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# Coalition and Opposition in Myself? On Integrative and Confrontational Internal Dialogues, Their Functions, and the Types of Inner Interlocutors

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The typology of interlocutors in internal dialogues comprises four main emotional types: faithful friend, ambivalent parent, proud rival, and helpless child. The two studies presented in the article aimed to identify which types appear in integrative and which in confrontational internal dialogues. Additionally, Study 2 compared the functions performed by these two types of dialogues. Both Study 1 ( $N = 101$ ) and Study 2 ( $N = 99$ ) confirmed the hypothesis that faithful friend and ambivalent parent are interlocutors typical of integrative dialogues, whereas proud rival and helpless child are characteristic for confrontational ones. It was also found that integrative dialogues perform certain functions—namely, support, bond, insight, and self-guiding—to a greater degree than confrontational dialogues.

When preparing for an important conversation, for example with the boss, we usually rehearse the arguments we intend to use. Sometimes we go a step further and imagine the interlocutor's responses, which in turn often elicit responses from us. Thus, we formulate an utterance from one standpoint and react to it from a different standpoint in order to activate the first perspective again. This phenomenon is colloquially referred to as “talking to oneself.” This was certainly what Brinthaupt and Dove (2012) had in mind when writing that self-talk reflects a person's social interactions and consists of “replaying something said to another person or imagining how other people responded to things one said” (p. 326). The addressee of our “inner utterances” does not always have to be an imaginary other with a counterpart in the real world (someone else's perspective). An exchange may also occur between parts of our self in the strict sense (our personal viewpoints). For example, when the thing we want to do goes against what we ought to, two perspectives clash in us. In such a situation, Brinthaupt and Dove (2012) would speak of self-talk, which consists of “giving oneself instructions or directions about what to do or say” (p. 327).

In the literature, this phenomenon is referred to not only as self-talk but also as self-statements (Kamann & Wong, 1993), private speech (Winsler, Fernyhough, & Montero, 2009), inner speech (MacKay, 1992), interior monologue (Hogenraad & Orianne, 1983), and inner dialogue (Hermans

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& Hermans-Jansen, 1995; Puchalska-Wasył, 2015). Whereas other terms—particularly self-talk, self-statement, and the colloquial expression “talking to oneself”—suggest full identity of the speaker with the recipient of the utterance, both being the same self, inner dialogue implies that there are (at least) two distinct communicating parties within one self. This is consistent with the stance, widely accepted in psychology, that the self is not monolithic. For example, in the cognitive approach, the idea of self-multiplicity is reflected in the distinction between the actual self, the ideal self, the ought self (Higgins, 1987), the undesired self (Ogilvie, 1987), the possible self (Markus & Nurius, 1986), the working self (Markus & Wurf, 1987), and so on. Polypsychism speaks of numerous subpersonalities (Assagioli, 2000; Rowan, 1990), and the dialogical approach refers to various I-positions (Hermans, 2003; Hermans & Gieser, 2012; Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995). In this context, when a person says to him- or herself “You shouldn’t do it!” this may be interpreted as one part of his or her self (e.g., the ought self) addressing another part (e.g., the ideal or actual self). Similarly, an imaginary conversation with the boss may be understood as alternate formulation of utterances from two I-positions: “I as an employee” and the I-position representing the boss.

The concept of inner dialogue is strongly rooted in the dialogical self theory (DST; Hermans, 2003; Hermans & Gieser, 2012; Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995), according to which dialogical relationships exist not only between the self and others but also within the self. Dialogical self is conceptualized as a dynamic multiplicity of relatively autonomous I-positions representing different viewpoints/perspectives available for a person. Each I-position, shaped in a particular social context, has a voice (the voice of a culture, a community, a significant other, or one’s own voice) and is intertwined with other I-positions resembling people in social relationships (Hermans, 2003). As a result, not only external (interpersonal) but also internal (intrapersonal) dialogues are possible. An internal dialogue means that a person alternately adopts (at least) two different viewpoints and that utterances formulated from these perspectives refer to one another (Puchalska-Wasył, 2015). According to DST, parties to internal dialogue can be I-positions representing the person’s own or someone else’s viewpoints. This means I can imagine not only my own conversation with the boss about my promotion but also a dialogue about the same thing between my superiors or between “I as an optimist” and “I as a pessimist.”

Internal dialogues may be divided according to different criteria (Oleś et al., 2010; Puchalska-Wasył, 2006, 2011), but recently researchers have been particularly interested in the distinction (with regard to mode and outcome) between integrative (integrating) and confrontational (contrasting/confronting/coercive) dialogues (negotiations). Researchers differ not only about the nomenclature but also about defining these two types of internal dialogues (Borawski, 2011; Młynarczyk, 2011; Nir, 2012).

For example, according to Borawski (2011), integrative dialogue is “aimed at finding solutions acceptable to both parties” and “presupposes mutual openness and striving to negotiate different or even opposing views by working out a new one” (pp. 203–204). Confrontational dialogue, by juxtaposing contrary voices of the self, increases cognitive dissonance and “introduces greater difference and diversity among the I-positions involved in it, which often hinders the achievement of inner integration” (p. 203). Following researchers investigating interpersonal negotiation, Nir (2012) distinguished coercive and integrative internal negotiations. The former lead to a win-lose solution (one party wins and the other loses), whereas the latter result in a win-win creative solution, enabling both parties to satisfy their different needs and interests, strengthen their relationship, and develop future cooperation. These authors seem to share a similar understanding

of integration as consisting in all viewpoints being taken into account and negotiated, which may lead to a creative solution to the problem. What they differ about is the understanding of confrontation. Borawski appeared to locate confrontation at the opposite extreme of the same continuum on which he placed integration. Highlighting differences between viewpoints, confrontation counteracts integration. To Nir, by contrast, confrontation meant the polarization of the parties to dialogue, with one party having a sense of victory and the other one a sense of defeat. It is not, then, the total opposite of integrative win-win resolution. Linking confrontational dialogues with the enhancement of one viewpoint while ignoring and depreciating the other seems correct, which other authors have confirmed (cf. Młynarczyk, 2011). It is harder to agree with Nir's treatment of the sense of victory experienced by a party to dialogue as a simple consequence of having negotiated a solution that satisfies that party. Depending on the relation between the two parties to dialogue, a solution that satisfies only one of them may evoke a sense of victory, both victory and defeat, or only defeat in that party. In some cases, a sense of victory results from preventing the satisfaction of the other party. The problem, therefore, seems to be more complex.

My understanding of integration and confrontation in internal dialogues draws on the above proposals but elaborates them. It is based on the assumption that integration and confrontation are independent dimensions in terms of which internal dialogues can be described. Integration concerns the degree of agreement reached between the viewpoints on problem solution that clash in a dialogue, whereas confrontation refers to determining the winner and the loser.

Integration comprises the extension and alignment of perspectives, whereas confrontation comprises valorization and devalorization processes. It is assumed that each of these four processes may occur in both parties to dialogue and concern both viewpoints.

