of wool it had on itself, through wonder and even indignation at the fact that I seemed to be the only one taking notice of the billboard. I was stricken by what I felt as utmost cynicism and also indifference to it. This billboard and its reception suggested that managerial discourse's message on the necessity to enhance productivity past normal limits was now part of everyday life and, as such, had become unquestioned. Is it also on the verge of becoming unquestionable?

Accenture's sheep, and the lack of reaction of by-passers to it, hinted to the possibility that managerial discourse may format thought. Another instance of the same brand marketing campaign shows that it can also contribute to confusing thought. A billboard which could be seen in airports worldwide in June 2011 depicted seven giraffes in a green savannah panorama[8]. At the forefront stood four giraffes, three bowing their heads, apparently to eat from the grass on the ground, while the fourth one stood on the backs of other giraffes with its neck raised, so that it could eat leaves from a tree. Three other giraffes were in the background, one of them seemingly moving to the right and the two others standing. The image at the front, when associated with the central message on the billboard ("Do what you do best. Better"), is puzzling: does it encourage climbing on others to reach the top? The message in smaller characters on the left renders the billboard even more puzzling: "Is your team working together? Talk to us to see how we can help". Indeed, the giraffes up front offered quite a surprising view of team work, where only one of them seemed to reach an objective (leaves from the tree) and it is doubtful that it was shared by the others, be it the giraffes bowing or the ones in the background... So, looking at this billboard, what does "working together" exactly mean? On the contrary, the injunction to excellence –"Do what you do best. Better"– seems not to raise any question[9], which can be interpreted as a sign of its previous subjective internalization. Prolonged exposition to the billboard, by trying to make sense out of its picture without questioning its wording, could also contribute to reinforce this internalization.

Accenture's advertising campaign was targeting companies, but could be seen by any individual, especially those wandering airports. And if the pronoun "you" written on the billboards most likely designated the company, it also called on the person seeing the campaign (as the company itself, obviously, has no eyes). Furthermore, the promoters of the campaign underlined that it would be "balanced" between "wit" and "insight" [10]. Such an appraisal can make it difficult for an in-

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[8] The billboard can still be seen online: http://www.accenture.com/sitecollectiondocuments/pdf/giraffe_do_what_you_do_best_better.pdf (consulted on 15/04/2015).

[9] I tried it first on friends, then on the Agora audience on 16th April, with similar results.

[10] A paragraph on Accenture's webpage read as follows: "Accenture's advertising continues to explore topical high performance themes: optimizing productivity, cap-

dividual to question or criticize the campaign, as this could be seen as revealing a lack of intelligence; it can also encourage a person willing to be viewed as clever to use its message. Thus, these examples show that managerial discourse can lead both to weakening the subject, by casting doubts on the meaning of words (such as "team work" in the giraffes' billboard) or to his/her intelligence (if s/he doesn't comply with the view that the billboards are balanced between "wit" and "insight"), while granting him/her means to represent him/herself as "clever" for instance, or as member of the organisational "tribe"[11].

Limiting complex thinking

Managerial discourse can restrain complex thinking through limiting meaning. A graphic example of this process could be found on the website of a multi-national consulting company specialized in customer loyalty, which I consulted in 2010. The section "who we are" encompassed a frame entitled "our vision and values" illustrated by a circular diagram. Its outer circle listed four values: "curiosity, passion, courage, collaboration" while the inner circle depicted four items: "start with data" facing "genius of simplicity" and "our great people" facing "customer first"[12].

Drawing on Levi-Strauss' structuralist theory of mythology (Levi-Strauss 1955), the inner circle of the diagram may be viewed as an artifice to create the illusion that irreconcilable binary oppositions (data vs. simplicity; customer vs. employees) have been resolved by appearing as if they were reconcilable binary

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turing unconventional opportunities and enhancing core competence. Appearing across 31 countries—in print, television, online and airport media—the advertising retains its signature balance of wit and insight, as well as its now-familiar use of animal metaphors." – URL: http://www.accenture.com/us-en/company/overview/advertising/Pages/index.aspx (consulted on 18/04/2011), also published on a blog article posted on 5th January 2011 where the words "Accenture's advertising" are replaced by the words "the new creatives" – URL: http://www.accenture-blogpodium.nl/tag/airport/ (consulted on 08/04/2015).

