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Introduction: Revisiting Dialogue

OVER the past half-century, discussions of characters' speech in fiction have been dominated by the category of free indirect discourse (FID), which is often described as blending the point of view of a character with that of a narrator. Ann Banfield influentially argued that FID has been the most distinctive formal achievement of literary writing in the modern period.¹ Following Banfield, critics have provided innumerable accounts of the origins and functions of FID in fiction, not only to analyze the complexities of its formal features, but also to understand the psychological, political, and aesthetic effects of its use. While disagreement persists among critics about the characteristics and boundaries of FID, this particular way of representing characters' speech and thought has received so much attention that it leads us to wonder about what alternatives may have been neglected for it to become so salient. FID is distinguished, on the one hand, from a narrator's discourse, whether in the service of exposition, reporting, interpreting, or evaluation of events. It contrasts, on the other, with both direct and indirect discourse. Direct discourse purports to quote a character's speech ("She said, 'I have to get out of here'"); indirect discourse reports on it ("She said she had to get out of there"); and FID incorporates the character's speech within the language of the narrator ("She had to get out of there"). What critics find most interesting about FID are its many forms of mediation: it conveys meaning through some words that belong to the character and some that belong to the narrator—and sometimes through some words whose ownership is not so clearly marked. Different accounts of FID may address characters' speech, thoughts, or both, and these differences can lead to conflicting understandings of what FID is as well as reveal the complexity of the phenomenon itself.²

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By contrast with FID, dialogue in fiction is often understood to represent the utterances of characters unfiltered through any intermediary frame. Dialogue is easily recognizable—and distinguished from other narrative elements—by the typographical and phraseological conventions that were stabilized in English in the first decades of the nineteenth century.³ Dialogue shares these features with quoted speech as represented in nonfiction: quotation marks (“inverted commas” in British English) or other typographical indicators, paragraph or line breaks, and speech tags such as “she said,” often qualified by adverbs of manner (“loudly,” “curtly”). This marked discourse is a familiar feature of fictional narrative at all levels of literary ambition. As Lewis Carroll’s Alice wonders, “What is the use of a book without pictures or conversations?” (9). While contemporary adult readers have mainly left pictures behind (or relocated them to the subgenre of the graphic novel), it is hard to imagine a novel that contains no conversation—no exchange of character speech—at all.

In addition to its promiscuous familiarity, the critical view of dialogue as a relatively self-evident, uninteresting feature, by contrast with FID, arises from the persistence of the illusion it creates—namely, that it plainly represents characters’ words. Some accounts of direct speech explicitly assign it the function of mimetic reproduction. Patrick O’Neill, for example, distinguishes FID from both indirect speech and direct, quoted speech. He identifies quoted speech as “the maximally *mimetic* option . . . where the narrator elects to show what happened rather than tell about it[;] we hear . . . only [the character’s] voice, as if we were physically present ourselves” (59). Most theorists in principle acknowledge the artificiality of this mimesis. Gérard Genette, for example, while agreeing with O’Neill that fictional dialogue is optimally mimetic because it refers to nothing but itself, also distinguishes it from nonfiction dialogue by virtue of its *doubled* artifice: “History, biography, autobiography are supposed to reproduce speeches that were actually made; epic, novel, story, novella are supposed to pretend to reproduce them. . . . *Supposed to*: Those are the generic conventions, which of course do not necessarily correspond to reality” (*Narrative Discourse Revisited* 50; emphasis original). Yet such is the power of what Meir Sternberg calls the “direct speech fallacy” (“Point of View” 68) that this mimetic account of direct speech still influences most arguments on behalf of FID’s relative subtlety and flexibility—arguments that unreflectively stop at the quotation marks, which appear to bind words as they are imagined to have been spoken.⁴

With the illusion of proximity to oral discourse that written dialogue generates, it can also seem distant from fiction’s particularly literary qualities. The application of linguistic frameworks, such as pragmatics, drawn from analysis of real-world conversation may contribute to the perception of dialogue as fundamentally transcriptive.⁵ Indeed, one of the innovations of Banfield’s *Unspeakable Sentences* was to assert that literary discourse has a deep grammatical structure distinct from that of spoken language. Yet as much as any other component of narrative, dialogue is part of the novel’s textual fabric. Instances of dialogue may partake of the narrator’s style (or styles), or may be distinct from it. Relative to other narrative materials, dialogue may evoke an illusion of mimesis and conversational spontaneity (words as actually spoken and exchanged), and yet it is as determined and stylized as any other writing in fiction. As James Phelan points out, fictional dialogue between characters is a com-

plex rhetorical representation: “The implied author *must simultaneously motivate each character’s speech within its mimetic context and within that of his or her own communicative purposes*” (172; emphasis original). In the afterword to this issue, Rosemarie Bodenheimer similarly analyzes characters’ dialogic exchanges as embodying a sequence of authorial choices and cues to the reader.