In the process of perspective *extension*, a given perspective is modified under the influence of new contents heard in a dialogue to take into account the arguments of the other party. In the case of perspective *alignment*, a given standpoint is adjusted to the partner's perspective in order to maintain the relation with him or her. Both extension and alignment refer to a modification of one perspective under the influence of the other, and in this sense both processes concern the degree of agreement between the clashing viewpoints. However, the cause of this modification is different in each case—qualitatively new contents or an intention to maintain the relationship with the interlocutor. Thus, when conducting an imaginary dialogue with my boss about a task I do not want to take on, I may partly or wholly change my opinion (modify my viewpoint) because my boss will give a convincing argument that I have not considered before (extension), or because I do not want to spoil the relationship with my boss (alignment). Likewise, "my boss's" viewpoint may be modified and reach agreement with mine under the influence of my arguments or for the sake of our good relationship. The higher the intensity of each process in each party to dialogue, the stronger the integration. Integration thus involves openness to the partner's perspective and readiness to consider his or her arguments and needs, which manifests itself in modifying the adopted stance. The more the solution takes into account the standpoints of both parties, the greater is the integration. Also, the stronger the integration, the greater is the chance of new creative solutions appearing through the cooperation of two perspectives that have undergone extension.

Confrontation in an internal dialogue involves valorization and devalorization processes. The *valorization* of a standpoint consists in treating it as victorious in a dialogue; the victory is attributed exclusively to the strength of argumentation following from that standpoint. *Devalorization*, by contrast, consists in perceiving a given standpoint as defeated in a dialogue.

Confrontation consists in maximizing the valorization and minimizing the devalorization of one party while minimizing the valorization and maximizing the devalorization of the other. The higher the disproportion in perceiving the parties to dialogue, the stronger the confrontation.

Confrontation should not be confused with conflict. Conflict may but does not necessarily involve strong confrontation. Conflict means contradictory goals or needs of the two parties to dialogue, whereas confrontation concerns a situation of one party (the winner) having an advantage over the other (the loser). When it is impossible to identify the winner and the loser in a conflict because both parties have a similar balance of gains and losses, then—according to the approach proposed—the intensity of confrontation is low. For instance, in my imaginary dialogue with the boss, confrontation will be low if neither party manages to force his or her standpoint and the problem remains unsolved (e.g., I still refuse to do what the boss expects). In such a dialogue, neither party feels he or she is the winner or both perceive themselves as losers to a similar degree. If, by contrast, the boss says I am fired, then confrontation will be strong, because my viewpoint will be the clear loser and the boss's viewpoint will be the indisputable winner. Conflict may also lead to constructive solutions. It will then exhibit a high intensity of integration.

This understanding of integration and confrontation in internal dialogues, together with the method based on it (proposed further), may prove useful in exploring the issues of integrating and confrontational dialogical activity. Little is known so far about integrative internal dialogues. The few existing studies show that voicing different viewpoints on a problem and considering the corresponding variety of arguments (typical of integrative dialogues) is conducive to well-being and better psychological functioning (Hermans, 2003; Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995). Compared to confrontational dialogues, integrative ones enhance situational self-esteem and positive emotions (Borawski, 2011). Additionally, integrative dialogues conducted by people who prefer dialogical thinking can reduce the discrepancies between their ideal and ought selves (Młynarczyk, 2011). It can be supposed that the ability to integrate internal perspectives in a dialogue that simulates social interactions translates into greater ease in generating solutions to difficult situations (cf. Staudinger & Baltes, 1996), into deeper and more empathic relationships, and into greater willingness to cooperate. Even less is known about confrontational dialogues than about integrative ones. Such scant knowledge about such an important aspect of internal dialogical activity invites further research.

It seems that one of the factors that may differentiate between integrative and confrontational dialogues is the specificity of the internal interlocutor. When conducting an internal dialogue, a person usually identifies with the activated perspectives to different degrees. The viewpoint less strongly identified with is treated as an internal interlocutor for the one that is more strongly identified with, and is perceived to a greater extent as one's own. This understanding of an internal interlocutor was adopted in my research.

In three previous studies I established that clustering internal interlocutors based on their emotional characteristics leads to distinguishing four main affective types of these interlocutors. In each of the three studies, data were collected differently. In the pilot study, each person listed all of his or her inner interlocutors (Puchalska-Wasył, Chmielnicka-Kuter, & Oles, 2008). In next study, each participant was to name the most frequent internal interlocutor. In the third study, each participant chose four interlocutors: two of those were the interlocutors who most often appeared in internal dialogues, and the remaining two were supposed to differ from them in the emotions they typically showed toward the participant (Puchalska-Wasył, 2015). In each

study, the internal interlocutor's emotional attitude toward the participant was assessed using 24 affect terms (love, care, pride, anger, etc.). The three studies analyzed, respectively, 649, 97, and 449 emotional profiles of interlocutors, which were subjected to k-means clustering (for details, see Puchalska-Wasył, 2015). These analyses allowed me to identify—with relatively high consistency—four clusters corresponding to four emotional types of internal interlocutors. To establish the specificity of these types, averaged affective patterns of clusters were related to the experience categorization criteria proposed by Hermans and Hermans-Jansen (1995). It was assumed that the cluster defined by the experience of “autonomy and success” corresponds to the emotional type of interlocutor labeled *proud rival*. The type experiencing “powerlessness and isolation” was labeled *helpless child*. “Strength and unity” were recognized as characteristics for *faithful friend*, whereas *ambivalent parent* was associated with the experience of ambivalence (balance of positive and negative feelings) accompanied by a high intensity of feelings expressing desire for contact (e.g., love) and strength (e.g., self-confidence). The names of interlocutor types were inspired by the specificity and context of their characteristic experience (Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995). On that basis, descriptions of types were developed. Faithful friend is a warm and caring interlocutor, full of love and at the same time strong, thanks to the bond with the author of internal dialogues. Ambivalent parent is a loving figure, although often critical of the person in whose internal dialogues he or she appears. Proud rival is autonomous, self-confident, and self-efficacious, and often has a sense of superiority. Helpless child awaits help or has lost hope for it, plunging into a sense of loneliness and helplessness. Thus, he or she seems to epitomize a loser.

The drawback of identifying types using cluster analysis is that individual cases of interlocutors with emotional climate clearly different from the others may be overlooked. Therefore, the above types should be understood as the most frequently found, not as the only ones.

In the first of the studies described (Puchalska-Wasył, Chmielnicka-Kuter, & Oles, 2008), it was checked whether interlocutor types differ in the intensity of seven metafunctions: support, substitution, exploration, bond, self-improvement, insight, and self-guiding, which will be discussed in greater detail further on. Only in substitution were no differences found between interlocutor types. It also turned out that the types fell into two function-based groups. The first group comprised faithful friend and ambivalent parent. The only significant difference between them was in support, which was stronger in faithful friend. The second group consisted of proud rival and helpless child. These interlocutors differed from each other only in self-improvement, a metafunction performed more markedly by helpless child. Moreover, the first group exhibited significantly higher support, exploration, bond, and insight metafunctions.