[11] See for instance, Birgitte Norlyk's article article on the evolution of the representation of organisations where she underlines that "The 1990s saw the introduction of the culture metaphor as a new way to understand and manage organisations. Borrowing its methods and models from the field of anthropology, the cultural approach to organisational theory interprets the organisation in a tribal framework." (Norlyk 2009).

[12] This diagram can still be seen on page 6 of the company's recruitement brochure "There is something inside" posted on 07th Septembre 2012 on the website of a North-American university. URL: https://iubeconundergrad.wordpress.com/2012/09/07/dunnhumbyusa-application-window-now-open/dunnhumby_recruitment_brochure-3/ (consulted on 20th May 2015).

oppositions[13], and thus that the company offers meaning (the so-called "vision") through its modus operandi (starting with client's data to customer satisfaction through the work of the employees) and its association with personal qualities termed as "values". In fact, grouping heterogeneous elements on the same diagram creates a direct relationship between them, and the circularity gives the illusion that those elements represent a kind of wholeness, as if curiosity, passion, courage and team work from the employees, all personal qualities, would directly lead to customer satisfaction.

Thus, this diagram emphasizes the responsibility of the individual subject in the implementation of this allegedly virtuous circle. This could in a way be seen as rewarding for the employees, stressing on their importance. But the environment of the company, its competitors, the complexity and versatility of customers... are all kept out of the picture. In other words, this diagram suggests a vision where the individual and his/her colleagues (the so-called "great people") are sole responsible for the success of the activity, which may imply that employees are also sole responsible for its failure.

Ambivalence: between discourse and reality

In a context where individuals are more and more reluctant to submitting to sheer force or order from the hierarchy but are looking for meaning, organisations tend to have an official discourse advocating for a joint ideal, for instance on their "career" webpages, where the employee is said to be granted the opportunity to develop both professionally and personally upon joining the company. The following is an excerpt from the on-line "career" page of an international provider of financial services:

> "As a highly client-centric organisation, we know that our success begins with yours. [...] You can grow through new roles or learning opportunities, [...]. Performance management, coaching and mentoring relationships and special assignments all contribute to your development. Our programs give you a path to opportunities for professional and personal growth that can match your aspirations and contribute to a varied and enriching career."[14]

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[13] I thank Robert M. Hayden for drawing my attention on this association with Levi-Strauss' work on mythology and for sharing it with the audience at the Agora session on April 16th 2015. He referred to Levi-Straussian analysis of myth, which functions to seem to resolve contradictions that cannot, in fact, be resolved, and underlinded that the advertisement functions as a Levi-Straussian myth, seeming to overcome the binary oppositions – but they cannot, in fact, be overcome.

[14] URL: https://www.rbcits.com/AboutUs/Careers/p_Career.aspx (consulted on 08/04/2015).

In this example, the success of the organisation is linked to the success of the individual, encouraging him/her to work for the company in order to work for him/herself. If this view is shared by the employee, it won't be necessary for the company to use coercive power to get the individual to work; power on the individual becomes internalized by the individual.

The flaw in this ideal view stems from reality, as it can be far from what's advertised. The individual's and the company's successes do not necessarily converge: the objective of the organisation is profit rather than employee well-being, and individual career and professional development are tools towards this goal (through their influence on employee's engagement in the organisation's activities) rather than the goal itself. However, the trust of the individual in the promise made through the company's discourse can make it especially hard for him to understand the gap that can arise between what's advertised and the reality of management practices, as I observed in my fieldwork on bullying at work. I proposed that this difficulty is based, among other things, on a belief that the meaning of a word or expression lies in what it points out in the world (so-called referentialism), belief that reinforces the power of the dominant discourse, namely managerial discourse within organisations (Vandevelde-Rougale 2014).

