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SIMILARITY TO THE INTERLOCUTOR, CERTAINTY OF STANDPOINT, AND INTEGRATIVE ATTITUDE IN AN INTERNAL DIALOGUE

Numerous positive functions are ascribed to integrative internal dialogues. It is therefore worth looking for the determinants of dialogue author's integrative attitude, which is understood as openness to the partner's viewpoint as well as readiness to favorably consider their arguments and, consequently, to modify one's own stance. The aim of the present experiment (N = 215) was to check how dialogue author's integrative attitude is influenced by his or her similarity to the imagined interlocutor and by the author's certainty of his or her standpoint. Before the participants conducted an imagined dialogue, they assessed the certainty of their standpoint and wrote down their three positive and three negative characteristics. Some of these characteristics were later presented to them as the traits of their potential interlocutor. Finally, the participants completed the Integration–Confrontation questionnaire, measuring their integrative attitude in the dialogue. I found that dialogue authors who were very certain of their own standpoints exhibited a significantly lower level of integrative attitude than those who were less certain of theirs. Additionally, it turned out that similarity in terms of negative characteristics increased integrative attitude in dialogue authors. No such relationship was observed when a sense of similarity in terms of positive characteristics was induced. This is a surprising result against the background of research on actual relationships, which may attest to the specificity of internal dialogues.

Keywords: internal/imagined dialogue; simulation of social relationships; integrative attitude; certainty of standpoint; similarity.

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Internal dialogues are a phenomenon that consists in a person alternately adopting at least two points of view and in utterances formulated from these points of view (aloud or only mentally) responding to one another (Hermans, 2003; Puchalska-Wasyl, 2016a, 2016b, 2017). These points of view taken in a dialogue may represent both the personal perspective and the perspective of a person from the social environment. In the former case, "I-optimist" in my internal dialogue may argue with "I-pessimist," and "I-realist" will try to dampen the enthusiasm of "I-idealist." The latter case happens when, for instance, we continue an interrupted inspiring conversation with a friend in our thoughts, or when we present our own arguments while preparing for an important talk with our superior and then refute them from the interlocutor's perspective in order to return to our own point of view and formulate another counterargument in response to the boss's stance. The last two cases of dialogues are typical simulations of social interactions – one point of view usually represents the dialogue author's personal perspective, while the other represents the perspective of an interlocutor, known personally or from the media or created in the imagination (e.g., an imaginary friend).

In the light of Puchalska-Wasyl's (2016a, 2016b, 2017) two-dimensional model of internal dialogue, every internal dialogue is characterized by two parallel processes: confrontation and integration. These processes are treated as two independent dimensions in terms of which a dialogue is described. As a result, it is assumed that a confrontational dialogue is one that has a higher level of confrontation than integration, whereas in an integrative dialogue the pattern is the reverse. Confrontation refers to the level of power and domination in a dialogue, while integration concerns the level of ideas (the essence of the matter under discussion).

Confrontation is understood as the degree of polarization between the partners in a dialogue in terms of victory and defeat. It depends on the difference in the level of confrontational attitudes in both partners. The confrontational attitude of a given party to dialogue is connected with their perceived advantage over the interlocutor, manifested in treating themselves as the winner and the interlocutor as the loser. The larger the difference in the level of confrontational attitudes between the partners after the completion of a dialogue, the higher the disproportion in the distribution of power between the winner and the loser and, consequently, the higher the rating of general (global) confrontation level in the dialogue.

Integration between dialogue partners is defined as the degree of agreement achieved by the partners regarding the solution to the problem discussed. General

(global) integration increases with the increase in integrative attitudes in both partners. The higher their level, the greater the chance of reaching a creative solution in the internal dialogue, since the integrative attitude is associated with openness to the interlocutor's perspective, willingness to favorably consider his or her arguments and to modify one's own standpoint accordingly.