Considering the emotional and functional specificity of internal interlocutor types and the characteristics of integrative and confrontational dialogues, two hypotheses were formulated:

1. Faithful friend and ambivalent parent are the types of interlocutors characteristic for integrative dialogues, whereas proud rival and helpless child are characteristic for confrontational dialogues.

The emotional characteristics of helpless child do not unambiguously exhibit an association with confrontational dialogues—a weak and helpless interlocutor may induce the other party to show his or her advantage or to show support. This association was hypothesized due to the additional functional resemblance between helpless child and proud rival.

2. Integrative internal dialogues perform support, exploration, bond, and insight metafunctions to a greater degree than confrontational dialogues.

Hypothesis 2 is a consequence of posing Hypothesis 1 and the findings of a previous study on the functional differentiation of interlocutor types (Puchalska-Wasył, Chmielnicka-Kuter, & Oles, 2008). Therefore, it emphasizes functions more characteristic of integrative than of confrontational dialogues.

Two studies were conducted to address these problems. Study 1 aimed to test Hypothesis 1. Study 2 aimed to replicate the results of Study 1 using a different procedure and, additionally, to test Hypothesis 2.

Study 1 was an experiment involving a manipulation of the type of internal dialogue (integrative vs. confrontational). The dialogue was to discuss the same hypothetical problem in each condition. In Study 2, the participants freely conducted an internal dialogue—later classified as integrative or confrontational—concerning an issue of personal importance. Thus, Study 2 began by collecting qualitative data, reflecting the great diversity of internal interlocutors reported by the participants. Next, the data were quantified and analyzed statistically.

## GENERAL METHOD

### Procedure

Both studies were conducted in Poland. In Study 1, a research assistant invited students encountered by chance at the university to participate. Those who agreed were randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions (integration vs. confrontation). The study had an individual character. In Study 2, convenience sampling was applied. The participants learned about the research project from their friends or from announcements. The research was held individually or in small groups. Paper-and-pencil versions of all the measures were administered in both studies.

### Measures

Three measures were used: Figure's Emotional Climate Inventory (FECI), Integration-Confrontation (ICON), and Functions of Dialogues (FUND, used only in Study 2).

FECI, by Puchalska-Wasył (2006, 2015), may be treated as a modified version of Hermans and Hermans-Jansen's (1995) Self-Confrontation Method (SCM). FECI is based on the following SCM elements: the list of 24 affect terms, the affective pattern index, and experience categorization criteria. It is also built on the assumption made by Hermans and Hermans-Jansen that various types of experience result from different degrees of gratification or frustration of two affectively manifested basic motives common to all people: desire for self-enhancement (S) and desire for contact and union with others (O). The gratification of these motives is accompanied by positive feelings (P), and frustration by negative ones (N). The major difference between FECI and SCM is that FECI is used for investigating internal interlocutors whereas SCM serves to investigate and reconstruct the client's personal system of meanings.

FECI takes the form of a table, with rows corresponding to the internal interlocutors reported by a given respondent and columns corresponding to the following 24 affective states:

Joy (P)	Shame (N)	Guilt (N)	Safety (P)
Powerlessness (N)	Enjoyment (P)	Self-Confidence (S)	Anger (N)
Self-Esteem (S)	Care (O)	Loneliness (N)	Pride (S)
Anxiety (N)	Love (O)	Trust (P)	Energy (P)
Satisfaction (P)	Self-Alienation (N)	Inferiority (N)	Inner Calm (P)
Strength (S)	Tenderness (O)	Intimacy (O)	Freedom (P)

Using a scale from 0 (not at all) to 5 (very much), participants indicate to what extent each affect describes the typical emotional climate of their imaginary interlocutor. It then becomes possible to calculate four indices for each interlocutor. S and O are the sum scores of four affect terms expressing, respectively, self-enhancement and contact with others. P and N are the sum scores of eight affects: positive and negative, respectively (Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995).

The scores range from 0 to 20 for S and O, and from 0 to 40 for P and N. All four, calculated for a particular interlocutor, constitute his or her affective pattern (S, O, P, N), based on which the most characteristic type of experience is determined for that interlocutor. The classification criteria of the six basic types of experience proposed by Hermans and Hermans-Jansen (1995) are as follows:

- +S = autonomy and success:  $S - O \geq 6$  and  $P - N \geq 10$ ;
- S = aggression and anger:  $S - O \geq 6$  and  $N - P \geq 10$ ;
- +O = unity and love:  $O - S \geq 6$  and  $P - N \geq 10$ ;
- O = unfulfilled longing:  $O - S \geq 6$  and  $N - P \geq 10$ ;
- LL = powerlessness and isolation:  $S$  and  $O \leq 7$ , and  $N - P \geq 10$ ;
- +HH = strength and unity:  $S$  and  $O \geq 12$  and  $P - N \geq 10$ .

If there is no clear difference between the levels of P and N, we speak of ambivalence (+/-), regardless of S and O.

In further analyses, as in the previous studies (Puchalska-Wasył, 2015; Puchalska-Wasył, Chmielnicka-Kuter, & Oles, 2008), the above categorization was the basis for distinguishing the emotional types of internal interlocutors—namely, proud rival, helpless child, faithful friend, and ambivalent parent. Their most characteristic experience types were, respectively: +S, -LL, +HH, and +/- (with high S and O).

Hermans and Hermans-Jansen (1995) determined the reliability of S, O, P, and N indices by examining two groups: 43 students (20 men) and 40 clients (20 men). For students, the reliabilities (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) of S, O, P, and N were .83, .86, .85, and .88, respectively. The correlation was .27 between S and O, and -.79 between P and N. For clients, the reliabilities of S, O, P, and N were .83, .89, .93, and .91, respectively. The correlation was .64 between S and O, and -.70 between P and N. Clients scored lower on S ( $p < .001$ ), O ( $p < .05$ ), and P ( $p < .001$ ) and higher on N ( $p < .001$ ) than students. No differences were found between men and women.

The reliability of FECI was tested on a group of 31 students assessing a figure of their choice. Cronbach's  $\alpha$ s of S, O, P, and N were .74, .93, .88, and .89, respectively (Puchalska-Wasył, 2006).

ICON, by Puchalska-Wasył, is a 13-item measure of the intensity of integrative and confrontational characteristics of internal dialogues, completed with a specific imaginary dialogue in mind.



ICON is based on my understanding of integration and confrontation (see Introduction). The assumption that integration and confrontation are independent dimensions of internal dialogue description makes it possible to measure them separately in each dialogue. Integration refers to the degree of agreement achieved between clashing standpoints, whereas confrontation concerns the intensity of victory and defeat in each party to dialogue.

