

Language and disruption of the world: Ingmar Bergman's account

Ilya Onegin

HSE University, Moscow
ilya.onegin200@gmail.com

Daria Khokhlova

HSE University, Moscow
hohlovadaria380@gmail.com

Abstract The disruption of the lifeworld is one of the most prominent themes in Bergman's films. In this article, our research question is: *How is the relationship between the internal and the external constructed in Bergman's films?* We will consider how Bergman's account of language explicates the aforementioned fracture. We suppose a framework based on his "language theory" may reveal the structure of the seemingly irrational lifeworld of Bergman's characters. Attempting to reconstruct Bergman's "theory of language", we consider two psychological approaches to language: Jean Piaget's theory of "egocentric" and "socialized speech" and Lev Vygotsky's theory of "internal" and "external speech". We argue that several stages, or situations, may be found in how Bergman's characters perform various language modes of interaction. Thus, the lifeworld of children is similar to the playground in the unity of its ludic structure. Then, the distinction between the internal and the external appears in a speech in order to sustain one's egocentric unity restricting the usage of language (for instance, refusing to talk to particular people). Another situation depicted by Bergman is the alienation of language which proceeds from the inability to confront the pressure exerted by the external "aggressor" on the lifeworld of the subject. The desire to express oneself in the illusionary reunion of the lifeworld is depicted in scenes when a conversation with a silent stranger enables free use of speech. It is especially highlighted that this reconstruction is rather a scheme of the internal "phenomenology" of Bergman's films than a psychological account.

Keywords: Bergman, Piaget, Vygotsky, language, lifeworld

Received 07/01/2022; accepted 10/03/2022.

0. Introduction: Revealing the fracture between the internal and the external
Cinematic heritage of Ingmar Bergman is saturated with the different modes of a speech distortion. There can be found an egocentric speech, which completely ignores reactions of other people, a speech with (semi-)real creatures or even the vow of silence aiming to safeguard the subject's independence. These modes are constituted by what may be

called a «language disruption», which reveals itself in a kaleidoscope of perverted destructive relationships, merged with the absence of understanding and acceptance.

Some Bergman's characters are incapable of communicating by words as Helena with a language disorder in *The Autumn Sonata* (Bergman 1978), others voluntarily refuse to say any word as Elizabeth Vogler in *Persona* (Bergman 1966). When it is expected to say something, characters cannot fill the awkward silence, for instance, spending time together as Johan Borg and his wife Alma in *Hour of the Wolf* (Bergman 1968), or their confession abruptly breaks the enduring silence as in Maria's expression to her sister in *Cries and Whispers* (Bergman 1972). On the contrary, in semi-real or semi-fictitious circumstances characters regain the ability to speak as Agnes, who is given the opportunity of approaching her sisters only after the agonising death in *Cries and Whispers* (Bergman 1972), or Alexander, who has a conversation with a mysterious immortal vampire Ismael in *Fanny and Alexander* (Bergman 1982).

We subsumed all these topics of Bergman's narratives under a general question: What is the relationship between the internal and the external realm within a Bergman's character? It may be also rephrased into the problem of distinguishing between a character's dream, recollection or supernatural manifestation in Bergman's cinema. Regarding this question, interpretations often focus on family relationships using psychoanalysis for revealing unspoken tension between characters (e.g., Greenberg 2007). Characters are «confronted with a language», «inintelligible both to them and to us», trapped in the «discrepancy between word and the reality» (e.g., Törnqvist 1966: 115, 163). What is more, a spectator should draw a strong distinction between what is spoken and what is shown on the screen (Steene 1970), give more credence to the music in a shot rather than to dialogs (Luko 2015), trust only to the words which appeal directly to the God omitting interpersonal «distrustful» communication (Dyer 2014). Even less shall we trust in Bergman's own words: he invented and re-invented his life story a great many times stressing the semi-real mode of his biographical writings (Koskinen 2010). Researches diagnose a «distrust of language as a means of communication» in Bergman's works (Törnqvist 1966), but they do not go into great detail in what does the problem with language consist of and how different «modes of distrust» can be brought together. Alternatively, we suggest a framework based on supposed Bergman's immanent language theory. This may be a clue to the nature of the tensions between the internal realm of Bergman's characters and their external world as it allows to structure their seemingly irrational behaviour.