Integrative dialogues (as compared to confrontational dialogues) are believed to have many positive functions. Studies have shown that they increase situational self-esteem and positive emotions (Borawski, 2011) as well as decrease the ideal – ought self-discrepancy (Młynarczyk, 2011). Additionally, voicing the opposing points of view on a problem increases well-being and adaptive psychological functioning (Hermans, 2003). The ability to integrate various perspectives in dialogues simulating social interactions also increases the ease of generating diverse solutions in difficult situations (Staudinger & Baltes, 1996). It is also known that integrative dialogues – to a greater extent than confrontational dialogues – play the roles of support, bond, insight, and self--guiding measured by the Functions of Dialogues (FUND) questionnaire (Puchalska-Wasyl, 2016a).

Although many positive functions of integration in internal dialogues are already known, we still know relatively little about its determinants. Looking for the determinants of integration in internal dialogue, Puchalska-Wasyl (2016b) found that it was positively related to the similarity which the author of the dialogue perceives between himself or herself and the imaginary interlocutor. These findings were based on the results of canonical analysis. The study presented further in this paper is an attempt at the verification of a similar relationship in an experimental model; namely, it concerns the relationship between the similarity of dialogue partners and dialogue author's integrative attitude. Additionally, by testing the influence of the potential moderator (the author's certainty of standpoint) on the analyzed relationship and introducing two levels of the similarity variable (similar positive vs. negative characteristics), the study may not only verify but also broaden the current knowledge.

The aim of the study is therefore mainly to contribute to the development of the dialogical theory (Hermans & Gieser, 2012). The practical objective is much more distant. Although it is suspected that internal dialogues may be a prototype for interpersonal relations (and so the integrative attitude induced by thinking about the imagined interlocutor as similar could probably be transferred to the domain of actual contacts with him or her), the testing of these suspicions requires further in-depth research on internal dialogical activity. Meanwhile, studies in different fields show that mental simulation of various behaviors

increases the intention to engage in them (Crisp & Turner, 2012; Ten Eyck, Labansat, Gresky, Dansereau, & Lord, 2006). Without resolving the issue of whether and on what conditions internal dialogues can shape (or be shaped by) actual relationships, it is worth noting that analogous patterns (links between variables) are observed in these two areas. In the already cited study, Puchalska-Wasyl (2016b) found that global integration in an internal dialogue was positively related to the similarity that the author of the dialogue perceives between themselves and their imagined interlocutor. Likewise, in the case of actual contacts the beneficial influence of dialogue partners' similarity on their relationship has been confirmed many times. This is reflected in proverbs such as "Birds of a feather flock together" or "Dog does not eat dog," suggesting that the people we like the most are those who are similar to us. And indeed, studies conducted by social psychologists show that people are egotistic, which means they evaluate themselves favorably and prefer those particular characteristics in others that they themselves possess (Pelham, Carvallo, & Jones, 2005). Consequently, evaluating a person as similar to oneself nearly always means evaluating them positively. The individuals we perceive as similar to us evoke not only our liking but also a belief that they are attractive (Fawcett & Markson, 2010; Sprecher, 2014). It is also known that we are more willing to help those who are similar to us and whom we like (Karylowski, 1976). Apart from leading to positive mutual evaluations, similarity facilitates cooperation, too (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Because cooperation is based on agreement about the understanding of a previously established objective, this result indirectly confirms the relationship, found in internal dialogue, between the similarity of dialogue partners and the integration of their standpoints (Puchalska-Wasyl, 2016b).

Assuming that there may be more analogies between internal dialogues and real interpersonal contacts, it is advisable to perform a review of other studies in social psychology as the basis on which to formulate hypotheses about internal dialogical activity.