Integration comprises the extension and alignment of the standpoints involved in a dialogue, whereas confrontation is constituted by the processes of their valorization and devalorization. Each process potentially occurs in each party to dialogue. Thus, the first eight ICON items (Appendix), rated on a 0–6 scale, concern the following, respectively:

1. first party perspective extension (EXT1),
2. second party perspective extension (EXT2),
3. first perspective alignment (ALI1),
4. second perspective alignment (ALI2),
5. first perspective valorization (V1),
6. second perspective valorization (V2),
7. first perspective devalorization (DV1),
8. second perspective devalorization (DV2).

In the basic version of ICON, the first perspective corresponds to the viewpoint of the dialogue's author (the participant); the second perspective corresponds to the imaginary interlocutor's standpoint. However, in this respect, the method is open to modifications (see Study 1).

The next five items (also rated on a 0–6 scale) are supplementary and concern the participant's empathy with the interlocutor's and his or her own role, the participant's similarity to the interlocutor, as well as the probability and wishfulness of the dialogue.

The higher the intensity of extension and alignment in each party, the higher is the intensity of integration, resulting from viewpoint modification under the partner's influence and enabling the development of new creative solutions. Integration intensity, from 0 to 24, is computed thus:

$$\text{INT} = \text{EXT1} + \text{EXT2} + \text{ALI1} + \text{ALI2}$$

Confrontation, which refers to determining the winner and the loser in a dialogue, consists in the polarization of partners. It manifests itself in maximizing the valorization and minimizing the devalorization of one party while minimizing the valorization and maximizing the devalorization of the other. The confrontation index increases with the growth of disproportion in the perception of parties to dialogue as winners and losers. If both parties win or/and lose to a similar degree, confrontation is weak. In ICON, confrontation intensity ranges from 0 to 12 and is computed according to the following formula:

$$\text{CONF} = |(\text{V1} + \text{DV2}) - (\text{V2} + \text{DV1})|$$

To determine whether a dialogue is more integrative or more confrontational, percentage indices of integration and confrontation are compared.

The reliability of ICON was established on the basis of data collected in Study 2, in which all participants received the same instruction. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  was .75 for INT and .78 for CONF; items V2 and DV1 were reverse-scored.

In the other two studies, in which individuals conducted dialogues about a matter of personal importance and then completed ICON, the correlation between integration and confrontation indices was nonsignificant and close to zero ( $N = 93$ ,  $r = -.048$ ,  $p = .648$ ;  $N = 119$ ,  $r = -.024$ ,  $p = .798$ ). This supports the theoretically postulated independence of integration and confrontation dimensions.

FUND, by Puchalska-Wasył, is a modification of the Dialogue-Monologue-Perspective Questionnaire (D-M-P; Puchalska-Wasył, 2006). D-M-P contains a list of 24 specific functions that internal dialogical activity may perform. The items were generated based on DST and research concerning dialogical phenomena. Participants use a 0–1 scale to indicate the occurrence (1) or nonoccurrence (0) of each function in their dialogue. Hierarchical cluster analysis conducted using complete linkage clustering showed the interrelations of all the functions. This made it possible to extract seven subscales corresponding to the main groups of functions, called metafunctions: support (3 items), substitution (4), exploration (3), bond (2), self-improvement (3), insight (6), and self-guiding (3).

D-M-P results were promising (Puchalska-Wasył, 2006; Puchalska-Wasył, Chmielnicka-Kuter, & Oles, 2008), but the small number of items in some subscales might have lowered their internal consistency (from .59 for self-guiding to .84 for support). Moreover, the 0–1 scale potentially limited measurement precision.

To remedy these difficulties, FUND was constructed. Taking into account the DST, research on internal dialogical activity, and the meaning of the metafunctions previously identified in D-M-P, additional items were generated. Based on consistent ratings by two competent judges, 56 items were included in the pilot version of FUND. The measure was administered to 93 students (45 men) with a mean age of 21.69 ( $SD = 1.50$ ; range 19–30) who had just conducted an internal dialogue about a matter of personal importance. The participants rated the intensity of each function using a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), relating items to their internal dialogue. Based on the discriminatory power of the items and the fulfilled requirement for each item to correlate higher with the subscale it belonged to than with other subscales, 49 items were selected to the final version of FUND—seven items for each metafunction. Presented below is the psychological sense and the internal consistency coefficient of each subscale.

- Support (a source of hope, a sense of security, and meaning in life); Cronbach's  $\alpha = .85$ .
- Substitution (a substitute for real contact, argumentation practice, catharsis);  $\alpha = .75$ .
- Exploration (search for new experiences, escape from dull reality);  $\alpha = .77$ .
- Bond (experience of deep relation, bond with someone close, and being needed);  $\alpha = .88$ .
- Self-improvement (warning against a mistake, learning from other people's mistakes, a self-evaluation criterion);  $\alpha = .80$ .
- Insight (a way of gaining a new perspective, advice, and distance from a problem);  $\alpha = .80$ .
- Self-guiding (a factor motivating for action and development, guidance in setting new goals, a source of a sense of control over the situation);  $\alpha = .80$ .

Because the items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale, the score on each subscale ranges from 7 to 35.

## STUDY 1

In Study 1, it was hypothesized that the main interlocutors in integrative dialogues were faithful friend and ambivalent parent, and in confrontational dialogues, proud rival and helpless child. With reference to the classification of experience proposed by Hermans and Hermans-Jansen (1995), it was assumed that averaged affective patterns for interlocutor types would reflect the following kinds of experience, respectively: strength and unity (+HH), ambivalence with intensified motives of self-enhancement and contact (+/-), autonomy and success (+S), and powerlessness and isolation (-LL). Apart from identifying the interlocutors characteristic for particular types of inner dialogues, Study 1 was to be the first experimental replication of the previously identified four emotional types of imaginary interlocutors.

### Participants

The participants were 133 people (67 women). The integration condition included 67 randomly assigned individuals (33 women), and confrontation included 66 individuals (34 women). Because the aim of the study was to identify interlocutor types characteristic for integrative vs. confrontational dialogues, it was essential that these two types of dialogues were properly represented. It was therefore decided that the effectiveness of the experimental manipulation in each participant should be verified using ICON. Consequently, it was decided that analyses should cover only those dialogues from the integration condition whose integration percentage index (determined using ICON) was higher than the confrontation index and only those dialogues from the confrontation condition in which confrontation prevailed. This manipulation check excluded 23 dialogues from the integration condition and 9 from confrontation. The rejected dialogues in the integration condition usually led to one party yielding to the other completely, which the participant perceived as clear defeat of the first interlocutor and/or victory of the other. A quarrel happened once. In the rejected dialogues in the confrontation condition, parties retained their positions, but it was impossible to determine the winner and the loser because the balance of gains and losses was the same for both parties.

Ultimately, analyses covered the results of 101 people (53 women) with a mean age of 22.68 ( $SD = 1.84$ , range 20–29). There were 44 participants (24 women) in the integration condition and 57 (29 women) in the confrontation condition. They were students of various majors (e.g., law, management, economics, administration, sociology, mathematics, chemistry, physics); 58 undergraduates, 40 graduate students, and 3 doctoral students.