However, we cannot easily conclude what initial circumstances determine that tension which tears a character apart, it is already given to the viewer (e.g., nobody knows whether Elizabeth Volger in *Persona* keeps silence due to the violence during the Vietnam War or owing to her career as a famous actress). Language is presented by Bergman as a battle venue between the character and the world, the language where discrepancies between the inner and the outer reveal themselves. The world torments a character but a wide range of speech modes is still available for him to resist. It might be communication with particular people (real or imaginary) who do not encroach on the integrity of the internal realm. The vow of silence is another mode of resistance to the infringement of the «inner inviolability», as social communication forces a character to play a role in front of others. If the internal realm is on the verge of unravelling, words turn to an indistinguishable cry or moan. In all these cases language is not a cause but a schema which shapes the distortion between the internal and the external world. The consideration of the psychological theories which put the development of language between the inner and the social realm is intended to fill this gap and «reconstruct» the initial circumstances under which characters find themselves.

1. Language and people: psychological account

In this part, we discuss two approaches to mastering a language: Jean Piaget's theory of «egocentric» and «socialised speech» and Lev Vygotsky's theory of language. The primary reason why we offer a concise summary of these psychological theories in the article dedicated to Bergman is a prominent interest of Bergman alongside with Piaget and Vygotsky in the themes of growing up, speech, and the tension between pre-social and social conditions in personal development. An outline of the two psychological approaches allows us to put relationships depicted by Bergman (especially coming-of-age stories or family conflicts) into a frame of a language theory. Moreover, as Bergman's creative practice was centred around his childhood memories (Russ & Wallace 2013), this frame might provide us with an interesting look inward and challenge the «classical» theories of language. Proceeding from the solutions of Piaget and Vygotsky, we will suggest what can be seen as Bergman's own «theory of language». For both Piaget and Vygotsky, the origin of language was essentially social. By Piaget, the involvement in social interactions was recognized as the «telic cause» of language. However, he introduced the two stages of the language development: «egocentric» and «socialised speech». The «socialised speech» is the final point of language development, contrary to the «egocentric» one (Piaget 1923: 5). «Egocentric speech» remains rather a tool for manipulating objects in the child's stream of consciousness. At this level, real and fictitious objects are not differentiated. They do not yet constitute entities of the external world, being the objects of accommodation and assimilation for a child's consciousness. At this stage, words and verbal expressions are used rather as the schemata of adaptation, i.e., of assimilating the allegedly objective entities in the way that would be the most appropriate for fulfilling the child's needs. For instance, participative magic originates largely in this function of speech, which manifests itself in the fusion of thought and reality (Piaget 1932: 131-132). For instance, when a witch curses his enemy, the words of incantation will be seen inseparable from the following troubles with him (the distinction between a desire and its fulfilment is also vague). Only is it «socialised speech», whose mastery is fully realised as the mastery of the intersubjective language which brings about a distinction between the fantasy and the reality, the subjective and the objective world (Piaget 1937: 360).

Vygotsky underlined the social nature of language in a rather strict way. According to his theory, language as a whole is a product of the assimilation of social context. Unlike Piaget, who traced the roots of the language faculty to the symbolic structures of earlier unsocial stages of the child's intelligence development (Piaget 1954), Vygotsky rejected the direct continuity between the unsocial and the social stage, regarding thought and speech as different in their very roots. According to him, the former does not necessarily involve any social context in the process of one's development, while the latter cannot arise outside sociality and thus essentially embodies this sociality (Vygotsky 1929). The origin of language is tied not to manipulating objects in an egocentric psychic environment but to the acquisition of socially recognised rules of conduct. Even the visible instrumentality of children's early speech does not presuppose its egocentricity. From Vygotsky's point of view, the connection between different types of reasoning and corresponding modes of speech falsifies the egocentricity of speech and shows that the sociality of language does not arise through mastering it but remains its main feature from the beginning, regardless of some manifestation of «autistic» ways of using speech that do not alter children's realistic conception of the world (Vygotsky 1934: 33-34). Once adopted by a child in the course of one's social interactions, speech does remain instrumental as well as the previous intelligent practices (Vygotsky 1979). However, this instrumentality is not opposed to the rationality displayed at the abstract reasoning stage. Vygotsky argued that abstract reasoning is itself rooted in the more

primitive instrumental forms of thought. Hence the adaptation of language is a breakthrough rather than an evolutionary stage in the natural course of the development of intelligence (Vygotsky 1979).

Piaget, as it has been shown, admitted a certain sort of continuity between language and the earlier symbolic stages of intellectual development. He would generally agree with the notion of independence of intelligence from language. The latter, according to him, does not even necessarily lead to the emergence of higher-order reasoning processes, taken alone. Not sufficiently socialised, it may serve as a mere part of play for children aged 7-8 (Piaget 1923: 24). Despite the fact that «socialised» language enables children to exercise deduction in a strictly logical sense of the word (Piaget 1937: 363), certain sorts of reasoning are present even at the level of sensorimotor intelligence. It is the «constructive deduction» (Piaget 1937: 93) that constitutes what might be called the intelligence of toddlers. It is neither deduction in a formal logical sense nor an empirical induction. Rather, the child superimposes the schemata of everyday activity on the objects of one's stream of consciousness, thus reassembling these objects in some spatio-temporal order (Piaget 1937: 93-94). Piaget called such a usage of the «schemata of assimilation» the «complementary dissociation» of the previously unified stream of consciousness (Piaget 1937: 93); he defined this assimilation as «essentially the utilisation of the external environment by the subject to nourish his hereditary or acquired schemata» (Piaget 1937: 351).