Recognizing how far dialogue in fiction actually is from oral performance—by comparison with, for example, dramatic literature—helps draw attention to that stylization and writtenness. Lennard Davis states that, for eighteenth-century playwrights, “Scripts were by and large not meant to be read, so that they stood in relation to [real spoken] conversation as a musical score stands in relation to the heard symphony” (172). As Frances Ferguson points out, drama “consists of almost nothing but direct quotation, so that [it] must continually create an unfolding plot that motivates individual characters to present their views, to have thoughts that rise to the level of the expressible.” In its early form in epistolary novels such as those of Samuel Richardson, fiction “expand[s] and exaggerat[es] the requirement that characters represent themselves and the details of daily life in their own persons, and only through their words” (167–68). Katie Gemmill argues in this issue that Richardson, a printer as well as a novelist, in fact attempts to supplement characters’ words, and to capture some of the embodied affective capacity of dramatic dialogue, through his use of typographic features such as the em dash and italics. His very success in “evoking aurally vivid and thus emotionally live characters” (Gemmill 158), however, contributed to the divergence, at the end of the eighteenth century, of fictional from dramatic representation.

The rise of the novel and the standardization of rules for representing dialogue depended on and mutually reinforced each other, fostering the development of third-person narrators who can characterize and evoke emotional states and different levels of character consciousness without recourse to a “transcriptional aesthetics” such as Richardson’s. As Dorrit Cohn, among others, has argued, the novel in the nineteenth century evolved away from the represented speech of its original epistolary and confessional first-person forms (such as Richardson’s), and toward a form of represented thought that “imperceptibly integrate[s] [characters’] mental reactions into the neutral-objective report of actions, scenes, and spoken words” (115).⁶ This integration, however, itself created new forms of division: between novelists who continued to rely at least sometimes on confessional utterance (for example, Charlotte Brontë, Charles Dickens, and Mark Twain) and those who decisively embraced third-person narration (such as Nathaniel Hawthorne, George Eliot, and Thomas Hardy); and between the blending technique of FID and the embedding of discrete instances of direct character speech within a narrator’s discourse. Yet direct speech pervades all these authors’ works even as it comes to seem a comparatively old-fashioned, perhaps unsophisticated mode of representation.

For the modernists, FID—in its coexistence with traditional dialogue and because of the traces of authorial commentary it embeds—was part of the ossifying, magisterial realist tradition that they saw as inadequate for the representation of consciousness. In an effort to reduce the intrusion of an authorial presence, some authors experimented by replacing quotation marks with a more streamlined, “continental” em dash (most famously James Joyce), doing away with the typographical indicator of speech

entirely (Virginia Woolf in *The Waves*), or reducing or eliminating speech tags and descriptors (Henry Green). Other authors, conversely, such as Ivy Compton-Burnett, reduced the proportion of narration to dialogue until a novel approached the state of a playscript. Postmodern authors from William Gaddis (*JR*) to Nicholson Baker (*Vox*) to Sheila Heti (*How Should a Person Be?*) have pursued the possibilities of the dialogue novel. The quotation mark/speech tag convention, while remaining the norm in English and American fiction, has come to mark the mainstream's indebtedness to a fictional tradition viewed as now well past its prime.

Modernist and postmodern innovations, however, do not really solve the problem of dialogue's apparent claims to a distinctive narrative status. Looking back to practices such as Joyce's, it is not obvious that the em dash is a less visually intrusive narrative signal than quotation marks. Indeed, the em dash's relative unfamiliarity in this context, potentially combined with the knowledge that such a usage is associated largely with continental or highbrow literary works, may make the authorship of an em dash *more* present for readers than the quotation marks that become invisible in their familiarity. And while the reduction or elimination of speech tags may increase the speed and apparent naturalism of conversational exchange, it may also draw attention back to the author's stylistic control, such as mastery of repartee (as in the case of Compton-Burnett's comedies of manners) or demotic speech (as in the case of George V. Higgins's crime novels).⁷ None of these innovations scrapes the traces of either authorial mediation or mimetic intention from characters' speech.