### Procedure

The study took 20 to 30 minutes. The participants were informed that the study would be anonymous and voluntary. They were told that it concerned the ability to adopt various people's viewpoints and to empathize with their emotions. Next, they received a description of a fictional problem faced by a young married couple. The woman—a wife and mother—wanted to change her job from well-paid but inconsistent with her aspirations to uncertain but ambition-fulfilling. The husband opposed this change as threatening the family's financial situation. After reading the description, participants were asked to imagine that they were one of the characters in the story and to write down an imaginary dialogue that could take place between the spouses. In

the integration group, the dialogue was to be conducted in such a way as to make the final decision a result of mutual agreement between the interlocutors. In the confrontation group, the participants were to prevent agreement and make one character the winner and the other one the loser. Afterward, participants from both groups completed ICON (as a form of manipulation check) and FECL. Finally, they were debriefed.

In Study 1, ICON was modified so that the names of characters from the description appeared in the items. As a result, in the integration and confrontation indices, “1” referred to the husband and “2” to the wife. The supplementary questions in ICON were modified likewise. Thus, the participants were asked about their empathy with the role of the man and the woman from the description and about similarity to them. Next, in order to learn which spouse a participant identified with more or less, the index of identification with the woman (i.e., the sum score of items concerning empathy with the woman’s role and similarity to the female character) and an analogous index of identification with the man were computed for each person. It was assumed that the character who was more strongly identified with represented the participant’s viewpoint and the one less strongly identified with was treated as the participant’s internal interlocutor.

FECL in Study 1 served to determine the spouses’ emotional climate. Only the affective pattern of the spouse corresponding to the internal interlocutor (weaker identification index) was included in further analyses.

## Results and Discussion

Because the hypothesis postulated two main types of interlocutors in integrative dialogues and two in confrontational ones, the affective patterns of interlocutors ( $N = 101$ ) were subjected to 2-means clustering with a distinction between dialogue types. The maximum number of iterations was established at 10. The analysis was finished after three iterations for confrontational dialogues and after four for integrative ones. Averaged affective patterns of clusters were related to the experience categorization criteria proposed by Hermans and Hermans-Jansen (1995) and presented when describing FECL. Analysis of the affective patterns of the four groups (Table 1) revealed that these patterns corresponded to the emotional types of internal interlocutors identified in previous research (Puchalska-Wasył, 2015; Puchalska-Wasył, Chmielnicka-Kuter, & Oles, 2008)—namely, faithful friend, ambivalent parent, proud rival, and helpless child—and their association with dialogue types was as hypothesized.

The following types were identified in integrative dialogues:

- Type +HH ( $n = 27$ )—previously called faithful friend—best characterized by the experience of “strength and unity” (high S, high O, high P, low N), which usually appears in the context of friendship and means self-reinforcement (high S), thanks to a deep relationship (high O; cf. Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995).
- Type +/- with fairly strong O motive ( $n = 17$ )—previously called ambivalent parent—a close and loving interlocutor (high O), full of positive (high P) but also sometimes negative feelings (high N) toward the dialogue partner, which causes ambivalence. He or she resembles a parent who experiences negative feelings in reaction to the child’s irresponsible behaviors but never stops loving the child.

In confrontational dialogues, the following types were distinguished:

TABLE 1  
Comparison of Affective Indices for the Types of Internal Interlocutors Identified in Integrative and Confrontational Dialogues in Study 1

Affective pattern		Type of internal interlocutor in internal dialogues				ANOVA			Post hoc tests—significant differences
		Integrative		Confrontational		$F_{(3, 97)}$	$p <$	$\eta_p^2$	
		1. Faithful friend ( $n = 27$ )	2. Ambivalent parent ( $n = 17$ )	3. Proud rival ( $n = 19$ )	4. Helpless child ( $n = 38$ )				
S	<i>M</i>	11.96	7.41	17.11	8.42	25.49	.001	.44	1–2, 1–3, 1–4, 2–3, 3–4
	<i>SD</i>	2.90	3.66	2.79	5.00				
O	<i>M</i>	14.07	10.59	4.11	7.24	20.16	.001	.38	1–3, 1–4, 2–3, 2–4
	<i>SD</i>	4.04	4.27	3.59	5.20				
P	<i>M</i>	25.41	13.35	20.47	8.45	58.47	.001	.64	1–2, 1–3, 1–4, 2–3, 2–4
	<i>SD</i>	6.12	6.39	5.58	5.23				
N	<i>M</i>	8.74	17.35	10.42	21.21	29.80	.001	.48	1–2, 1–4, 2–3, 2–4, 3–4
	<i>SD</i>	5.27	6.92	5.93	4.39				

**Note.** S = self-enhancement motive; O = contact with others motive; P = positive affect; N = negative affect. Bonferroni test was applied in post hoc analyses—except for the S index, in which *T3* Dunnett's test was used due to violations of the homogeneity of variance assumption. The numbered subgroups differ significantly at the level of at least  $p < .05$ .

- Type +S ( $n = 19$ )—previously called proud rival. “Autonomy and success” (high S, low O, high P, low N) is this interlocutor's basic experience during internal dialogue. This imaginary figure does not give his or her creator a sense of closeness and intimacy (low O) but, through interactions with the creator, boosts his or her own self-esteem and self-confidence (high S).
- Type –LL ( $n = 38$ )—called helpless child because his or her basic experience is “powerlessness and isolation” (low S, low O, low P, high N).

Generally, the hypothesis was positively verified. It is worth noting, however, that the ambivalent parent type, as identified in this study, showed weaker S motive compared to O, which had not been observed in earlier studies (Puchalska-Wasył, 2015). This effect might have been caused by the description of the problem situation, concerning spouses, as marriage as a community is, by definition, based on contact with others (O) rather than on self-enhancement (S).

## STUDY 2

Although in Study 1 the hypothesis was positively verified, certain shortcomings of the procedure applied may raise doubts about the reliability of the results. Can an imaginary dialogue between

fictional characters be regarded as a typical internal dialogue? Did every participant identify with one of the characters strongly enough to assume that the character expressed the participant's view? What about the dialogues of people with no experience of marriage or relationship? Finally, what if people generally have certain individual inclinations to engage in a particular type of dialogues (integrative or confrontational) and a participant was assigned to the condition that forced him or her to conduct a dialogue of the type opposed to the naturally preferred one? Perhaps this is why as many as 23 dialogues in the integration condition were not clearly integrative and 9 dialogues in the confrontation were not confrontational and had to be excluded from analyses.

In response to these concerns, Study 2 was designed to replicate the results of Study 1 using a different procedure. Instead of imaginary dialogues between fictional characters inspired by one scenario, diverse internal dialogues were collected that involved diverse but unambiguously identified interlocutors and discussed matters of personal importance to the participants, who could also choose the type of the dialogue. Moreover, Study 2 was to test Hypothesis 2, that integrative internal dialogues would perform support, exploration, bond, and insight metafunctions to a greater degree than confrontational dialogues.