The «conceptual thought» as such arises only at the stage of the socialisation of language (Piaget 1937: 360), and this is where Piaget would roughly agree with Vygotsky. The differences in their understanding of the origins of language are connected with divergent accounts of play and symbolic activity. The connection of language with the child's earlier symbolic realm postulated by Piaget has already been stated. *This fonction symbolique* is also what constitutes the origin of intelligence at a higher level than sensorimotor activity does, and *les opérations combinatoires* displayed here are the conditions of the propositional language (Piaget 1954). Vygotsky also regarded the creation of an imaginary situation of play as the key to the development of abstract thought (Vygotsky 1966). But he did not recognize the absorption of schemata, which partially constitute the playful activity of children, in children's language that was assumed by Piaget. And this was the result of the initially different approaches to the nature of play.

For Piaget, play is an essentially abundant schema of assimilation (Piaget 1945: 89). The reason for playing is the presence of multiple schemata that got out of use due to the development of the more complex ways of assimilating the objects of experience but still cannot be undone. These schemata do not become a part of the process of adaptation and acquisition of language, as others do, but rather the tools of getting pleasure. The symbolization of play occurs because of distortion of the functionality of schemata that is engendered by their transfer from the process of adaptation to that of entertainment (Piaget 1945: 163). On the contrary, Vygotsky emphasised not the abundance but the feeling of dissatisfaction that gives birth to play. He sees the essence of play as «wish fulfilment» that substitutes the real fulfilment of the «generalised affects» (Vygotsky 1966). Instead of invoking symbolism, it propels an imagined situation that, in turn, induces learning the rules of play as the basis for inner speech and abstract thought. Therefore, there is a direct transition from play to internalisation of its schemata in Vygotsky's model that makes socialisation natural to the original development of children's intelligence (not to be confused with the acquisition of language) – the transition that goes entirely contrariwise in Piaget's account.

2. Language and people: cinematographic account

The theory of language, which we regard as implicit to Bergman's cinematography, goes beyond scattered psychoanalytic references. It intertwines with Piaget's and Vygotsky's models in some respects and contradicts them in others. The obvious common ground for their theories of language is the recognition of its social aspect. Besides, Bergman shows that language is not an exclusive mode of thought and does not substitute other ways of reasoning, and this account resonates with Piaget's and Vygotsky's. As in Piaget's theory, language in Bergman's films enters the stage as essentially egocentric, but it does not overcome its egocentricity. In fact, he would approve of Merleau-Ponty's doubts about the truly communicative character of adult's speech (Merleau-Ponty 1964: 60), although with a different perspective. On the contrary, Piaget's idea that the figure of an adult may hinder the socialisation of a child's speech, because an adult represents «a powerful and wise being» that poses questions which bring a child into the state of choosing between «acceptance of a superior judgement or refusal to give in» (Piaget 1923: 147), – this idea was expanded by Bergman and lied at the core of his narratives. In some aspects, Vygotsky's perspective on the origin of play as substitution of reality unfit to fulfil a child's desires is also reflected in Bergman's works.

2.1. The «playground» synthesis

As a starting point of cinematographic life of any character, there is already a fundamental gap between language and «silent» ways of interaction with the objects of the characters' lifeworld. This gap does not entail the fracture of the lifeworld, for it strengthens its unity through the synthesis of both types of objects and corresponding modes of (inter)actions. In Bergman's works, this synthesis is accessible only to children, and it always takes the form of a «playground» on which the play of their lifeworld is performed.

In this respect, an exemplary narrative is that of *The Silence* (Bergman 1963). The main character Johan, a boy aged approximately 7-9 years, displays distinctly different strategies in communicating with normal adult people and with dwarfs (we cannot conclude from the film whether the dwarfs exist or are imagined by Johan). The doorman and the electrician serving at the hotel, where Johan dwelled with his mother Anna and aunt Ester, are the objects of Johan's play at most. While aiming at the electrician who is repairing lighting in the hall or being captured by the doorman, Johan says not a single word to them. Meanwhile, he readily talks to dwarfs, getting in their room and being offered some new activities or talks to Ester to entertain himself