These studies show, among other things, that what promotes positive attitude towards the partner is similarity in terms of physical characteristic (Kandel, 1978) and in terms of personality traits important from the point of view of interpersonal relations (Wilson, DeRue, Matta, Howe, & Conlon, 2016), as well as the similarity of attitudes, opinions, and views (Byrne & Nelson, 1965). What will happen, then, if I engage in a discussion with a person similar to me in some respects (appearance, personality) but having a standpoint different from mine? Persuasion by a similar person is known to be particularly effective with regard to preferences and evaluations (Goethals & Nelson, 1973). Does this mean I will

modify my beliefs and integrate them with the interlocutor's stance much more easily if I know that he or she resembles me in appearance or personality? Does it make a difference then whether the interlocutor resembles me in terms of characteristics that I regard as positive or in terms of those that I regard as negative? The classic theory concerning the relationship between similarity and attractiveness does not differentiate between these two situations (Byrne, 1971), thus inviting the exploration of this issue.

Another important question that arises in this context is this: does the degree to which I am certain of my standpoint makes a difference for the course and outcome of my discussion with a person similar to me but having a different opinion? Intuition suggests that lower rather than higher certainty of standpoint will be conducive to its change. A person who assumes that there may be information that he or she is not aware of at the moment, shedding new light on the problem, will probably declare lower certainty about the correctness of his of her standpoint. This kind of person will be more open to the interlocutor's arguments and probably more willing to reformulate his or her views, as well as to seek a solution to the problem that will take the needs of both dialogue partners into account, thus manifesting an integrative attitude in the dialogue. Thinking along these lines, it is possible to conclude that high certainty regarding one's own standpoint will hinder integrative behaviors. This reasoning seems not only consistent with intuition but also justified in the light of the theses advanced by Rokeach (1960) about the dogmatic style of thinking as a cognitive defense mechanism associated with the belief in the validity of one's views, firmness, determination, as well as being categorical and impervious to influence. Dogmatism of thinking is understood here as a mechanism reducing anxiety via information selection and the elimination of threatening contents. Following Rokeach, Johnson (2010) treats dogmatism as a personality trait describable in terms of three dimensions: cognitive, emotional, and behavioral. In his opinion, the cognitive aspect of dogmatism is characterized by attributes such as rigid certainty, intolerance of ambiguity, and defensive cognitive closure. Analyzing the manifestations of dogmatic thinking at the level of language, Ertel (1986) also associates this mechanisms, among other things, with words from the certainty category (e.g., certainly, undoubtedly, obviously). Likewise, Zinczuk-Zielazna and Obrębska (2016) found that individuals with a high level of anxiety (conscious or repressed) used phrases interpreted in the literature as expressions of dogmatism in thinking – including words from the certainty category – significantly more often than low-anxiety individuals.

It is not certain if the relations between parties to an imagined dialogue are governed by the same rules as social relations, but I assumed there was some similarity and formulated the following hypotheses:

1. Similarity to the interlocutor positively influences the level of integrative attitude in the author of an internal dialogue. In experimental groups, where a sense of similarity to the interlocutor (in terms of both positive and negative characteristics) is induced, the author's integrative attitude will be higher than in the control group.

2. The internal dialogue author's certainty of his or her standpoint negatively influences the level of his or her integrative attitude. Individuals who declare high certainty of their standpoint before engaging in a dialogue will have a lower level of integrative attitude than individuals who are less certain of theirs.

3. The experience of similarity to the interlocutor causes an increase in the integrative attitude in dialogue authors who are not very certain of their standpoint, but not in ones who are certain of theirs.

METHOD

Participants

The participants in the study were 216 people (108 women) aged 18-33 (M_{age}= 22.65, *SD* = 2.27). Mean age was 22.12 (*SD* = 1.82) in the group of women and 23.19 (*SD* = 2.55) in the group of men. A majority of the participants (*n* = 203) were undergraduate students (*n* = 120), graduate students (*n* = 80), or doctoral students (*n* = 3) from 13 Polish universities and colleges. They represented 65 majors (such as law, education studies, nursing, IT, economics, English studies, or transport). The remaining subjects (*n* = 13) were school students, working people, and unemployed individuals. The participants in the study were randomly divided into three groups equal in size (*n* = 72) and equal in terms of gender proportions: positive similarity, negative similarity, and the control group.

