

CHRONOLALIA (Artists talk)

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Abstract

In Chronolalia, we understand the relationship between human microbiota and humans through the deanthropocentric "figure-ground inversion" of anthropology and the "inverse anthropological model" (Roy Wagner 2001, Eduardo Viveiros De Castro 2015). In Western thought, nature is the common innate basis of humans and non-humans, from which the human soul and spirit are most distinct. In contrast, inverse anthropology describes that all beings are endowed with the same soul and spirit and thus see the same world. The human soul is the common innate basis of humans and microbiomes, from which both are distinguished by their morphological body characteristics. This is not so much a common world, but the respective reference creates a relational world in which place and time take on a relational meaning.

In our highly specific deep learning based setup, the visitors experience themselves as relational subjects in the moment in which they hear themselves differently through the time-based growth of the microbiota. The subject of the speaker in Chronolalia is thus dissolved into a decentralised relational event and a diffuse resonance/sound event. This no longer thematises a fixed, central, linear, time-related subject, but a polytemporal community with subject parts that are distributed among all actors (speakers, former speakers, community of oral microbes with reproductive interests).

Keywords: microbiome, phonetics, inverse anthropology, human-non human relationship, non-linear time, vibration lead growth, cross-species ecologies

Introduction

The anthropocentrism of spoken language meets the needs of non-human species in the mouth. Humans and the microbiome use speech differently and give it different meanings. For the microbiome, vibration in the mouth means strengthening the cytoskeleton, metabolism and growth, and for humans it means the necessary vibration for speech. By reflecting the need for vibration for the sounds of the audience and for the oral microbiota in our Chronolalia project, a polyphonic, cross-species choir is created.

In Chronolalia, we understand the relationship between microbiota and humans through the deanthropocentric "figure-ground inversion" of anthropology and the "inverse anthropological model" (Wagner 2001, De Castro 2015). In Western thought, nature is the common innate basis of humans and non-humans, from which the human soul and spirit are most distinct. In contrast, inverse anthropology describes that all beings are endowed with the same soul and spirit and thus see the same world. The human soul is the common innate basis of humans and microbiomes, from which both are distinguished by their morphological body characteristics. This is not so much a common world, but the respective reference creates a relational world in which place and time take on a relational meaning.

Performance / Installation Description

Visitors change the tempo, pitch and intensity of their speech, sing and whisper and use different phonemes and words. The vibrations generated are transmitted to the whole-body vibration plate on which they stand and to their oral microbiome in the bioreactor.

The microbiome feeds on the vibrations that it can use for its growth. These "vibrational needs", which every living organism has, are read out and sent to an artificial voice articulator so that the audience hears its altered voice and feels the altered vibrations of the disc

This echolalic speech explores a possible space of unknown phonemes that overlaps with the need/environmental space of the oral microbiota. By mimicking the articulator, the audience provides data to the ongoing deep learning process to continuously adapt their vocal frequencies to the vibrational needs of the microbiome.

The result is a polyphonic, vibrating, hybrid choir of a new cross-species intelligence, both in microbial and vocal interest.

Interpretation

The speaker understands himself as a relational subject at the moment in which he hears himself differently through the growth of the microbiota and explains his singularity through its influence on her voice.

The subject of the speaker in Chronolalia is dissolved into a decentralized relational event and a diffuse resonance/sound event. This no longer thematises a fixed, central and linear time-related subject, but a polytemporal subject-community with subject-parts that are distributed among all actors (speakers, former speakers, community of microbes with reproductive interests).

This response system allows the speaker to experience multiple authorship and a nomadic concept of time, a shared meta-organism that embodies the "subjectless subjectivity of technology".

The repetition of sounds becomes the artistic practice of a political ec(h)olalia sustained by literal resonance with other beings, transformed from a meaningless repetition into an ecolalia, a co-constitutive relationship and ethical intimacy with the oral microbiota that disrupts the colonial, speciesist and capitalist rhythms of sociality, communication, space and time.

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/930773989>

References

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De Castro, Eduardo Viveiros: *Exchanging Perspectives. The Transformation of Objects into Subjects in Amerindian Ontologies*. *Common Knowledge*, Volume 10, Issue 3, Fall 2004, pp. 463-484.

Artists Biographies

Klaus Spiess (AT) has been directing the Arts in Medicine Program at the Vienna Medical University as an associate professor and he has been developing hybrid art-performances addressing biopolitical issues. His performances have been shown among others at the Natural History Museum, Vienna; Click Festival Helsingör, Muffatwerk Munich, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin. Installations at the Beall Center of Arts and Technology, Irvine, the Onassis Cultural Center, Athens, the Bemis Center for Contemporary Art, Omaha, and at Ars Electronica, where he was awarded at the Prix. He has published numerous articles at *Performance Research*, *The Lancet*, *Leonardo*, *Technoetic Arts* *ao.*.

Emanuel Gollob (AT) investigates today's relations between humans, AIs & robots with the goal of making alternative ones bodily experienceable. In parallel, his work traces the change in human perception in connection to digitalization. Since 2020, he has been a PhD candidate and researcher at the University of Arts Linz. In 2023, he was a guest artist at the ZKM | Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe. Subsequently, he became EMAP residence artist at the WRO Art Center.

Gollob's work has recently been exhibited in various international institutions, including Smithsonian Arts + Industries Building, Washington DC (2021); Science Gallery Melbourne (2021); Art Science Museum Singapore (2022) and HEK Basel (2023), among others.

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Paul Gründorfer (AT) works in the scope of conceptual and process art, site specific intervention, sound sculpture and performance. He develops installations and interventions that deal with functional methods and question the spatial conditions by exploring process-related systems. His works focus on processes that evolve in a social space, where sound is considered a found object and event, that directly relates to, influences and reflects the environment. They deal with the instability of systems, questioning the role of control and reaction, and research mechanisms of hidden signals.

<http://tricx.net/>