While his activity is ludicrous, his use of speech implies neither its especially socialised nor chiefly rational character. It might appear doubtful that the use of language in clearly communicative purposes does not indicate the sociality of language. But it is important to look at the setting of the film: montage here was devised so as to blur the boundaries between scenes of the external world and expression of characters' internal states. Thus, when Johan sees officers in the train and tries to hide from them (although the officer, who is leaving the compartment, does not notice a child hiding behind furniture), after a few seconds he clearly sees tanks transported on flat wagons through a window. Gazing at the antique painting with a god and a goddess in one another's arms, he afterwards mirrors their pose in the embrace with his mother. There is no «objectified» setting: everything reflects the attitudes and moods of the characters, establishing the frame that makes no difference between the internal and the external. When characters collide, the attribution of certain scenes to some particular lifeworld thus may be confused. The clash of characters (for instance, in the scene of Ester's intrusion into the room where Anna and the waiter are having sexual intercourse)

somewhat distorts the continuity between the objective and the subjective, but this always indicates a certain crisis, where the individuality and unity of the characters' lifeworld are in danger.

Briefly speaking, the only intelligence present here is «egocentric» intelligence in Piaget's terms. But the function of language is not reduced to mere ludic recombination of verbal signs, for Johan uses speech in particular situations of play – in situations of encountering someone who would bring him some new sort of pleasure or interest, be that the dwarfs or sometimes Ester (and, but not always, his mother). But the function of language is not reduced to mere ludic recombination of verbal signs.

As everything in Johan's sight constitutes the «gameplay» of his egocentric world and nothing yet goes out of Johan's control, the use of language draws quite a peculiar distinction between objects. It differentiates things – and also humans – that provide amusement by accommodating ready patterns of play from those that may envisage some new ways of getting pleasure. Therefore, this is a gap not between passive and active objects, but rather between order and spontaneity as two paradigms of one egocentric world, between mere adaptation to the schemata of the lifeworld and their active enrichment. And the language is thus the tool of enabling the dwarfs or Ester, who talks to Johan about Anna and herself, to bring to life new sources of interest and play. Even the conversation with dying Ester and her last words (foreign words that Johan asked Ester to write down) are included in his game. And the diffusion between the self and the world explains the absence of Johan's internal monologue: his personality is such a mediator between experiences of different kinds, the experience that is woven into the world destabilised by the deterioration of Ester's health and involuntary stop in the hotel, rather than a self-sufficient source of spontaneity.

This egocentric idyll comes to its own breakdown with Ester's death and the departure from the hotel. Anna's demand to Johan to show her a paper with foreign words given by deceased Ester faces no resistance, but silent acceptance. There is neither ordered nor spontaneous amusement anymore, therefore the functionality of language has to undergo a fundamental reversal to defend the borders of children's world from invasion.

2.2. The reversal

Confronted with an unresponsive yet demanding external object in the form of a parent, the child's lifeworld becomes conscious of its limits unthinkable before. To sustain one's own egocentric unity and vitality, it should restrict the language faculty so that it does not allow external forces impersonated by some other people to occupy the spontaneity of play. In such demanding unresponsive figures, the menace of subjection to dark powerful forces arises – the subjection of the entire lifeworld. As this freedom and vitality are at stake, language can reveal paths to the core of the lifeworld no more.

Here is the origin of the reversal of language and silent activities in Bergman's films. Formerly being an open highway to spontaneity, language turns into an instance of control over this spontaneity; once being a mark of agreeable order, silence becomes the iron curtain.

The stage initiated by this reversal accompanies the characters of Bergman's films throughout their lifetime and is not attached to any particular age. The continuity of this stage is shown in *Autumn Sonata* (Bergman 1978). When Eva, a journalist and a writer, was a little girl, she used to carry a teacup tray to the room where her mother, the already famous pianist Charlotte, would be relaxing after exhausting exercises. She entered the room telling no single word to the mother from whom she hopelessly waited for any sign of love and care. Up to a particular moment, the mother was just

unresponsive, but she was already not capable of serving as a source of spontaneity for satisfying the urge for the joy that permeated Eva's lifeworld. However, when Eva became a teenager, her mother became not only an unresponsive but also a demanding figure. The silence that had been preserving Eva from encountering the mother's ice-cold nature turned into a strategy of ignorance under new circumstances: she never told her mother that her zealousness in making the life of her teenage daughter has nothing to do with Eva's own desires. However, Eva managed to transfer her language capacity to her work, thus creating a world, outside of which she had nobody to love, except her prematurely deceased son.

