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Perezhivaniya as a means of creating the aesthetic form of consciousness*

Beth Ferholt and Monica Nilsson

Until recently scholars have placed the emergence of *perezhivaniya* in the very latest stages of childhood or in adolescence. This article will clarify the meaning of the term *perezhivanie* by describing and creating a working definition of *perezhivaniya* across the life span. We will also delineate stages of *perezhivaniya*. We take into account the work of a range of scholars and artists whose studies of the properties of *perezhivaniya* have converged, often without their using, or possibly even being aware of, the term *perezhivanie*. We derive our claims from empirical material from a Swedish preschool and from a playworld that took place in an elementary school in the United States.

“How do *moments* add up to *lives*?” – Jay Lemke, 2000, p. 273

What is the meaning of life? That was all – a simple question; one that tended to close in on one with years. The great revelation had never come. The great revelation perhaps never did come. Instead there were little daily miracles, illuminations, matches struck unexpectedly in the dark; here was one. This, that, and the other; herself and Charles Tansley and the breaking wave; Mrs. Ramsay bringing them together; Mrs. Ramsay saying, “Life stand still here”; Mrs. Ramsay making of the moment something permanent (as in another sphere Lily herself tried to make of the moment something permanent) – this was the nature of a revelation.
– Lilly Briscoe in *To the Lighthouse*, Virginia Woolf, 1927, p. 240-1

Defining quality, descriptions and diagrams that portray *perezhivaniya*

Perezhivanie is a concept that addresses Lemke’s question and Woolf’s response. It is similar to a certain type of viewing device for seeing three dimensional photographs. The two dimensional photographs sit side by side, a fixed distance apart. It is only when you adjust the viewer so that your eyes are just the right distance from the photos that you can see both flat pictures at once and you find yourself back in the room with your dead friends and relatives – for a second time. A *perezhivanie* doubles back on itself through a series of stages that spiral back over themselves in such a way that, when the same stage, still flat but at another point in time, is placed over the first, just so, your life becomes three dimensional again.

Blunden (2015) summarizes this defining quality of a *perezhivanie* in this way: “a *perezhivanie* is *both* an experience (in the sense in which Dewey explained) *and* the ‘working over’ of it.” Essential to this defining quality of a *perezhivanie* is that there is not just a revisiting of an experience, but that the first time the experience takes place in the march of time forward from birth to death, while the ‘working over’ does not take place in a linear time that moves from past to present to future. This is why Mrs. Ramsay does not say, “Stand still here,” but rather, “Life stand still here,” which is a paradox, as life is exactly that which does not stand still.

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By ‘saying’ “Life stand still here,” Mrs. Ramsay presents the frame which creates a paradox by delineating two times, and it is in this way she makes of the moment something permanent. Lily, a painter, tells us that she tries to do just this in her artistic practice. A *perezhivanie* is, in this sense, the frame that makes life like art.

A *perezhivanie* is not the frame of birth and dying that delineates life, and thus allows a life to become art for people who are still alive, but rather the frame that gives us the perfect distance from which to view the two, two-dimensional slides. Without the paradox there could be no communication, change or humor (no “meaning of life,” for Lily / Woolf). Vygotsky writes: “The potential for free action that we find associated with the emergence of human consciousness is closely connected with imagination, with the unique psychological set of consciousness *vis-à-vis* reality that is manifested in imagination” (1987, p. 349). What is of interest in this quote is Vygotsky’s assertion that the relationship between two things that are not of the same logical type is closely connected to the potential for free action, and thus to consciousness.

As Gunilla Lindqvist (1995) explains:

Vygotsky’s view of the dynamic structure of consciousness corresponds with the aesthetic form of art. In play, a meeting between the individual’s internal and external environment takes place in a creative interpretation process, the imaginary process, in which children express their imagination in action. Play reflects the aesthetic form of consciousness. (1995, p. 40)

Leaving aside Lindqvist’s focus on play, this argument allows us to describe a *perezhivanie*, described above as “the frame that makes life like art,” as an action: *a means of creating the aesthetic form of consciousness*.