Procedure

The study was conducted on an individual basis. The participants were informed that it was anonymous and concerned imagination and attitudes. Next, the participants in both experimental groups (positive similarity and negative similarity) were supposed to name their three most important positive charac-

teristics and three negative ones, and then to rate, using a scale from 0 (*not at all*) to 4 (*to a very high degree*), to what extent each of these characteristics could actually be attributed to them. Then the respondents answered the question about whether they were "for" or "against" young people getting tattoos, and used a scale from 0 (*not at all*) to 4 (*to a very high degree*) to rate the certainty of their standpoint. During the next ten minutes they were supposed to write down the arguments supporting their standpoint. This task was followed by the experimental manipulation. A list of counterarguments formulated by the researcher was presented to the participant as counterarguments written down earlier by a different, randomly selected, participant. The participant was asked to make themselves acquainted with these counterarguments. Next, he or she was to conduct (and write down) an imaginary conversation on the topic of getting tattoos with the author of the counterarguments described by the experimenter by means of two characteristics. These were two positive characteristics in the "positive similarity" experimental condition and two negative characteristics in the "negative similarity" condition. In fact, they were the same characteristics that the participant had used a few minutes before to describe themselves. In order to avoid suspicion on the part of the respondent, the attributes describing the imaginary interlocutor never included the one that described the respondent to the highest degree. After the dialogue, the participants completed the Integration–Confrontation questionnaire, measuring their integrative attitude manifested in the dialogue.

In the control study the procedure was the same, the only differences being that the participants did not list their characteristics at the beginning and did not get information about the attributes of the person who had allegedly formulated the arguments contrary to their standpoint.

Measure

Integration–Confrontation (ICON). It is a 13-item method developed by Puchalska-Wasyl (2016a) to measure the integrative and confrontational characteristics of internal dialogue. It is based on the assumption that integration and confrontation are two independent dimensions of internal dialogue description. Integration concerns the degree of agreement achieved between the standpoints clashing in a dialogue, while confrontation – associated with the polarization of viewpoints – refers to disproportion in the distribution of power between the winner and the loser in a dialogue (cf. Introduction).

ICON consists of eight basic and five supplementary items. Answers are indicated on a 7-point Likert scale (0 – *does not describe this dialogue at all*; 6 – *describes this dialogue very well*).

Based on the eight basic items it is possible to compute the following indices: dialogue author's integrative attitude (INT_aut), interlocutor's integrative attitude (INT_int), general integration (INT), dialogue author's confrontational attitude (CONF_aut), interlocutor's confrontational attitude (CONF_int), general confrontation (CONF) (for detailed information on computing the indices, cf. Puchalska-Wasyl, 2016b).

Supplementary ICON items concern the level of: the subject's identification with his or her own and the interlocutor's point of view/role, the subject's similarity to the interlocutor, as well as the plausibility and wishfulness of the dialogue. These items were not taken into account in the analyses presented further.

In a different study (Puchalska-Wasyl, 2016b), in which the participants engaged in an internal dialogue about a matter of personal importance and then completed ICON, the correlation between the global indices of integration and confrontation was non-significant and close to zero (N = 119, r = -.024, p = .798). In the present study, analogous analyses yielded similar results (N = 216, r = .019, p = .779). This confirms the theoretically postulated independence of the integration and confrontation dimensions measured by ICON.

The validity of ICON was confirmed in previous studies, and so was its reliability (Puchalska-Wasyl, 2016a, 2016c). Cronbach's alpha values were as follows: .79 for INT_aut, .85 for INT_int, .75 for INT, .78 for CONF_aut, .63 for CONF_int, and .78 for CONF. In the present study I analyzed only the first of these coefficients (INT_aut). Its value was lower in this case (.63) than previously, but it can be regarded as acceptable , given that this coefficient is computed on the basis of only two questionnaire items.