An attempt to reconcile the linguistic function in the conversation with Charlotte led to nothing more than a clash of personalities. Eva told the «story» of her childhood, mother Charlotte objected to it and complained about her own miserable life. Nobody has been heeded. Mother did not believe in the importance of the dead sun for Eva, got scared and fled into ordinary life with her impresario, extravagant dresses and endless touring. The endeavor of the youngest disabled daughter Helena remained in vain too. She tried to reach her mother, got out of the bed, crawled on the floor, and her slurred calls went unanswered. After a long break from childhood, the lifeworlds of the sisters and mother collapsed in a futile attempt to be accepted by the Other.

It should be underlined that only at this stage can we articulate what we would call «personality». While the lifeworld of the characters remains egocentric, its egocentricity becomes self-conscious and subjective. This subjectivity may even transform the defensive strategy into some form of brutal hate, as it seems to have happened in *The Silence* (Bergman 1963). Anna keeps silent looking at a couple making love in the theatre but tries to release her speech in ambiguous interactions with her son or during sexual intercourse with the waiter. The release of language enhances her desire to a certain degree but also delineates the boundaries of the self that stir up her extremely acute conflict with the sister. Quite a similar way of transferring language from the inside to the outside – in respect of the boundaries of the lifeworld – can be seen in Ester, whose unsatisfied perimortem desire pushed the linguistic faculty out to the fringe of her subjectivity, to the deleterious showdown with her sister.

Bergman proposes a slightly different perspective to language in *Persona* (Bergman 1966) where famous actress Elizabeth Vogler suddenly stops speaking. Bergman does not introduce to the viewer reasons for such a vow of silence, we can only guess them by the TV series she watches or books she reads: sometimes her face is peaceful and pleasant, sometimes it is doomed or frightened (for instance, a scene when Elizabeth watches the news on TV about self-immolation on the war or another scene when she looks at the pictures of Jews in Warsaw Ghetto). Her personality and feelings are hidden from the viewer, while Alma, a nurse assigned to care for Elizabeth, externalises her internal world to the viewer during the whole film.

At first, Alma epitomises a «healthy» personality in contrast to the mental illness of Elizabeth. When the story of Alma's orgy on a beach and the following abortion unfolded, obsession and jealousy became evident. Alma reads the papers of Elizabeth, threatens to pour out spoiled water on her, and throws a tantrum to beg for a word from her. It became unclear whether it is reality or Alma's delusion that she had intercourse with the actress's husband and explained the silence of Elizabeth through the abortion and failed motherhood (which are more applicable to her own story). In this film, speech is depicted as blatantly corrupted and unreal, while silence offers resistance to the destructive force of human desires. Alma's most desired dream is to hear a word from Elizabeth and the dream comes true twice in the movie: the first time with spoiled water (in this case Elizabeth is forced to articulate the desire not to be burnt) and the second time at the end of the film when Alma begs to say at least

something and Elizabeth says «Nothing». Speech as a tool of implementation of desire resonates with Vygotsky's account of language while refusing to talk and «play» can be interpreted in a manner of the Buddhist Noble Eightfold Path warding off desires and suffering. Elisabeth's silence triumphs at the end of the movie – it means that the internal world (no matter what is concealed inside) can successfully resist the external world.

Here we should notice that it is difficult to interpret the character of adults' and children's lifeworld similarly. We can hardly describe adults' desires as a need to play and amuse themselves. However, the logic of egocentricity and desire proposed by Bergman remains structurally unified for both children and adults. This logic has little to do with the problem of the origin of abstract thought and higher-order types of intelligence that would concern Vygotsky and Piaget. Instead, Bergman presents an account of «existential intelligence» that dialectically unifies language and silence, sign and symbol in complex gestalts of the lifeworld. What we would call «intelligence» here cannot be reduced to rational strategies of characters, nor to unconscious drive, for it is an indivisible unity of both. Certainly, all these terms are approximate and rather metaphorical, but they make possible the reconstruction of Bergman's understanding of language and development of the person, as it manifests itself in his films, in the least «transcendent» terms.

The general continuity in the development of adults' and children's subjectivity at least at this stage of reversal can be illustrated with the example of *Fanny and Alexander* (Bergman 1982). Alexander freely uses his speech when speaking as a ruler of an imaginary land, but in front of a rat in a cage or self-moving statues he quickly becomes silent, let alone the housemaid approaching him after the statues settle down. Both those statues in a room and the vision of his deceased father, with whom Alexander does not talk till his last appearance, are «unreal». This means both the fusion of the real and the unreal in Alexander's subjectivity and the discrepancy between the spontaneity controlled by Alexander and his imaginary realm, which often tends to make him silent, as the ghosts – or illusions – of bishop Edvard's perished family do:

«Isak's nephew Aron quotes his uncle's kabbalah-like notion that God speaks through all things and everywhere there are spirits – though to keep life intelligible we lock these off. All things are possible, miracles, wonders. But some of those locked doors are terrifying, and when opened reveal mad, destructive forces locked away in each household» (Quart & Quart 1983: 25).