Experiencing bullying at work and translating the experience to get rid of the feelings?

In a context of fierce competition between all kinds of organisations on their various markets, including a competition to recruit the individuals that they view as "high-value human resources", considering bullying at work is like looking behind the curtain of managerial discourse. My fieldwork in Ireland, where organisations have adopted anti-bullying policies for several years, shows that reality can be far from the image given by those policies. This is not meant to say that anti-bullying policies would be useless; those policies contribute to raising awareness of violence at the workplace and in relation to work, as well as providing some means of action to individuals. But anti-bullying policies do not erase bullying and they can have detrimental side effects if they lead to individualizing and psychologizing organisational issues. As far as my research is concerned, the fact that workplace bullying happened in organisations where anti-bullying policies were in force enabled me to look at two different discourses on the same phenomenon: the discourse of the individual regarding his/her experience of bullying, the formal discourse of the organisation on bullying.

Bullying at work has been defined by the Irish Health and Safety Authority as:

> "Repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work."[15]

It can have effects both on the individual, from loss of self-esteem to anxiety, panic attacks and even thoughts of suicide; and on the workplace and the organisation, such as reducing performance and productivity, negatively impacting profit. According to studies conducted by the Anti-Bullying Resource Centre in Ireland, one out of twelve people in Irish workplaces is bullied[16]. Eryn was one of them.

Eryn's narrative

Eryn is an Irish woman, about 35 years old, whom I met through one of my acquaintances. At the time of our meeting, Eryn was married, with no children, and a member of the teaching staff of a medical training centre that enforced a "Dignity and respect in the workplace policy". This policy stated inter alia that the organisation "strives to provide a work environment that is free from bullying or harassment", that "where matters arise, there is an expectation that all parties will work toward a resolution that will enable to maintain a professional work environment", and that "complaints will be addressed speedily and treated with fairness and sensitivity"[17]. I met Eryn in her office, an individual cubicle with a glass door to the corridor, on a day when, as she told me, her boss and one of her colleagues were not in the office. She sat behind her desk, facing the door, and lowered her voice as soon as she heard noise in the adjacent rooms or in the corridor. She told me of her bullying experience in a nearly two hours of biographically oriented research interview, which I recorded, with her prior consent, and then transcribed as part of the analysis process. I must stress that the protagonists of her narrative would have been likely to have diverging views on the events she recalled, which could be complimentary or even contradictory to the story told by Eryn. But my interest was not focused on assessing facts but on researching the relation of the individual to managerial discourse. So I focused on Eryn's subjective experience and the way she put it into words.

Willing to improve medical practice in her area of expertise, Eryn managed to get a scholarship to conduct PhD research. She became the first, and was still

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[15] http://hsa.ie/eng/Topics/Bullying_at_Work/#WhatisBullying (consulted on 08/04/2015).

[16] http://www.dcu.ie/news/2015/apr/s0415h.shtml (consulted on 08/04/2015).

[17] Eryn's narrative as well as the communication material of the organisation have been anonymised. In order to maintain this anonymity, I will not disclose the reference of the citations of the organisation's policy on bullying.

the only one, in her working unit to have a PhD degree. Getting back to work in this unit after completing her PhD and post-doctoral research, she was confronted with the animosity of one of her colleagues as well as of her line manager. Below are some excerpts of her narrative on her experience of bullying at work (my emphasis on some of her words):