### Participants

The participants were 99 people (49 men) with a mean age of 22.58 ( $SD = 1.39$ , range 19–27). Integrative dialogues were conducted by 45 people (23 men), and confrontational dialogues by 54 people (26 men). The participants were students of various majors (e.g., law, information technology, physiotherapy, biotechnology, pharmacy, administration, journalism, medicine) at 16 Polish universities; 41 undergraduate and 58 graduate students.

### Procedure

First, each participant was informed that the study was anonymous and voluntary and that it concerned the functions of dialogues that people conduct in their imagination. Next, the participants were to think about a problem important to them and then about a person who contributed to the occurrence of that problem. Finally, they were asked to write down an imaginary dialogue with that person about the problem, choosing one of two options. The dialogue could be conducted in such a way that the interlocutors took into account the arguments of the other party and worked out a new solution together that met the needs of both parties (integrative); alternatively, the participant had the option of preventing agreement and making one interlocutor the winner and the other one the loser (confrontational). Afterward, the participants completed ICON, FECCI, and FUND.

Based on ICON, the type of each dialogue was determined. It was assumed that an integrative dialogue should have a higher percentage index of integration than of confrontation, and that a confrontational dialogue should exhibit the reverse pattern. FECCI served to determine the emotional climate of both parties to dialogue, but only the imaginary interlocutor's affective pattern was entered in further statistical analyses. FUND made it possible to identify the dialogue's functions. In the context of the objective, which was to identify interlocutor types and their functions, the content of dialogues was of secondary importance and was therefore not analyzed.

TABLE 2  
Comparison of Affective Indices for the Types of Internal Interlocutors Identified in Integrative and Confrontational Dialogues in Study 2

Affective pattern		Type of internal interlocutor in internal dialogues				ANOVA			Post hoc tests—significant differences
		Integrative		Confrontational		$F_{(3, 95)}$	$p <$	$\eta_p^2$	
		1. Faithful friend ( $n = 29$ )	2. Ambivalent parent ( $n = 16$ )	3. Proud rival ( $n = 30$ )	4. Helpless child ( $n = 24$ )				
S	<i>M</i>	12.59	7.94	13.47	5.04	26.24	.001	.45	1–3, 1–4, 2–3, 3–4
	<i>SD</i>	3.40	3.62	3.48	5.03				
O	<i>M</i>	9.93	4.63	3.63	3.67	12.11	.001	.28	1–2, 1–3, 1–4
	<i>SD</i>	5.22	3.72	3.97	4.98				
P	<i>M</i>	25.86	11.94	16.53	6.46	44.93	.001	.59	1–2, 1–3, 1–4, 2–4, 3–4
	<i>SD</i>	5.04	4.95	7.42	6.74				
N	<i>M</i>	7.59	17.25	6.90	21.50	31.08	.001	.50	1–2, 1–4, 2–3, 2–4, 3–4
	<i>SD</i>	6.59	5.81	5.09	8.19				

**Note.** S = self-enhancement motive; O = contact with others motive; P = positive affect; N = negative affect. Bonferroni test was applied in post hoc analyses—except for the S index, in which *T3* Dunnett's test was used due to violations of the homogeneity of variance assumption. The numbered subgroups differ significantly at the level of at least  $p < .05$ .

## Results and Discussion

To replicate the results of Study 1, affective patterns of internal interlocutors collected in Study 2 ( $N = 99$ ) were subjected to analyses analogous to those performed in Study 1. Analogous results were obtained (Table 2). Faithful friend (+HH;  $n = 29$ ) and ambivalent parent (+/-;  $n = 16$ ) were the types found in integrative dialogues, whereas proud rival (+S;  $n = 30$ ) and helpless child (-LL;  $n = 24$ ) were identified in confrontational dialogues. The only difference compared to Study 1 was that this time ambivalent parent exhibited a self-enhancement motive (S) more intensive than the contact motive (O), both motives being rather weak. This suggests that the intensity of motives in an ambivalent interlocutor may depend on the context of dialogue.

To identify the metafunctions wherein performance integrative and confrontational dialogues differ, the types of dialogues were compared on each FUND subscale using Student's *t*-test (Table 3). Analyses revealed that integrative dialogues performed the support, bond, insight, and self-guiding metafunctions more markedly than confrontational dialogues. Comparison effects (Cohen's *d*) were high for the first two of these metafunctions and average for the others. Additionally, the four types of internal interlocutors were compared, using one-way ANOVA, for each of the seven metafunctions (Figure 1). As previously, differences were found in support, bond, insight, and self-guiding, although post hoc analyses showed that these differences did not occur between interlocutors characteristic for a given type of dialogue but only between interlocutors

TABLE 3  
Comparison of Metafunctions in Integrative and Confrontational Dialogues in Study 2

Metafunctions	Internal dialogues				Differences			
	Integrative (n = 45)		Confrontational (n = 54)		t	df	p <	d
	M	SD	M	SD				
Support	21.38	5.63	16.69	5.67	4.11	97	.001	0.84
Substitution	24.13	5.00	22.94	5.37	1.13	97	.261	0.23
Exploration	21.02	5.08	19.39	5.48	1.53	97	.130	0.31
Bond	18.78	7.81	13.39	5.72	3.85	97	.001	0.81
Self-improvement	24.69	4.82	23.48	5.91	1.10	97	.274	0.22
Insight	25.93	5.34	22.48	6.45	2.86	97	.005	0.58
Self-guiding	26.91	4.54	24.07	5.33	2.82	97	.006	0.58

representing different dialogue types. Generally, Hypothesis 2 concerning metafunctions was positively verified with regard to support, bond, and insight. Contrary to expectations, there were no differences in exploration, but a difference was found in self-guiding.