Thus, this is speech, Alexander's own voice that delimits the domain of his omnipotence from that of his impotence. This is a tool that lies in heart of Alexander's self-presence even «in the absence of the world», indicating his «spiritual flesh» in almost a phenomenological way of voice's being, as Derrida described it (Derrida 1967: 15-16), as the only exit from the henceforth foreign and dubious world – as the most real reality.

There remain just three ways of keeping control of the lifeworld without abandoning full-fledged speech: dissolving in the mysterious puppet theatre in Jacobi's house, where the locked clairvoyant Ismael Retzinsky sees the terrifying death of bishop Edvard; telling obscenities in an undertone; intensely making fictional stories. The latter activity, however, leads him to bishop Edvard's impromptu «trial» but he does not recognize telling lies as something blameworthy. There is no consciousness of guilt except that of practical inconvenience. Hence Bergman's account of lies approaches Piaget's one when the latter considers the encounter of the «egocentric attitude» with the «moral constraint» of the adult to be the essence of lies occurring in children (Piaget 1932: 135). However, Bergman, unlike Piaget, does not see the reason for evolution that should lead to the notion of moral necessity and objective truth.

The latter does not mean that the stage is the final destination of a human being and such moral conflicts are unavoidable costs of the «condensation» of language. Indeed, Bergman draws two main routes that escape and some sort of reunification – or at least pacification – possible.

2.3. The Alienation

This stage is rather an alternative path of the lifeworld's development that involves no necessary transition, unlike a typical psychological «stage» that may come to mind; however, no stage in Bergman's account falls under the criteria of necessity. The alienation possibly proceeds from the inability to confront the pressure exerted by the external «aggressor» on the lifeworld of the subject. At this stage, a character's world is pressed by the totalizing intervention of another person whose presence permeates both the external and internal realms. In contrast to the «reversal» a character is unable to change discourse (or «play») voluntarily, it demands tremendous efforts to get over the structure and express yourself (the social structure of alienation may collapse simultaneously with the character's personality). Yet it is only evident that at this stage language completely adapts to the schemata of the coercive interactions with the actual exterior, thus overcoming silence as a sort of «defensive» wall and totalizing itself. Although this entails not only discrepancy between the internal and the external but also some kind of split of the self (due to the inevitable double-sidedness of the conformist subject), it creates room for superficial pacification of the lifeworld.

This can be illustrated by the mode of communication performed by the main characters of *Autumn Sonata* (Bergman 1978). While Eva, Charlotte and Viktor tend to display warm and benevolent communication in front of paralyzed Helena, they are ready to expose their intimate thoughts of themselves and each other only before themselves. This does not lead to conflicts, unless they try to bring together the intimate parts of their language, thus pushing from the depth of language to the surface of the public.

Cries and Whispers also displays the inability of its characters to go beyond concealment (Bergman 1972). From the very childhood, the three sisters are used to closing themselves off from each other, after the marriages, their concealment grows stronger (We see an uncomfortable silent scene at the dinner with her husband, and then Karin disfigures her genitals with a glass). Agnes has a terminal form of cancer and the only consolation over the last days is her diary and kind-hearted housemaid Anna. Each sister is jealous and detached but still desperately tries to talk to another: Agnes cannot talk to Maria because their mother neglected her and favored Maria. When Maria started a sincere conversation with Karin complaining that they did not talk to each other, Karin recalls traumatic images of her husband. Nevertheless, the structure of concealment is so deeply embedded that affectionate gestures cannot break the ice: afterwards, Karin rejects that she talked to the sister. Besides, Agnes returns to life to talk to the sisters but they did not love her so much during her life and, therefore, turned away from her after her death.

In contrast to speech human voice is regarded in the European tradition as a phenomenon associated with the uniqueness and personality (Cavarero 2010). For example, the purest voice which is free from the logocentrism reveals itself in the songs of nymphs or sirens in the Homer's poetry. Similarly, voices are often to be heard in Bergman's cinema, only if they cry from the outside of the logocentric «reality» belonging to eternal, dead or mysterious creatures (as in the case of dead Agnes in *Cries and Whispers*) or aiming to escape from alienation in the world (as in the case of Alexander's mysterious friends in *Fanny and Alexander*).

A striking example of what this alienation consists of is given in *Fanny and Alexander* (Bergman 1982). The extremely alienated attitudes of Ekdahls' housemaids toward Helena Ekdahl (and her reciprocal attitude) in any of Helena's orders and the housemaids' expression of willingness to fulfil them are evident. The evident formality of Oscar Ekdahl and his wife's Christmas speeches (with Helena saying that nobody listens to the words of Oscar) in front of their theatre troupe may also be an example of this.