Eryn:
"Last summer, I had a miscarriage. I was 12 weeks pregnant and I lost the baby. [...]. That affected me badly of course. When I came back in here, I had my manager saying things like 'oh, I feel a bit unwell today, maybe that's morning sickness' and [...] she swapped all the teaching around to set me with a woman that was expecting twins. And I might as well add, would be having her twins the time my baby was due. Now I can talk about it now because I took two and a half month sick. [...] Yesterday I got an email with 15 funny faces of babies, from her [my manager]. The difference now is I took two months out. I got to a point where I dealt with that issue, got help with that issue [the miscarriage] [...]. But *what they did is torture me*. So I took two months sick. Because I knew that the bullying would start all over again and I had to get back my strengths, get over the trauma I had suffered then come back, and see how it goes.
I was back one week when [my] colleague had a huge outburst. [...] Where she was insulting me about my qualifications, that she would not allow me to do anything to go further, she would do anything to prevent that. She was so out of control; I kept trying to calm her down. [...] *I was utterly, utterly frightened*.
So I contacted the manager here, rang her the following day. Well the following day this colleague arrived with no apology, nothing. No acknowledgement that this behaviour was inappropriate, all this insulting, roaring. Just out of her mind, really. And basically, *I felt that the management was going to do something, but nothing was done*.
And my colleague started to have meetings with the manager. So I emailed the manager asking for a meeting with me, so that she would hear both sides, but she wouldn't engage in a meeting with me. *So this has gone more and more frightening as it has been going on*. Because I started to feel really uncomfortable then, very stressed out. Because I started to think if the manager is taking her side of the story and is not even listening to me, I'm in deep trouble here. [...]"

Then, a meeting was scheduled between Eryn, her colleague and their manager. Fearing to confront her colleague and her manager in the meeting, Eryn reached out to the support offered in the organisation: she got in touch with the "Equality Officer", an employee from the human resources department whose role is to promote respect and dignity at the workplace. He gave her some advice regarding the way to express herself in the meeting aiming at "re-establishing a good working environment", according to the wording of the organization's policy on bullying. Below is what she said during the research interview on what happened after the meeting:

Eryn:

"Since that meeting, my colleague did not speak to me. But we are working together on a day-to-day basis. [...] So I am leaving, when I get off in the morning, I was sick in the morning thinking of work. I am trying to get a job out of here. I'm crying all the time. ... It's horrendous. It's horrendous. And I am afraid of my life because she started out sending emails on the quality of my work, not being supportive as a colleague... [...] *It has escalated to where it is impossible to work with her.* [...] It has become worse, to the point where she does not even look at me, ignores me. But this was not dealt with. I was told that we would have to come to another meeting. *I feel that the system doesn't support me.* [...] I have been advised by the member of HR [Human resources department] that I have to wait, I have to see whether or not she now choses to behave. [...] I feel they are viewing the process as something that has begun last week. I am saying I have a litany of emails to management to tackle this informally since [2 months]. So *for me it is a hugely drawn out process where my feelings and the way I felt about how I have been treated are being largely ignored.* Now I am being asked to look at it the way they are. However, I'm exhausted. I'm worn out."

Eryn's narrative reveals an intricacy of different types of violence, which fuel one another: she experienced interpersonal violence at the workplace, but also organisational violence (both the fact that the organisational discourse, promising an environment free from bullying, is contradicted by the reality of practices, as well as the fact that there is a lengthy procedure), in a context of social violence, where people are competitors in the quest for jobs (Eryn underlines during the interview that "with the financial constraints, there are rumours that only PhD employees will be kept. This is rumour. But you can see how this can fuel a colleague who doesn't have a PhD").

Even if Eryn feels a lack of support from the system, she engages in the procedure defined by the organisation's anti-bullying policy, starting with a so-called "informal procedure" whose objective is to try to "re-establish a good working environment following an experience of bullying for any member of the organisation" through three main steps, namely: "Assess whether harassment or bullying has happened" through using a "self audit checklist" provided by the organisation; "Approach the individual directly and request them to stop the offending behaviour" or "bring the matter to the attention of the individuals' line manager and request an informal resolution"; "Attempt a locally facilitated solution". The organisation recommends that individuals first enter a formal resolution process if the informal resolution process failed. This "formal process" starts with a formal investigation of a complaint within the organisation and can end in disciplinary measures[18].