Results

After data exploration and the rejection of one outlier (a woman from the control group), I performed a two-factor analysis of variance in a 3 (similarity: positive, negative, none) x 2 (standpoint certainty: high, low) design. The dependent variable was dialogue author's integrative attitude (INT_aut). Its level measured with the ICON questionnaire ranges from 0 to 12, and in the presented study it ranged from 0 to 11 (M = 3.10, SD = 2.77). I divided the certainty of

standpoint variable into two categories based on the median for the results of the total sample (*Me* = 3). Certainty was considered to be high when the respondent's certainty rating was above the median, and it was considered low when certainty rating was lower than or equal to the median. This means that in the high certainty group there were individuals who chose the maximum score on the scale when rating the certainty of their standpoint (i.e., 4 on a scale from 0 to 4). The results of the two-factor analysis of variance are presented in Figure 1.

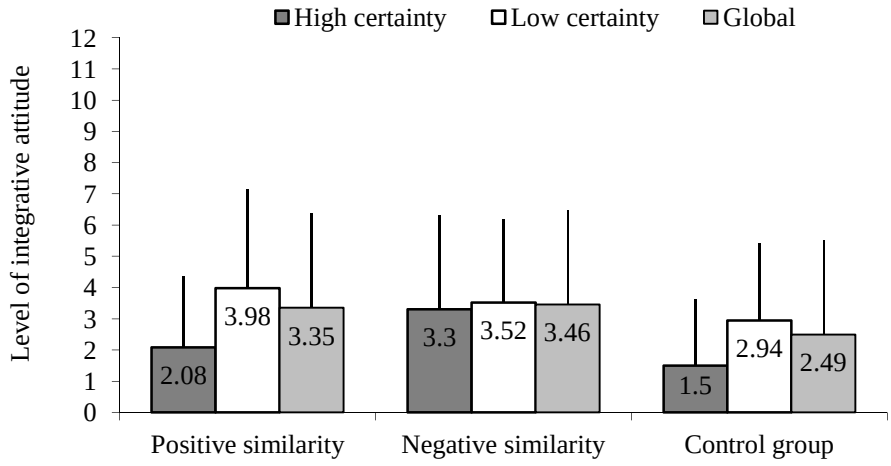

Figure 1. The level of integrative attitude in a person conducting an imaginary dialogue as a function of the person's similarity to the interlocutor and certainty of standpoint. Error bars show the values of standard deviation.

The results showed a statistically significant main effect for the similarity variable, $F(2, 209) = 3.04$, $p = .050$, $\eta^2 = .028$. This result confirms the first part of Hypothesis 1, postulating that similarity to the interlocutor influences the level of integrative attitude on the part of the dialogue author. However, multiple comparisons with Šidák correction only partly confirmed the further part of Hypothesis 1. They showed that in the group in which the experimenter induced a sense of similarity in terms of negative traits the dialogue author's integrative attitude ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 2.74$) was significantly higher ($p = .050$) than in the control group ($M = 2.49$, $SD = 2.45$). No significant difference was found

(p = .256) between the positive similarity group (M = 3.35, SD = 3.03) and the control group.

Moreover, the analysis of variance showed a statistically significant main effect of the certainty of standpoint variable, $F(1, 209) = 8.81$, p = .003, η^2 = .040. This result fully confirms Hypothesis 2, according to which the internal dialogue author's certainty of his or her standpoint negatively affects the level of the author's integrative attitude. I found that the individuals who assessed their standpoint as valid with greater certainty before engaging in a dialogue had a lower level of integrative attitude (M = 2.26, SD = 2.55) than individuals less certain of their stance (M = 3.48, SD = 2.79).

Contrary to the expectations, the effect of the interaction of the two factors proved not to be significant, $F(2, 209) = 1.55$, p = .215, η^2 = .015, which means Hypothesis 3 was not confirmed.

DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to analyze the links between the dialogue author's integrative attitude and his or her similarity to the imaginary interlocutor and the certainty of the standpoint voiced by the dialogue author.