Toward the end of the twentieth century, literary criticism as well, particularly in the field of narratology, became increasingly restive at the idea of dialogue having a special status within fictional representation and at the tacit nostalgia for mimesis apparently embedded in that idea.⁸ Sternberg, for example, in explicating the many forms of "reported discourse" (which include direct and quoted speech), exhaustively demonstrates that every instance of quotation, no matter how seemingly accurate and unmediated, alters the meaning of the "inset" (the reported or quoted words) simply by virtue of the new context in which it appears ("Proteus in Quotation-Land"). Sternberg suggests that, far from being mimetic, direct and quoted discourse—in both fiction and nonfiction contexts—are always, to some extent, reframed and resignified rather than reproduced. Monika Fludernik, focusing more directly on the case of fictional discourse, argues that the representation of direct speech should be considered not as mimesis, attempted or achieved, but rather as a "process of evocation" of an "ideal type" that can never be fully reproduced (17).

In a novel, there is no original being quoted, and so the referent is coincident with its reproduction. But fiction depends for its effects on the assumption that the storyworld being constructed in fact exists independently of its representation. On this assumption, fictional dialogue is not a special case but is subject to the same limitations on mimetic fidelity as quoted speech is in reportage of real utterances. The cordoning off of characters' speech from other elements of narration, particularly with quotation marks, reinforces this similarity.⁹ If Sternberg's analysis, along with many other related discussions of direct discourse, undermines a conception of dialogue as pure mimesis, that does not mean that dialogue lacks important, particular

functions and effects within the fictional storyworld that may be distinguished from those of other narrative elements, as we will go on to suggest.

It can, however, be difficult to pinpoint those functions and their distinctiveness from other elements of narrative. Basic definitions of dialogue often emphasize its function in narrative diegesis. For example, the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory* begins by defining dialogue as “the direct representation of characters’ speech whereby some sense of interaction or exchange of views is created. Dialogue fulfills the important narrative functions of characterization and advancing the plot” (105). Yet these aspects of dialogue are not in themselves either necessary or sufficient to distinguish it from other elements of fictional narrative. Characterization and plot advancement can equally be served by other narrative attributes, such as author/narrator commentary, interior monologue, or FID. Into the twentieth century, novelists remain comfortable summarizing features of both character and event. Woolf’s impatient reading of Arnold Bennett’s *Hilda Lessways* decisively rejects that technique: “We cannot hear her mother’s voice, or Hilda’s voice; we can only hear Mr. Bennett’s voice telling us facts about rents and freeholds and copyholds and fines. . . . [H]e is trying to hypnotise us into the belief that, because he has made a house, there must be a person living there” (430). But despite the reference to “voice,” Woolf herself, in turning away from such authorial hypnotism, turns more frequently to interior monologue or FID than to dialogue.¹⁰

The proposition that dialogue creates “some sense of interaction or exchange of views” within the novel is more promising as a distinctive feature. Dialogue’s reliance on different speakers is the feature that overlaps most closely with the larger sense of *dialogism* that Mikhail Bakhtin ascribed to the novel genre—the idea that the novel creates a polyvocal community. Bakhtin’s conception of dialogism has been criticized as an idealization, both because a novel is monologic in the important sense that the author retains the power of representation, if not of creation, of every speech act, and on the grounds that speech exchange is not, in itself, a necessarily democratic or community-building event.¹¹ Novelists may go to great orthographic lengths to counter authorial monologism, by, for example, representing different sociolects and idiolects in dialogue—from Dickens’s rural workmen Joe Gargery and Ham Peggotty to Irvine Welsh’s foulmouthed Scots. But as Banfield observes, “Naïve commentary on language often assumes that there are pronunciations which are transparent, accentless; but this, of course, is only an illusion. All speech is a realization of some particular set of choices; all speech has an accent. It is only in writing that this transparency really exists” (248–49). The orthographic and stylistic deviation of such speech only underscores the normative power of narrative and speech that is not so marked. Moreover, literary history offers ample evidence of dialogue that ostentatiously fails to create interchange or polyvocality, or recognizes the unevenness of their application. Consider *Pride and Prejudice*’s Lydia Bennet: “‘Oh! Mary,’ said [Lydia], ‘We were so merry all the way home! we talked and laughed so loud, that any body might have heard us ten miles off!’” Conversation, for Lydia, is an opportunity not for interaction but for self-display, and the formal necessity of an interlocutor to create a scene of dialogue is a necessary evil: “[Lydia] seldom listened to any body for more than half a minute, and never attended to Mary at all” (170). At the other end of

the nineteenth century, the relationship between characters' *speech* and their *communication* frequently reaches a breaking point in the novels of Henry James, in which, as Elizabeth Alsop argues in this issue, "echolalic" exchanges between characters express conversational "reciprocity" not as a fact but as an unattainable fantasy.