An in depth discussion of aesthetics and *perezhivaniya* is required by this description. Vivian Sobchack (1992, 2004) on film, specifically on Chris Marker’s *La Jetée* (1962), and Vygotsky (1971) on literary analysis, provide a start.

Sobchack describes the “lived momentum” (1992, 2004) of film, which is the illusion of time flowing, which we, the audience, fall into *because* we are aware of the disjointed still photographs that film actually is. Sobchack’s (1992) argument is that film shows us the frame through which it is created and that it is our knowledge of this frame, our knowledge that the movement we experience is just an illusion, that makes this illusion convincing. She explains that film designates a space by drawing attention to the frame of this space and that we, the viewers, then fall into this space and, in falling, glimpse the future.

The reason that film allows us to glimpse the future is that there is a connection between filmic time and ‘real’ time: “The images of a film exist in the world as a temporal flow, within finitude and situation. Indeed, the fascination of the film is that it does *not* transcend our lived-experience of temporality, but rather that it seems to partake of it, to share it” (1992, p. 60). We inhabit the live space of film, and in our new habitat we feel so at home *in time* that the fantastic we experience through film lives on in our memories, as a part of our pasts, and in this way (becomes the figures within the picture to the wallpaper of our ‘real’ lives (Bateson, 1972), or vice versa, and thus) shapes both our present and our future.

Sobchack (2004) describes *La Jetée* (1962), a film that is composed almost entirely of still photographs, as a film about film. She makes use of the central moment in *La Jetée*, the one moment that is not a still photograph, when the woman opens her eyes, looks at the camera and blinks, to add to her description of film as always being in the act of becoming and therefore being habitable. “One can wonder what reality a photograph memorializes, but we can crawl into a film and live there,” is her accurate description of this moment in the film, and of the three dimensional photograph that is *perezhivanie*. Sobchack writes that in creating this moment in the film, Marker abides by film’s most fundamental rule:

Thus, even as we are seemingly prepared, and even though the photographic move to cinematic movement is extremely subtle, we are nonetheless surprised and deem the movement startling and “sudden.” This is because everything radically changes, and we and the image are reoriented in relation to each other. The space in between the camera’s (the spectator’s) gaze and the woman becomes suddenly habitable, informed with the real possibility of bodily movement and engagement, informed with lived temporality rather than eternal timelessness. (2004, pp. 145-146)

Vygotsky (1971) diagramed this very process of creating “lived temporality” through a “reorientation in relation” that is surprising, startling and “sudden,” in *The Psychology of Art*. Vygotsky portrays a quality of a short story, not a moment in a film (see Figure 1):

Figure 1: Vygotsky’s (1971) diagram of the melody of Bunin’s “Gentle Breath.”

The Psychology of Art (1971) primarily concerns catharsis, and the process of working over in a *perezhivanie* is known as catharsis (Blunden, 2015), so it should come as no surprise that Vygotsky’s 1925 thesis is relevant to a discussion of *perezhivaniya*. In his discussion of Bunin’s short story, *Gentle Breath*, Vygotsky describes a simultaneously classical and romantic process of analysis (what A. R. Luria called “Romantic Science,”¹ but in a field that has only occasionally been considered a science) that allows one to “witness how a lifeless construction is transformed into a living organism” (1971, p. 150) (how moments add up to lives, in response to Lemke):

It is useful to distinguish (as many authors do) the static scheme of the construction of the narrative, which we may call its anatomy, from the dynamic scheme, which we may call its physiology. We have already said that each story has a specific structure that differs from the structure of the material upon which it is based. It is

¹ Alexander Luria states: “When done properly, observation accomplishes the classical aim of explaining facts, while not losing sight of the romantic aim of preserving the manifold richness of the subject” (2006, 178).

also obvious that every poetic technique of treating the material is purposeful; it is introduced with some goal or other, and it governs some specific function of the story. By studying the teleology of the technique (the function of each stylistic element, the purposeful direction, the teleologic significance of each component) we shall understand the very essence of the story and witness how a lifeless construction is transformed into a living organism. (1971, pp. 149-150)

Vygotsky is arguing that either the structure of the material or the poetic technique, taken on its own, can reveal only the anatomy, the components visible after murder and dissection, just as one of the two, two dimensional photographs taken on its own cannot reveal the three dimensional image. To make physiology available for study we must juxtapose material and poetry, and then ask the function of the technique in relation to a whole. Vygotsky describes the first stage of this process, the “comparing the actual events upon which the story is based ... with the artistic form into which this material has been molded,” as “establishing the melodic curve (he calls this curve of the story its “melody”) which we find implemented by the words of the text” (1971, p. 150).