Hypothesis 1 postulated that similarity to the interlocutor positively influenced the level of integrative attitude in the author of an internal dialogue. Accordingly, in the experimental groups, in which a sense of similarity to the interlocutor was induced (in terms of both positive and negative characteristics), the author's integrative attitude was expected to be higher than in the control group. The analyses confirmed this hypothesis only partly, showing that in the group in which a sense of similarity in terms of negative characteristics was induced the dialogue author's integrative attitude was significantly higher than in the control group. I found no such difference between the group in which a sense of similarity in terms of characteristic regarded as positive was induced and the control group.

It should be stressed that the classic theory concerning the relationship between similarity and attractiveness did not analyze the valence of interlocutors' similar characteristics (Byrne, 1971), which is why research did not address this issue. This trend has recently been broken by Wilson and colleagues (2016), and the result of the present study seems to be consistent to some extent with their observations.

Wilson and colleagues (2016) observed that, during negotiations, individuals similar to each other in terms of characteristics regarded as socially undesirable (low agreeableness and low extraversion) reacted to each other more positively than individuals similar in terms of characteristics regarded as desirable (high agreeableness and high extraversion). This positive emotional reaction translated into the quality of the negotiation – namely, into its shorter duration, the reduction of conflicts, and the creation of a more positive image of the partner. Commenting on this difference, the researchers suggested that the similarity––attractiveness effect may have been stronger in the first group (i.e., in individuals similar in terms of socially undesirable characteristics), but they were unable to identify the possible causes of this state of affairs. The result of my study supports their suggestion, since it shows that the tendencies to be open to the interlocutor's perspective and willing to modify one's own standpoint in response to the partner's arguments (important for effective negotiation) occur to a significantly greater degree in the group in which similarity in terms of negative characteristics was induced than in the control group.

It must be emphasized, however, that in their study Wilson and colleagues (2016) also found a confirmation of the hypothesis that people similar in terms of positive traits (high agreeableness and high extraversion) react to each other more positively than individuals who differ strongly in the levels of these traits. The study reported in the present paper yielded no analogous result, since it did not reveal a difference in the level of integrative attitude between dialogue authors in whom the experimenter induced a sense of similarity to the interlocutor in characteristics regarded as positive and dialogue authors who were not informed about any characteristics of their discussion partners. How can this result be interpreted?

The hypothesis postulated that, regardless of the (always present) difference between dialogue partners' standpoints, their similarity in terms of positive characteristics would increase the level of integrative attitude in the dialogue author. Because the hypothesis was not confirmed, it can be concluded that the similarity of standpoints (more, precisely, the lack of such similarity) was more significant for the relationship and the course of dialogue than similarity in terms of other (e.g., physical) positive characteristics of dialogue partners. This explanation is consistent with the results of studies in social psychology, which show that, while similarity in terms of physical characteristics is conducive to liking (Kandel, 1978), what influences liking the most strongly is the similarity of attitudes, opinions, and views (Byrne & Nelson, 1965). This is probably due to the fact that we treat a person whose views are similar to ours as a "living

proof" confirming the validity of our own opinions and views, which it is difficult to confirm in other ways (Clore, 1976).

Because standpoint difference reduced the influence of similarity in terms of positive characteristics on the dialogue author's integrative attitude but did not reduce the influence of similarity in terms of negative characteristics on this attitude, it should be concluded that similarity in negative characteristics is more significant for the course of the relationship than similarity in positive characteristics. How can this be explained? The awareness of exhibiting characteristics that are socially evaluated as undesirable induces a greater need to enter into a coalition with the person (interlocutor) sharing these characteristics against those who evaluate them negatively. This is because being negatively evaluated by the environment is a form of threat, and a situation of threat leads to a growth in the need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), the need for affiliation (Dutton & Aron, 1974; Schachter, 1959), and the need to see oneself as a member of a group (Staub, 2014). The group, even the smallest one, provides an individual with support, a sense of strength, security, and belonging, and this is why factors threatening the group enhance behaviors aimed at increasing group unity (Kramer & Brewer, 1984; Lauderdale, Smith-Cunnien, Parker, & Inverarity, 1984; Stein, 1976). In this context, there may appear a belief that members of one group think in a similar way, which may increase willingness to integrate standpoints (i.e., an increase in the integrative attitude). This kind of thinking would also be consistent with the social identity theory, according to which perceiving similarity results in identification with the person perceived as similar (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Hypothesis 2 was fully confirmed in the present study. It postulated that the standpoint certainty declared by the author of an internal dialogue would negatively influence the level of his or her integrative attitude. Indeed, it turned out that the participants who declared high certainty of their standpoint before engaging in a dialogue had a significantly lower level of integrative attitude than participants who were less certain of theirs. This result, supported by the already cited views presented by Rokeach (1960) and the continuators of his thought (Ertel, 1986; Johnson, 2010; Zinczuk-Zielazna & Obrębska, 2016) makes it legitimate to conclude that high certainty of the validity of one's standpoint may often mask anxiety, which is supposed to be reduced by the avoidance of potentially threatening contents. In consequence, this kind of certainty cannot be conducive to openness to the interlocutor's arguments or willingness to change one's views (even to some extent). A question arises, however: how, in this situation, should we understand the result obtained by Puchalska-Wasyl (2016c),