Nevertheless, Bakhtin's conception of dialogism captures something about the novel's polyvocal aspirations, even when not fully achieved, and about the importance of dialogue to those aspirations. In contemporary narratological approaches, that importance is captured by David Herman's conception of fictional dialogue as "scenes of talk" ("Dialogue" 91), which draws on discourse analysis as well as other fields to suggest that fictional "communicative events should be viewed as gestalts including but not limited to verbal acts" (96). Amy Wong, in this issue, argues for a transvaluation of what critics have considered "bad dialogue" as "talk," which she too defines as capturing nonverbal communicative acts, as opposed to more critically approved, stylized dialogue, which, she suggests, excludes embodiment and orality.

Recalling, as well, Fludernik's suggestion that fictional representation of direct speech is not mimesis but "a process of evocation" (17), we may posit that dialogue in a novel conjures up not specific real-life speech events but the experience of communicative sociality, with its implications of populousness, heterogeneity, and spontaneousness as well as of domination, contestation, and artifice. In this issue, Tara Menon, for example, demonstrates that fleeting verbal exchanges in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* contribute to the depiction of a transactional and alienating public sphere, while in Alex Benson's analysis of W. E. B. Du Bois's novel *The Quest of the Silver Fleece*, dialogue functions beyond communicative utterance to convey characters' negotiations of a racially and economically oppressive social order. Characters' utterances may perform some of the narrative tasks also undertaken by a narrator, whether named or anonymous, such as exposition, commentary, or description, but the inclusion of dialogue emphasizes personhood—being—over event. As Alsop's article suggests, even demonstrably artificial, stylized representations of speech in the late novels of Henry James—in which characters seem to communicate at best obliquely—might be understood to express a yearning for shared experience and an ideal of consensus that transcends individual interest.

The impressions of sociality created by dialogue are thus features of an imagined storyworld and not a reproduction of speech. An acceptance of dialogue does not, for most readers, even require that the character speaking be the sort of entity ordinarily assumed to be capable of verbal exchange. When the White Rabbit runs by a sleepy Alice, she finds his exclamations—"Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be late!"—to be in the moment "quite natural" (it's his possession of a pocket-watch—and pocket—that startles her into pursuit [9–10]). In fact speech in *Alice's Adventures* is frequently questioning, querulous, and abortive if not actually hostile, not to mention impossible under real-world conditions. But none of those features disqualifies it from contributing to the creation of a populous storyworld. Genres such as fairy tales, fantasy, and science fiction routinely feature dialogue among characters who categorically do not possess the capacity for human expression (because they are representations of nonhuman entities, such as animals, or of entities that do not exist at all outside of the storyworld), let alone expression within a particular novel's language of composi-

tion.¹² As Genette writes of the characters in Balzac's *La Comédie humaine*, "The words exchanged among the characters of a novel are clearly serious speech acts carried out within the fictional universe of that novel; a promise made by Vautrin to Rastignac is not binding on Balzac, but it is as seriously binding on Vautrin as it would be if I had uttered it" (*Fiction and Diction* 33). This remains true despite the ontological gulf between Balzac and Vautrin.

To sum up, we have argued that, on the one hand, it would be a mistake to reduce fictional dialogue to mimesis—to a representation of speech—and so it must be regarded as continuous with the distinctly written style and narrative effects of the rest of the novel. On the other hand, we have proposed, dialogue ought not to be so fully absorbed into the narrative language that its distinctiveness as an evocation of speech cannot be recognized. Dialogue in the novel represents the node at which this insuperably written form pretends to break out of its writtenness and to partake of speech. It is perhaps this discordance within the literary that has made connoisseurs of indirection shy away from giving dialogue its due. Moreover, we have suggested, dialogue belongs to the sociality of the novel. Within the category of direct speech that is imitated or evoked, dialogue, even in its infinite variety, provides some dimension of subjectivity, interaction, and interpersonal relation that is essential to the novel, and that stands at some distance from the focus on consciousness associated with FID and narration. This sociality arises not from any particular representation of speech acts, which might be more or less mimetic, more or less plausible, but from the totality of verbal interaction that inheres in the exchange of words, whether they meet or clash, draw people together or push them apart. What matters is not that dialogue represents speech—for it is still essentially written—but that it represents an *occasion* of conversation. Unlike narration and FID, the occasion for dialogue may be communicative, but even if not, the effect is to expand the production in fiction of human subjects interacting with one another.