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[18] The Irish law also provides for legal steps, but individuals are encouraged by organisations to deal with the issues within the organisation itself and individuals tend to do so and to turn to the judiciary only as a last resort.

Eryn and managerial discourse:
translating the narrative to be heard

Eryn's narrative enables to compare two ways of putting her experience into words: she feels that one is closer to her subjective reality, but she uses the other as a tool to be heard within the organisation and advance on the so-called "resolution process of incidents of bullying". Through quoting Eryn's words, the following correspondence table between two wording systems can be drawn, one column showing how she would say things in "her language" and the other one showing how she felt compelled to translate them in a descriptive kind of language (consistent with the recommendations of the Equality officer that she consulted in the Human resources department) that she terms "HR speech", where words do not convey emotions but facts that imply consequences (e.g. from the second column: the words "harassed", "bullied", "day-to-day basis", "vulnerable" are all words written in the anti-bullying policy of the organisation and are linked to steps of the organisational process designed to deal with incidents of bullying).

Table 1: Two "languages" (quoting Eryn; my emphasis)

Eryn: "my language"	Eryn: "their language", "a new language", "HR speech"
"My approach would be 'I'm really *tortured* here'"	When HR would be short, snappy: they stick to *facts not emotions*."
"I'd personally rather use the language "well, *I'm dying here guys, I'm slowly withering away dying down here* and you're all turning your back and saying: 'let's ignore what's going on'.""	"I said: '*I am feeling harassed on a day to day basis*'. '*I am being bullied on a day-to-day basis*. I can't stay in this meeting because I am *too vulnerable* to listen to this kind of a ton. Because I get nothing apart from slamming doors and *abuse all day'*.""
"I would love to say [...]: ° 'can we stop on this b.s.h.i.t and get to the core of this? which is, the *lunatic*. [...]' ° 'get this done. *Why are you letting it get this far*?'"	But I have to *take back that kind of impulsive nature* that I have and alter it, *speak in their language*, that fits in the informal/formal process *which means half of my feelings don't get heard*."

Eryn emphasizes that this discursive approach is part of a survival strategy rooting on restraining the expression of her emotions at the workplace:

> Eryn: "that's how I've been trying to survive. Come in, because I like keeping a professional stance, blocking all in, get it through my day professionally. Go home, crash out, bowing, upset, dying".

Work by Arlie R. Hochschild on emotion management since the 1970s (Hochschild 1979; 1983) have shown that emotions can be and often are subject

to acts of management, thereby leading the individual to work on inducing or inhibiting feelings as deemed "appropriate" to the situation. Eryn's example clearly highlights that managerial discourse, both from the anti-bullying policy and from the Equity officer, leads her to refrain from expressing her emotions in the workplace. This process is encouraged by the learning and the internalisation of managerial discourse: Eryn learns a new way of speaking, whose forms derive from managerial discourse, which enables her to position herself as a "professional" by erasing the expression of her emotions at the workplace. This allows for a procedure to start as regards managing the "incidents of bullying". But the use of forms derived from managerial discourse comes with a high price. On the first hand, it hides the intensity of the suffering and the complexity of its causes by focusing on the relationship between individuals. Indeed, entering the procedure designed by the organisation to tackle incidents of bullying means focusing on relationships between individuals, and not dealing with the violence exerted by the organisational system (e.g. the slow process to deal with incidents of bullying) or society (e.g. lack of employment leading to competition between individuals). On the other hand, using managerial discourse to get rid of the emotions threatens the individual's identity as an autonomous subject, as shown by Eryn's difficulty to use the personal pronoun "I".

> Eryn stresses: "you work in a system that can destroy you. You, you, because I find it so hard to say 'me' and I feel like I'll start crying if I start saying like 'me'. [...] I don't want to be like that because I have to work, you see? [tears] I'm at it again. Oh God!"