But the most evocative example of this is the constant usage of third-person speech in *Fanny and Alexander*. Alexander describes himself in the third person when the stepfather – bishop Edvard – forced him to confess just before the punishment. He would have kept silent in the mode of «reversal» if there had not been an immediate risk of severe punishment. The usage of third-person speech at the Christmas Eve dinner in the conversation between children and adults shows that this way of building linguistic walls around the lifeworld was not anything new to Ekdahls. So, the mode of «alienation» allows Alexander not to accept the cruel oppressive game of adults avoiding expression in the first person. Meanwhile, Alexander does not hesitate to speak in the first person when he spells obscene words or curses with his sister Fanny thinking of the stepfather's death. But this kind of speech can be attributed to the stage of the «playground» synthesis where wishful thinking is a kind of participative magic and has real consequences (the dreadful aunt and stepfather were burnt alive as Alexander wanted).

2.4. The (illusionary) reunion

At the stage of alienation, the world of character is subjected to the «play» which belongs to another person (or is inconvenient for all its inhabitants). This stage is remarkable in its inability to capture another person in the character's realm, and vice versa. A person may be integrated into the character's world until she starts resisting. Figures ensuring the reunion are very strangers who do not actively participate in the character's life but still play an «integrative» role in it. The presence of a silent stranger gives the impression that interpersonal communication is possible and does not necessarily involve a fracture of the character's world.

Anyone can fulfil one's innermost wish of expressing oneself being in the company of a stranger who barely talks. For instance, Charlotte in *The Autumn Sonata* feels fine near Pierre who organises her travels, listens to her and does not speak against her (because he barely answers to her talks). Daughters waiting for many years are more demanding and annoying than an old friend Pierre. Afterwards, Pierre epitomises the stability and continuity of Charlotte's lifeworld. Nevertheless, she confessed to the daughter that her world was never unstable, she lost her passion and dignity in her youth and all the surrounding things were only tools for forgetting this truth.

The core of this «illusionary» reunion is that it may be successfully fulfilled only when an «integral» person hides one's interests and desires. A good example of non-fulfilment of such expectations is the waiter in *The Silence*, who is desired by Anna not personally but as a common idea of a man. Anna is complaining to him about her ill sister Alma, while he remains silent. When he stops listening and starts intercourse with Anna, she laughs and cries, as if it were wild harassment. This waiter is a «negative» example of such an object of a play: Anna would like to play a jealous «confession game» instead of a «game of intercourse».

Another prominent example is Elizabeth Vogler in *Persona*, whose silence was alluring for the nurse Alma. She could tell Elizabeth everything about herself, it also seemed to Alma that Elizabeth was more defenseless than she was. The situation turned over when

Alma started to demand active behavior from Elizabeth forcing her to have a conversation. Alma felt that her position was unstable and decided to check how Elizabeth treated her by reading the letter to her husband. When she realised that Elizabeth was investigating her personality, the relationship between the silence as a symbolic disability or mental illness turned into a new configuration where speech became abnormal. At the end of the film Alma (not Elizabeth) is on the verge of a madness torturing by desire, misery and affection. The order based on the illusory interpersonal communication is depicted by Bergman as fragile and it cannot hide problems lying at its core for a long time.

3. Conclusion: The modes of the fracture

As we mentioned, the problem of the fracture between the external and the internal was central to Bergman's works. The semi-real, semi-illusionary lifeworlds of his characters are arenas of play, desire, and struggle with enslaving exterior forces that were deemed distinctly alien. Having attempted to reconstruct this logic of linguistic and personal development, we discerned several stages, or rather situations, of language and personal development of Bergman's characters: the childish «playground» as an egocentric unity of the lifeworld, where language is a road to spontaneity and silence strengthens the habitual order of play; the reversal, where the breakdown of language's task leads to the rise of the menacing external; the alienation of language as an attempt to reconcile the disunified lifeworld; and the (illusionary) reunion as a linguistic dream concealing the breakdown of the original reality.

This can be considered an alternative to Piaget's and Vygotsky's conceptions of language acquisition. However, psychological investigation is not at all Bergman's purpose. His (reconstructed) theory is rather a scheme of understanding that lies beyond scientific objectification, a sort of phenomenology. And this phenomenology enables us to re-examine familiar images of consciousness and the world, question habitual boundaries and let the (un)conscious speak on its own terms.