The articles in this special issue span the period, from the mid-eighteenth to the early twentieth century, when the conventions of written quotation in British and American novels are established, become standardized, and are subsequently expanded, played upon, reconsidered, and contested. We begin with Katie Gemmill's article, "Typography and Conversational Threat in Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*," which places Richardson's novel in the context of his experience as a printer, particularly of playscripts. Gemmill argues that Richardson adapted printers' conventions in an effort to capture the dramatic—embodied and affective—qualities of conversation on the printed page. His typographic efforts and assertive character exchanges, as she indicates, provided a resource that later novelists could use, adapt, or work against in their representations of speech, characterological interiority, and narratorial omniscience. Nevertheless, as Tara Menon shows in "Keeping Count: Direct Speech in the Nineteenth-Century British Novel," direct speech remains a prevalent fictional feature even as those changes occur. Taking a computational approach to reveal corpus-level trends, Menon finds that the average amount of direct speech (36 percent) varies little among fictional genres and across the nineteenth century. When the computational analysis focuses in on a single novel like *Jane Eyre*, it can reveal unusual patterns, such as the surprisingly large number of anonymous or fleetingly present speaking

characters. Menon argues that this pattern points to Charlotte Brontë's interest in delineating a Victorian public sphere that is "civil and dependable, but also indifferent and alienating" (170).

While these two articles show how novels aim to draw distinctions around dialogue, the next two argue for a blurring of boundaries between direct speech and the narrative contexts in which it takes place. In "Late Victorian Novels, Bad Dialogue, and Talk," Amy Wong's analysis of "bad dialogue" in novels by George Meredith and by Joseph Conrad and Ford Madox Ford demonstrates that these writers were already providing narratively sophisticated approaches to the very questions that this *Narrative* special issue seeks to address: When we move beyond naïve equations of fictional dialogue with verisimilitudinous speech, what other stylistic and performative effects of dialogue become visible? Wong argues that the dialogue in these works, to which contemporary readers objected for its apparent artifice, aimed to depict communication in more of its embodied human actuality than accorded with the Victorian realist preference for a smooth exchange of utterance. While the results may not align with conventional aesthetics, these writers confront ethical questions about the materiality and embodiment of "talk." Alex Benson, in "Gossypoglossia: W. E. B. Du Bois and the Pragmatics of Dialogue," similarly attends to the non-denotative dimension of discourse in a novel, *The Quest of the Silver Fleece*, that has also been derogated for the poor quality of its dialogue. Benson's reading shows how, in the Jim Crow era, the pragmatics of dialogue—that is, the nonverbal contents that are conveyed through the form and context in which dialogue takes place—give voice to political relations of economic and racial exploitation. While critics have previously drawn connections between Du Bois's famous formulation of double consciousness and the formal structure of FID, Benson reveals in Du Bois's use of direct discourse analogies among grammatical personhood, the racial construction of black and white subjects, and the commodity form of cotton.

If these articles suggest some of the social fractures and disjunctions that dialogue can express, Elizabeth Alsop, in "The Question of James's Speech: Consensual Talk in *The Ambassadors*," shows how high modernist style can also represent a powerful longing for consensus and community through direct discourse. In James's late novels, Alsop argues, character speech transcends the individual and becomes an expressive arena of style in which people seem to read each other's minds and finish each other's sentences. Although the dialogue presents an ideal of discursive community, Alsop shows how Strether's investment in that ideal leads him to serious misinterpretations and misjudgments. More generally she shows that the discursive ideal largely fails to find expression in a social world depicted as one of dissensus and alienation, circumscribed by elite ideas of national and class formation. In the afterword, Rosemarie Bodenheimer further advances the argument that dialogue represents the totality of occasions for social interaction between characters, and she extends this argument to questions of form, particularly through the narrative arc that shapes a long scene of dialogue. In a reading of the opening chapter of George Eliot's *Middlemarch* that resonates with a number of the other articles in this issue, Bodenheimer shows how vital the nonverbal components of dialogue scenes are to both the reader's experience

of the work and to the author's concept of what constitutes social form—the relations between people in the world, as evinced in words and other types of communication.