### GENERAL DISCUSSION

The main aim of the presented research was to identify the types of internal interlocutors appearing in integrative and confrontational internal dialogues and to determine the differences in the

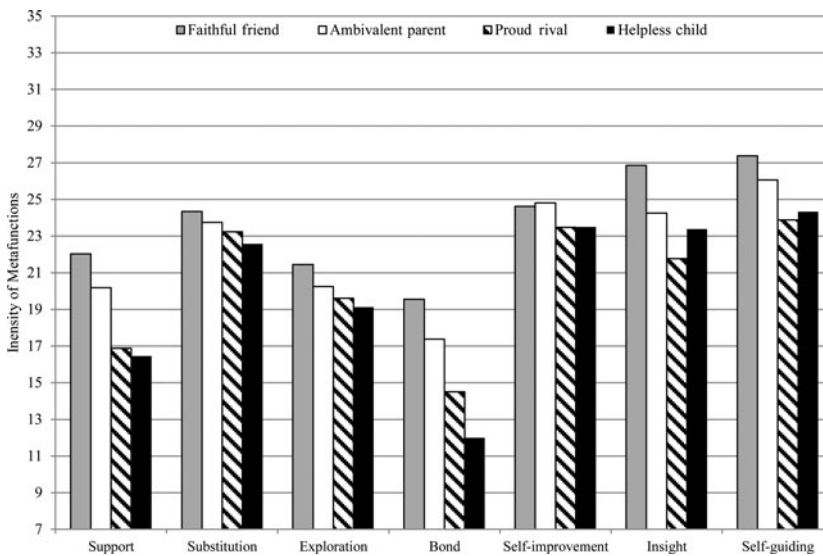


FIGURE 1 Mean intensity of metafunctions in the types of internal interlocutors identified in Study 2.



functions performed by these two dialogue types. Using different methods, each study replicated previous results pointing to the existence of four most frequent emotional types of internal interlocutors (Puchalska-Wasył, 2015; Puchalska-Wasył, Chmielnicka-Kuter, & Oles, 2008) and confirmed that faithful friend and ambivalent parent are characteristic for integrative dialogues whereas proud rival and helpless child are typical of confrontational ones. The results seem consistent with my understanding of integration and confrontation, proposed in the introduction. Given that confrontation implies determining the winner and the loser, it seems natural that, of the four types distinguished, proud rival and helpless child are typical of confrontational dialogues. The emotional specificity of proud rival, featuring self-enhancement (high S) without maintaining the bond (low O) with the other party (the author of the dialogue), suggests that this figure will be the winner. By contrast, helpless child, powerless and isolated by definition, appears to embody the loser. Integration means reaching agreement between clashing viewpoints. Unsurprisingly, it is faithful friend that promotes integration—a strong (high S) and loving (high O) interlocutor allowing the partner to experience self-reinforcement thanks to a deep relationship (Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995). The same could be said about ambivalent parent, an interlocutor who, by definition, disapproves of some behaviors of the dialogue’s author while maintaining a close positive bond with him or her. This interlocutor can therefore be expected to be interested in reaching agreement. Still, this explanation of the link between ambivalent parent and integration in dialogue has a weakness. It seems accurate in light of previous studies (Puchalska-Wasył, 2015; Puchalska-Wasył, Chmielnicka-Kuter, & Oles, 2008) but is not very convincing against Study 2, in which ambivalent parent had a low intensity of both motives, especially contact with others (O). Considering that study—and Study 1, in which ambivalent parent exhibited relatively low self-enhancement (S)—one may wonder if the intensity of the motives in this interlocutor type is not dependent on the dialogue’s context, which it is beyond the scope of this article to analyze. On the other hand, ambivalent parent was the least represented in both Study 1 ( $n = 17$ ) and Study 2 ( $n = 16$ ), which makes generalizations premature. This issue requires further research.

In light of DST, it is possible to see proud rival and helpless child as representing the centrifugal force in the self and faithful friend and ambivalent parent as serving the centripetal force. Whereas the centrifugal force increases the autonomy of I-positions and maintains their diversity, the centripetal force favors the integration of the desires and efforts of those different I-positions, so that the self can function as an organized “society of mind” (Hermans, 2003; Hermans & Kempen, 1993). The distinction between confrontational and integrative internal interlocutors can also be seen as expressing the two main characteristics of the dialogical self: dominance and intersubjective exchange (Hermans & Kempen, 1993). Proud rival and helpless child mainly occur in dialogues that establish an advantage of one party over the other (dominance), whereas faithful friend and ambivalent parent, striving for integration, not only express their needs and desires but also remain open to the partner’s arguments (exchange).

The presented studies analyzed only one category of internal dialogues: those simulating social relations. Such dialogues draw on but do not reproduce various aspects of actual interactions. It seems they may be a form of counterfactual reasoning, the ability to consider alternative possibilities for past interactions (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000), or plans for more or less desired courses of future interactions. People’s internal dialogues have many characteristics typical of their actual interpersonal relations (Cooper, 2003); for instance, people’s traits are reflected in the ways of conducting not only real but also imagined dialogues (Puchalska-Wasył, 2011). Also, the outcome of dialogues simulating social relations may be considered as modeled on actual

negotiations in terms of power distribution and the satisfaction of the needs of the two parties, which I define as integration and confrontation dimensions (Deutsch, 2001; Weingart, Thompson, Bazerman, & Carroll, 1990; cf. Nir, 2012).

Dialogues simulating social relations can be seen in a broader context of phenomena described in the literature as mental imagery. Mental imagery is a key to understanding others by simulating their mental states—intentions, feelings, and beliefs (“theory of mind”; Goldman & Sripada, 2005), and to self-evaluation (Kahneman & Tversky, 1982). It is a self-regulatory mechanism that enables and empowers our pursuit of ambitions, aims, and aspirations (Crisp & Turner, 2012). It serves a fundamental function in the selection, rehearsal, preparation, and planning of goal-directed behavior (Marks, 1999). Additionally, it helps us regulate our emotional reactions to past and possible future events, and it is a key component needed to effect behavior change (Crisp & Turner, 2012). These functions of mental imagery are congruent with several functions of internal dialogues presented in FUND—namely, insight (adopting the perspective of the other), self-improvement (self-evaluation), self-guiding (a factor motivating for action and development, guidance in setting new goals), and substitution (rehearsing planned actions). It seems, however, that internal dialogues play at least two other functions—support and bond—which (just like insight and self-guiding) turned out in Study 2 to differentiate integrative and confrontational dialogues simulating social relations.

The emotional specificity of internal interlocutors may help explain the fact that confrontational dialogue performs the support, bond, and insight metafunctions to a significantly smaller degree than integrative dialogue. These metafunctions, particularly the first two, seem to stem from the contact motive (O), suppressed in proud rival and helpless child—and if warmth, closeness, and trust are lacking in a relationship (O motive), effective support and the experience of a genuine bond are lacking, too. Also, insight, understood here as obtaining advice or distance from a problem, is easier in an atmosphere of freedom created by the partner’s acceptance than in a situation of compulsion involved in the winner-loser situation (Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995; Miller & Rollnick, 2002; Rogers, 1961). It is worth stressing, though, that in the light of the results obtained, even a dialogue far from this ideal—a dialogue involving a proud rival or a helpless child—may sometimes perform the above metafunctions. What circumstances make this possible remains for further research to probe.