Preventing the expression of emotions also hinders the possibility to get social support and to find meaning in emotional episodes. Victims of bullying are often confronted with a feeling of isolation and in a state of imaginary stunning, where they can neither think the present situation nor project into the future. On the contrary, in developing the theory on social sharing of emotion, the psychologist Bernard Rimé and his colleagues have underlined the reconstructive or transformative effects sharing feelings (and not only facts) related with emotional episodes may have on the self. Sharing feelings would elicit social support as well as contribute to the process of generating meaning (Rimé et al. 1998; Rimé 2009). The clinical research interview seemed to have offered Eryn a space where she could engage in social sharing of her emotions and reconnect with a capacity to make sense (feeling, meaning and direction) of her experience. She states that it enabled her to recover some agency, some power for autonomous action. At the end of the interview, when I asked her how she felt about our meeting, she said:

> "I think that I got a chance to say exactly what I feel and how I feel and how this has affected me without being in a straightjacket of formal language or being

hindered by the abuse again from my colleague, or the power language from the Head of school, or the arch-manipulation that comes from my line manager. I have just been able to talk as a human being about who I am, what I am like as a person, how this has affected me and the fact that, you know, it's gone to the point where it's... leave or something gets resolved."

A few months later, Eryn left the organisation for a new job. Her narrative and its resonance with others heard on my field left me with the question on how to share understanding on what I had grasped regarding the relation between managerial discourse and the individual.

From findings in the field to sharing understanding

During the research interview, Eryn pointed out an evolution of "her" language:

"My language [...] has been altered by the help of the equality officer at HR. There is a language that is used in HR speech, which I would never use or never think of using. And I've learnt a new language. A new way of speaking and writing through HR speech that I never knew before."

She emphasized its role in complying with the organisational procedure at the cost of giving up the hope to make her feelings heard: "I have to [...] speak in their language that fits in the informal/formal process which means half of my feelings don't get heard". When writing my PhD dissertation, I wondered what term I could use to convey this idea of "an alteration of the language", which Eryn wasn't the only one to express, and more precisely the idea that managerial discourse was internalised by the subject and turned into a linguistic tool to express oneself.

The issue of naming

Naming or labelling an observed phenomenon is not only a descriptive action; it also gives it a specific colour, it offers a prism through which the phenomenon is likely to be considered. Scientific works related to language in organisations mostly refer to "managerial discourse" or "management discourse", expressions that can be related to linguistic work on institutional discourse, pointing to its main sources (the organisation through its managers and its communication as well as consulting companies) and objective (managing people). Since I wanted to underline the influence of this institutional discourse on the subject and his/her relation to language, the expression "managerial discourse" didn't seem to me to be fully adequate.

Various expressions are being used in critical works on management and neoliberalism in relation to management/managerial discourse:

"management-speak", "management or corporate jargon", "managerial new-speak"... I opted for the latest. This choice resulted from a co-construction of meaning between me, as interviewer, my interviewees (including Eryn), and the literature I had access to. In other words, my lexical choice took place in a polyphonic space, where discourses are intertwined with previous discourses (a dynamic that has been conceptualised as dialogism by Mikhail Bakhtin). Indeed, when asked about their relationship to language, the people I interviewed identified a specific kind of language used in the organisation. Eryn even gave it a name, "HR speech", which proved useful as an analytical category: during the research interview she was able to identify various ways of expressing her experience and their subjective implications, differentiating between what would be "her" language and the "HR speech" (that she also puts at some distance with the expression "their language"). However, I did not settle for Eryn's expression, "HR speech", as managerial discourse is not limited to what is said by human resources departments.

"Newspeak" is a word coined by the English writer George Orwell in his novel *1984* to name the language created by a fictional totalitarian state (Oceania) as a tool to meet ideological needs of the regime through limiting freedom of thought of the citizens. This imaginary and dystopian language is based on the English language, with a drastic reduction of its vocabulary and a simplified grammar allowing for "interchangeability between different parts of speech"[19]. My fieldwork pointed out that expressing oneself with the words of managerial discourse had an influence on the understanding of one's experience (by oneself as well as by others) inter alia by limiting the expression of emotions through a limited vocabulary. It also showed that the subject retained the ability to express oneself via other means, such as metaphors, provided that the listening framework enabled him/her to reconnect with verbal symbolization of his/her experiences (Vandevelde-Rougale 2014). So it seemed to me that "newspeak", associated to the adjective "managerial" limiting its scope, would be a satisfactory notion to convey the idea of a discourse aiming at managing people, internalised by the subject and with detrimental effects on this subject, but not replacing all language, all ability to express oneself.