according to which certainty (as a linguistic category included in LIWC) was positively related to integration in internal dialogue?

According to Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010), the experience of uncertainty is what stimulates a person to engage in internal dialogue, but at the same time this dialogue may reduce the uncertainty that has induced it. It therefore seems probable that – as a result of integration, which offers agreement satisfying for both parties – the initial uncertainty may be supplanted by certainty regarding the value of the solution agreed upon. In the light of this explanation by Puchalska-Wasyl (2016c), certainty in an integrative dialogue would therefore be the target rather than the point of departure, and it would be non-contradictory to the results of the study presented in this paper or to the results of the previously cited studies inspired by Rokeach's thought.

Hypothesis 3 assumed that the experience of similarity to the interlocutor would cause a significant increase in the integrative attitude in dialogue authors who are not very certain of their standpoint, but not in ones who are certain of theirs. I therefore expected that certainty of standpoint would turn out to be a moderator of the relationship between similarity to the interlocutor and integrative attitude on the part of the person conducting the dialogue. This hypothesis was not confirmed, however.

Naturally, a replication of my experiment is needed in order to verify this finding and my previous ones, preferably with a sample of non-students – a group of people diverse in terms of age and status, and possibly from different countries. In the context of replication, it is worth reflecting on one more limitation of the present study in order to minimize it in the future.

So far, in most studies based on similarity–attractiveness theory similarity has been considered in terms of attitudes to issues such as smoking, alcohol consumption, marriage, etc. (Byrne, 1962). Speaking of personality similarity, Byrne (1971) stresses that if we wish to study the similarity–attractiveness relationship we should focus on those characteristics that are strongly related to behavior in interpersonal situations. An example supporting the validity of this suggestion is the study by Wilson and colleagues (2016), mentioned above. The researchers found that individuals similar to each other in high or low extraversion or agreeableness achieved better results in negotiations, but this effect was not generalizable to the remaining Big Five traits, less significant to functioning in relationships. In my experiment the subjects named their three most important positive characteristics and three negative ones, and it was not specified what kind of characteristics these were meant to be. It is possible that this aspect of the procedure uncontrollably modified the analyzed relationship.

In further studies, therefore, the type of these characteristics and, consequently, the type of perceived similarity, should be controlled for.

To sum up the results of the present study, it should be highlighted that two variables are significant to dialogue author's integrative attitude: certainty of standpoint declared before starting the dialogue and perceived similarity to the imagined interlocutor. I found that the individuals who assessed their standpoint as valid with greater certainty before starting the dialogue had a lower level of integrative attitude than individuals less certain of their stance. Moreover, what leads to an increase in integrative attitude in the dialogue author is the perceived similarity between the author and the interlocutor in terms of socially undesirable characteristics. This effect does not occur in the case of the similarity in terms of positive characteristics, which is surprising against the background of studies concerning actual relationships. Pointing to the specificity of internal dialogues, this result may be an original contribution to the development of dialogical theory (Hermans & Gieser, 2012).

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