References

- Bergman, Ingmar (1963), *Tystnaden*, Svensk Filmindustri (*The Silence*).
- Bergman, Ingmar (1966), *Persona*, AB Svensk Filmindustri (*Persona*).
- Bergman, Ingmar (1968), *Vargtimmen*, Svensk Filmindustri (*The Hour of the Wolf*).
- Bergman, Ingmar (1972), *Viskningar och rop*, Svensk Filmindustri (*Cries and Whispers*).
- Bergman, Ingmar (1978), *Höstsonaten*, ITC Entertainment (*The Autumn Sonata*).
- Bergman, Ingmar (1982), *Fanny och Alexander*, Cinematograph, SVT, Gaumont International, Personafilm, Tobis Film, Svenska Filminstitutet (*Fanny and Alexander*).

Derrida, Jacques (1967), *La Voix et le Phénomène*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris (*Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs*, trans. by D.B. Allison, N. Garver, Northwestern University Press, Evanston 1973)

Greenberg, Harvey (2007), «The Rags of Time: Psychoanalytic Notes on Ingmar Bergman's Wild Strawberries», in *Journal of Aging, Humanities and the Arts*, n. 1-2, pp. 97-121.

Kaminsky, Stuart (1974), «The Torment of Insight: Youth and Innocence in the Films of Ingmar Bergman», in *Cinema Journal*, vol. 13, n. 1, pp. 11-22.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice (1964), «La Conscience et l'acquisition du langage», in *Bulletins de psychologie*, vol. XVIII, n. 236, pp. 226-259 (*Consciousness and the Acquisition of Language*, trans. by H.J. Silvermann, Northwestern University Press, Evanston 1973).

Piaget, Jean (1923), *Le langage et la pensée chez l'enfant*, Delachaux et Niestlé, Paris (*The Language and Thought of the Child*, trans. by M. and R. Gabain, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., London 1959).

Piaget, Jean (1926), *La représentation du monde chez l'enfant*, PUF, Paris (*The Child's Conception of the World*, trans. by J. and A. Tomlinson, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., London 1929).

Piaget, Jean (1932), *Le jugement moral chez l'enfant*, PUF, Paris (*The Moral Judgement of the Child*, trans. by M. Gabain, The Free Press, Glencoe 1948).

Piaget, Jean (1937), *La construction du réel chez l'enfant*, Delachaux et Niestlé, Paris (*The Construction of Reality in the Child*, trans. by M. Cook, Routledge, London 1954).

Piaget, Jean (1945) *La formation du symbole chez l'enfant*, Neuchâtel, Delachaux et Niestlé, Paris (*Play, Dreams and Imitation in Childhood*, trans. by C. Gattegno and F.M. Hodgson, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., London 1951).

Piaget, Jean (1954), «Le langage et la pensée du point de vue génétique», in *Acta Psychologica*, vol. X, n. 1-2, pp. 51-60.

Quart, Barbara, and Quart, Leonard (1983), «Fanny and Alexander by Ingmar Bergman» in *Film Quarterly*, vol. 37, n. 1, pp. 22-27.

Sontag, Susan (1969), *Bergman's Persona*, in *Styles of Radical Will*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, pp. 123-146.

Vygotsky, Lev (1929), «II. The Problem of the Cultural Development of the Child», in *The Pedagogical Seminary and Journal of Genetic Psychology*, vol. 36, pp. 415-434.

Vygotsky, Lev (1934), *Mysblenie i rech*, Sotsekgiz, Leningrad (*Thought and Language*, trans. by E. Hanfmann and G. Vakar, The MIT Press, Cambridge 1986).

Vygotsky, Lev (1966), «Igra i ee rol v umstvennom razvitii rebenka», in *Voprosy Psikhologii*, vol. 12, n. 6, 62-76 («Play and Its Role in the Mental Development of the

Child», trans. by N. Veselov and M. Barrs, in *International Research in Early Childhood Education*, vol. 7, n. 2, pp. 3-25, 2016).

Vygotsky, Lev (1979), *Tool and Symbol in Child Development*, in *Mind in Society. The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*, London, Harvard University Press, Cambridge.
Luko, Alexis (2015), *Sonatas, Screams, and Silence: Music and Sound in the Films of Ingmar Bergman*, Taylor and Francis, Milton Park.

Maaret, Koskinen (2010), «Ingmar Bergman, the biographical legend and the intermedialities of memory», in *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture*, vol. 2, n. 1, pp. 1-11.

Dyer, Daniel (2016), *Sacred trauma: Language, recovery, and the face of God in Ingmar Bergman's trilogy of faith (Master's thesis)*, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Steene, Birgitta (1970), «Images and Words in Ingmar Bergman's Films», in *Cinema Journal*, vol. 10, n. 1, pp. 23-33.

Törnqvist, Egil (1996), *Between Stage and Screen: Ingmar Bergman Directs*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam.

Cavarero, Adriana, Lingione, Matt (2012), «The Vocal Body: Extract from A Philosophical Encyclopedia of the Body», in *Qui Parle*, vol. 21, n. 1, pp. 71-83.