Furthermore, since I conducted my fieldwork in English but wrote my PhD dissertation in French, I was paying particular attention to the issue of sharing an idea expressed in a linguistic code through using another linguistic code. Thanks to its lexical form [adjective + (adjective + noun)], "managerial new-speak" seemed easy enough to translate into various languages, as has been "newspeak" in the translations of Orwell's novel ("novlangue" in French,

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[19] George Orwell described the principles of Newspeak in an appendix to the novel (Orwell 2008[1949], 312-326). See (Živković 2012) on the dystopian nature of Orwell's newspeak.

"novogovor" in Serbian for instance). So I retained the expression "managerial newspeak" in order to underline, with a global lexeme, the global aspect of this discursive form (not limited by organisational or linguistic boundaries), its relative novelty (as modern managerial discourse spreads since the 1970s through incorporating the individuals' thrive for personal development), and the fact that it limits what can be expressed and thus understood by the subject, especially by limiting the social sharing of emotions through its internalization.

In my PhD thesis, I proposed viral infection as a metaphor in order to characterize this internalization process. A virus is a pathogen agent that infects living bodies by replicating inside the cells of the organism (the host) through using their biological structure. A virus may be dormant for a long time and its action may be revealed by other pathogen agents. HIV for instance interferes increasingly (but without symptoms) with the immune system as the infection progress, thus making the person much more susceptible to common and opportunistic infections that do not usually affect people who have working immune systems. A virus may also be dormant for a long time and its action be prompted by other infections. Based on my fieldwork and theoretical inputs on the access of the subject to language (Aulagnier 1975) and on the social influence on sharing emotions (Haden *et al.* 1997; Rimé 2009), I argue that managerial newspeak spreads like a virus, by relying on the psychic and sociocultural structures constituting the "host-subject" as enunciatory agency. At the same time, by presenting itself as a means to support socialization, this newspeak weakens the subject as it diminishes its enunciative autonomy and limits its ability to make sense of his/her emotional experiences. Workplace bullying reinforces the weakening of the subject and thus, by increasing the subject's dependency on a spokesperson, bullying can contribute to the intensification of managerial newspeak's internalization (Vandevelde-Rougale 2014).

In place of a conclusion: perspectives for future work

My lexical choices in a scientific work can raise questions, be it questions stemming from using a biological figure (the virus) as a metaphor for a psychosocial process, or issues stirred up by the expression "managerial newspeak", such as the issue of defining and naming languages (Canut 2000), the prior uses made of the word "newspeak" (Krieg-Planque 2014), or the fact that the emphasis on the coercive role of managerial discourse contributes to hiding that "ordinary" language is also framed by power relationships (Bourdieu 2001).

I cannot dwell on them in the scope of this article, but I suggest that settling for the expression "managerial newspeak" is metaphorical rather than descriptive: "managerial newspeak" is not a "social fact" that would result from a deliberate

will to construct a specific linguistic system, but rather the co-construction of an analytical category. As such, this notion could participate in fostering critical thinking within organisations: speaking of "managerial newspeak" draws the attention to the performativity of managerial discourse, its influence on the subject, and, through conveying images from Orwell's dystopia, it may help to question the ambivalence of discursive practices promoted as "the best way". Seeing managerial discourse as a kind of foreign language that can be learnt can also contribute to giving some "agency" (Butler 1997), some power of action through the subversion of norms, to victims of bullying by granting them means to be heard within the organisation, so that their claim will be taken into account and some efforts made in improving working relationship and environment. As regards the metaphor of the "virus" to share understanding on a psychosocial process, namely the internalization process of managerial discourse, I believe that it contributes to mirror the fact that social issues such as bullying are often left to medical experts, who try to prevent individuals from remaining victims of bullying by medical means (such as sick leave). It would be interesting to question it further in light of other metaphors used to illustrate processes related to the internalization of dominant discourses.