Endnotes

1. The historical argument is mainly in ch. 6. Banfield rejects a characterization of FID “as a combination of direct and indirect speech” (70), defining it instead according to the form’s distinctive grammar. Frances Ferguson, writing about Jane Austen’s *Emma*, calls FID “the novel’s one and only formal contribution to literature” (159).
2. The full titles of Banfield’s and Cohn’s foundational books illustrate the orientation of the analysis of FID (which Banfield calls “represented speech and thought” and Cohn “narrated monologue”) toward a comparison with speech, in the first case, and thought, in the second: *Unspeakable Sentences: Narration and Representation in the Language of Fiction* and *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction*. In both cases, the literariness of novelistic discourse distinguishes it from other ways of representing speech and thought. For some recent examples analyzing FID’s complexity, see Gunn, “Free Indirect Discourse” and “Reading Strether.” Recent critical interests in theory of mind and cognitive narratology have intensified the focus on thought. See, e.g., Suzanne Keen’s rich discussion of Hardy’s blending of narrated monologue, quoted monologue, and psychonarration (ch. 2), in which a long passage of dialogue is cited not for its features as speech but as an example of “intermental thought, shared or communal thinking” (69). In Palmer’s *Fictional Minds* (from which the concept of “intermental thought” is drawn), a chapter titled “The *Speech* Categories” (emphasis added) contends against a characterization of thought as “inner speech”; speech *per se* is not part of the analysis (53–86). Lisa Zunshine is a partial exception, but her analysis of a conversation in Frances Burney’s *Evelina*, for example, is framed in terms of “embedded mental states” (112 *ff.*) and thus leads back toward a concern with mental cognition rather than speech expression.
3. See, for the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century history of conventions of dialogue representation, Mepham 412–13; Davis 172–73; and Gemmill (140) in this issue. See Rhee 1043–45 and Estill for consideration of quotation marks in particular.
4. Banfield’s designation of the uniquely literary character of FID, which she argues is grammatically possible only in writing, depends on a distinction from words that are directly represented, as they retain the characteristics (and the grammar) of speech. For an implicitly mimetic account of direct speech (especially dialect) that works in the service of a nuanced reading of “realism,” see Fisher, who states: “quoted words imply that the author is for the moment not speaking. . . . In . . . quoted passages, one decisive fact is that all of the material is given complete; no editing by the author has taken place, no three dots of deletion or ellipse. The words are just as written or spoken, every word present, just as the person chose to utter or write them” (235).
5. See, e.g., Toolan, who argues that “crucial structural and functional principles and patterns are at work in fictional dialogue as they are in natural conversation” (193).
6. See Cohn 111–13.
7. On dialogue in Higgins’s novels, see Phelan 14–18 and 169–70.
8. Fludernik argues that “The narratological tradition, in fact even the grammatical tradition on which it relies, terminologically and substantively tends to privilege direct discourse over its (free) indirect (also called *oblique*) equivalents” in contradistinction to the origins of that tradition in Plato’s discussion of mimesis, which “privileges the narrator’s rendering of speech events. The narrator’s presentation [i.e., diegesis] is in a single voice; mimesis is characterized by a duality of discourse” (30), and is therefore less truthful. Fludernik’s *Fictions of Language* is an effort to redress that privileging; her discussion of it is mainly on 408–28. As this special issue suggests, we

- believe that Fludernik's and other such efforts have been successful enough that direct discourse has now suffered from critical neglect.
9. According to Herman, "Storyworlds are mentally and emotionally projected environments in which interpreters are called upon to live out complex blends of cognitive and imaginative response" ("Storyworld" 569–70). A narrative's dialogue contributes to the projection of its mental and emotional environment.
 10. Erin Greer writes, "Frequently [Woolf] contrasts wordless conversational attunement with the shallower and flawed efforts of characters to gain access to each other's inner worlds through speech. Even in scenes of conversation, her narrative voice famously focuses more on the non-verbal attunement or divergence of thoughts than on the actual words exchanged" (3).
 11. See, for example, Davis 165–66 and 177–78. Some recent novels, however, put pressure on this premise of character interaction embedded in the concept of dialogue. Rachel Cusk's recent trio of novels features a first-person narrator who is "a cipher who inspires other people to confess" while "filtering out most of her own questions and remarks" (Julavits).
 12. On the effects of representing multiple languages in fictional dialogue, see Cohen.

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