It is difficult to explain why Study 2 did not reveal the difference found in previous studies, which showed that faithful friend and ambivalent parent performed the metafunction of exploration significantly more often than proud rival or helpless child (Puchalska-Wasył, Chmielnicka-Kuter, & Oles, 2008); it was found, contrary to expectations, that integrative dialogues perform the self-guiding metafunction to a significantly higher degree. First, these unexpected results may reflect actual functional differences between the interlocutor types identified in dialogues simulating social relations (Study 2) compared to interlocutors identified in the first study (Puchalska-Wasył, Chmielnicka-Kuter, & Oles, 2008), in which a more heterogeneous group of dialogues was analyzed. The participants could report any interlocutors, including those from dialogues in which personal viewpoints clashed (e.g., identity dialogues). Second, these two findings may be ascribed to the use of different methods: the D-M-P in the previous study and FUND in Study 2. The latter is a modification of the D-M-P and included more items. The added items were meant to reflect the previously distinguished metafunctions, but it cannot be excluded that the extended exploration and self-guiding scales gave participants new possibilities of relating functions to the situation of integration and confrontation in dialogues. As a result, integrative dialogues, more often than

confrontational ones, proved to be a factor motivating for action and development, guidance in setting new goals, and a source of a sense of control (self-guiding). Confrontational dialogues proved to be a form of search for new experiences and escape from dull reality (exploration) to a similar extent as integrative ones.

Establishing differences in the intensity of functions between integrative and confrontational dialogues is an important outcome of the presented research. Surprisingly, however, no functional differences were found between interlocutors characteristic for a given type of dialogue (e.g., proud rival vs. helpless child, or faithful friend vs. ambivalent parent). Given that such differences had previously occurred (Puchalska-Wasył, Chmielnicka-Kuter, & Oles, 2008), the different results can be explained in two ways. They may stem from different data collection procedures in the studies compared and, consequently, from the somewhat different material analyzed (dialogues simulating relations vs. any dialogues). It is also possible that one result or another is an artifact. Further research is needed to resolve this issue.

Still, assuming that interlocutors from a given dialogue type do not differ significantly in terms of function, is it possible to explain the existence of internal interlocutors functionally duplicating one another? First of all, it is essential to realize that the four main emotional types of internal interlocutors (those most frequently found in the examined groups) need not occur in every person. Based on cognitive psychology of the self, an interpretive hypothesis can be advanced that there is only one type of confrontational interlocutor and one type of integrative interlocutor within a particular self. What that type is (faithful friend or ambivalent parent? helpless child or proud rival?) may depend, for example, on whether the dominant motive organizing the self is self-enhancement or self-verification (Swann, 1987). The self-enhancement motive makes a person focus on his or her fortes and seek experiences that confirm his or her worth. Generally, the person then looks for positive information about him- or herself (Duval & Silvia, 2002). The self-verification motive is responsible for self-concept consistency and safeguards its harmony with experience and behavior. It induces people to seek information verifying their self-concept, positively or not. Such people are more willing to take criticism and recognize faults in themselves. Research shows that people with a predominance of the self-enhancement motive are usually discouraged by criticism, so they associate with flatterers, whereas those with a stronger self-verification motive select friends and colleagues from among people capable of criticizing them in the name of truth. In this context, it can be supposed that if a person with dominant self-enhancement motive conducts a confrontational dialogue, he or she will generate an opponent figure that will turn out to be weak and helpless when faced with his or her argumentation (helpless child), so that the person can triumph. In an integrative dialogue, the preferred interlocutor will be faithful friend (supportive regardless of the situation) rather than ambivalent parent (critical as well as supportive). By contrast, a person with dominant self-verification motive will probably tend to choose critical interlocutors: ambivalent parent in integrative dialogues and proud rival in confrontational ones.

What are the implications of the research? It seems that confirming the existence of four types of internal interlocutors, their dichotomous division between integrative and confrontational dialogues, and the differences in the intensity of their functions is just the first step in exploring this aspect of dialogical psychological reality. The main value of the research lies in the fact that it opens the way for further inquiry. What seems particularly important is checking whether a given type of internal interlocutor cooccurring with a given type of dialogue (integrative vs. confrontational) is a factor conditioning the course of that dialogue, or

whether the specificity of the interlocutor as described by participants is only a consequence of how the dialogue proceeds. The research conducted does not resolve this, as it does not make it possible to draw causal conclusions. However, if further research showed that the interlocutor's specificity is indeed a factor conditioning the course of imaginary dialogues, the knowledge of this relationship could enable us to influence the types and, indirectly, the effects of dialogues conducted by people. That knowledge could be applied in psychological practice.

It seems that both quantitative and qualitative approaches may prove valuable in further research on integration and confrontation in internal dialogues. Study 1 represents a quantitative approach, whereas Study 2 goes beyond it. Although in Study 2 qualitative analyses were not performed, the participants could freely choose the interlocutor, the topic, and the way of conducting the dialogue. Thus, the method was individualized. This made it possible to collect qualitative data first, reflecting the great diversity of internal interlocutors reported by the participants. Next, the data were quantified and analyzed statistically. In this sense, Study 2 exemplifies the approach to research that Lamiell (1981) called *idiothetic*. It takes into account the person's individuality without abandoning the search for *nomothetic* regularities subject to interindividual verification. This is an attempt to combine the advantages of the qualitative and quantitative approaches.

These two approaches in research on dialogical phenomena can also be combined in a different way and remain separate. According to the sequential strategy of the mixed methods model (Creswell, 2009), they are used alternately. One may use qualitative research at the stage of problem exploration and then verify the hypotheses posed in quantitative research. One may also start with quantitative analysis and deepen its findings through qualitative research. Treating my research as the first phase in exploring the issue, it is possible to ask questions that open the way for further in-depth qualitative analyses, such as these: What forms can integrative and confrontational dialogues take? What sorts of affect are associated with the voices in these dialogues? Whose voice prevails in confrontational dialogue, and to what do people attribute this? What are the various ways people arrive at integration, and what sort of integration is accomplished? How does all of this vary with situation, with relationship context, and with the particular issue, such as the extent of disagreement prior to the evolving integration or confrontation?

What might encourage combining approaches in research on integrative and confrontational dialogues is Bakhtin's observation, that when our vision is supplemented with the vision of others, a "surplus of seeing" occurs, which can bring us a more comprehensive perspective (as cited in Holoquist, 1990).

#### DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The author has no financial interest or benefits arising from the direct applications of her research.

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## APPENDIX

### The Instruction and the First Eight Items of the Basic Version of Integration-Confrontation (ICON) Used in Study 2

Rate the extent to which each of the sentences below describes the dialogue you have conducted. Use a 0–6 scale:

- 0 = does not describe this dialog at all.  
6 = describes this dialog very well.

1. Under the influence of new content heard in the dialogue, I changed my stance and took my interlocutor's arguments into account.
2. Under the influence of new content heard in the dialogue, my interlocutor changed his or her stance and took my arguments into account.
3. In order not to spoil the relationship with my interlocutor, I changed my stance and took my interlocutor's arguments into account.
4. In order not to spoil the relationship with me, my interlocutor changed his or her stance and took my arguments into account.

5. I feel I have won the discussion, thanks to the force of my arguments.

6. My interlocutor feels he or she has won the discussion, thanks to the force of his or her arguments.

7. I feel I am the loser in this discussion.

8. My interlocutor feels he or she is the loser in this discussion.

Note: In Study 1, ICON was modified so that the items contained the names of characters from the description presented to the participants.