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*Od osećanja do imenovanja:
osetljiv pristup menadžerskom novogovoru
o maltretiranju na radnom mestu*

Kroz jezik, pojedincu su data sredstva da izrazi iskustva i da im daje smisao. Međutim loša osećanja ili patnja povezana sa maltretiranjem na radnom mestu (kao nasilno ili podcenjivačko ponašanje od strane jednog ili više kolega) otežavaju subjektu da pretoči njegovo iskustvo u reči. Ova nelagodnost bila je predmet mog istraživanja. Terenski rad, koji sam započela u Francuskoj i nastavila u Irskoj (2010–2014), doveo je do pitanja uticaja modernog menadžerskog diskursa na pojedinca i njegovu povezanost sa jezikom. Sprovodeći intervjue s osobama suočenim sa maltretiranjim na poslu i poređenjem ovih priča s informacijama na sajtovima kompanija, pretpostavila sam da moderan rukovodeći diskurs (koji se proširio od 1970. kako bi upravljao ljudskim resursima u kompanijama) sprečava izražavanje emocija i stoga razumevanje subjektivnih iskustava. Tvrdim da je ovaj proces ukorenjen u internalizaciji menadžerskog diskursa, pri čemu on biva preinačen u „menadžerski novogovor“, koji slabi subjekta tako što smanjuje njegovu govornu autonomiju i ograničava njegovu sposobnost da daje smisao svojim emotivnim iskustvima. Ovaj članak je rasprava o menadžerskom diskursu, o terenskom radu u Irskoj, kao i o novogovoru i imenovanju iskustvenog ili posmatranog fenomena.

Ključne reči: osećanje, jezik, menadžerski diskurs, novogovor, maltretiranje na radnom mestu, klinička sociologija

Des émotions à la dénomination:
une approche sensible du discours managérial
par le harcèlement moral au travail

Avec l'apprentissage du langage, via une langue, le sujet accède au moyen de représenter son expérience et de partager du sens. Mais la souffrance au travail le confronte à la difficulté de mettre en mots son vécu, notamment émotionnel. J'ai exploré ce malaise dans ma recherche doctorale, à partir du questionnement de la symbolisation verbale des émotions liées à une expérience de « harcèlement moral ». Mon terrain m'a amenée à questionner l'influence du discours managérial sur le sujet et sa relation au langage. Le discours managérial moderne, développé depuis les années 1970 pour servir la gestion des ressources humaines au sein des organisations économiques, dépasse les frontières organisationnelles et linguistiques. Pour interroger son influence sur le sujet, j'ai adopté une démarche clinique, en appui sur un référentiel pluridisciplinaire en sciences humaines et sociales et dans une approche centrée sur l'étude de singularités à partir de cas concrets. J'ai avancé que le discours managérial contraint l'expression des émotions et empêche d'en faire sens, dans un processus qui repose sur et supporte l'intériorisation du discours managérial par le sujet et participe de sa fragilisation. Cet article revient sur cette recherche. À partir d'exemples tirés de la communication d'organisations, il présente certaines caractéristiques du discours managérial en s'appuyant sur une approche sensible du sens, puis il montre l'ambivalence du discours managérial à partir d'un récit d'expérience de harcèlement moral au travail. Enfin, il revient sur le processus d'internalisation du discours managérial et le choix du lexème « novlangue managériale » pour caractériser sa relation au sujet. Ce faisant, il éclaire le processus de co-construction du sens dans une recherche scientifique.

*Mots clés***:** sociologie clinique, discours managérial, émotions, novlangue, harcèlement moral, travail