Vygotsky creates his diagram (Figure 1) of the melody of Bunin’s short story by first putting the events of each of the two main character’s lives in chronological order along a straight line. Next, he draws curved lines to show the order of events as they take place in the short story: “The bottom curve represents transition to chronologically earlier events (when the author moves backward) and the top curves represent transition to chronologically advanced events (when the author leaps forward)” (1971, p. 152). Vygotsky notes: “The confused diagram reveals, at first glance, that the events do not evolve in a straight line, as would happen in real life, but in leaps and bounds” (1971, p. 152).

Sobchack and Vygotsky describe and portray the means of eliciting the aesthetic form of consciousness that is a *perezhivanie*. Brian Sutton-Smith (1997) tells us that when one is studying play, one’s arguments can be expected to spiral through levels of analysis, and this warning applies to the study of *perezhivaniya* as well. The next section of this paper will describe a working definition of a *perezhivanie*, which takes into account the work of a range of scholars and artists whose studies of the properties of *perezhivaniya* have converged, often without their using, or possibly even being aware of, the term ‘*perezhivanie*’, and whose studies proceed from several different levels of analysis.

Richard Schechner’s work will feature strongly in the working definition of *perezhivaniya* to be presented. His diagrams of “twice-behaved behavior” strengthen the portrayal of *perezhivaniya* that Vygotsky presented (Figure 1).

Schechner integrates the work of the child psychoanalyst D. W. Winnicott, Victor Turner and Bateson (in his discussion of the “play frame” (1972)) with his own work as a theater director. He (1985) claims that the underlying processes of the ontogenesis of individuals, the social action of ritual, and the symbolic / fictive action of art are identical, and he supports this claim by describing, in concrete detail, the process of *perezhivanie* without using the term itself (although he is, of course, familiar with the work of Constantin Stanislavski (1949)). Schechner’s (1985) diagrams (Figure 2) of the juxtaposition of temporal double sidedness with progressive stages, a juxtaposition that produces twice-behaved behavior, are strikingly similar to Vygotsky’s diagram of his method of analysis of art even though Schechner’s subject is artistic creation, not analysis:

Figure 2.2

Figure 2.3

Figure 2: Schechner's (1985) diagrams of the juxtaposition of temporal double sidedness with progressive stages that produces twice-behaved behavior.

Working definition of a *perezhivanie*

Our working definition of a *perezhivanie* (Ferholt, 2009, 2015) is not a comprehensive definition but is instead a list of components and characteristics of a *perezhivanie*. Blunden (2015) provides a first overview of *perezhivaniya* for those of us who do not read Russian. We will begin by highlighting the seven of his central points that are essential to our working definition.

Most important here, for our subsequent analysis of the stages of *perezhivaniya*, Blunden (2015) writes that *perezhivaniya* “have a beginning a middle and an end; they are events, episodes, activities, happenings or experiences in which people are active participants.” Also fundamental to our working definition are Blunden's (*ibid.*) following two points: “a person's intellect develops, along with the development of their emotions and their will, as aspects of their personality, through the *perezhivaniya* of their life”; and “*Perezhivaniya* are both objective and subjective.”

Dewey's (1934/1939) concept of “An experience” is either closely related to a *perezhivanie* or a term that less completely describes the same phenomenon. However, Dewey's (1934/1939) “Having an Experience” has helped several English-speaking scholars to understand the term *perezhivanie*, and Blunden (2015) highlights the active nature of *perezhivaniya*, and several other key aspects of *perezhivaniya*, with a series of four quotes from Dewey on “an experience.” Blunden writes that an experience and a *perezhivanie*:

“includes *what* men do and suffer, *what* they strive for, love, believe and endure, and *how* men act and are acted upon, the ways in which they do and suffer, desire and enjoy, see, believe, imagine.” (p. 256) Experiences, as a countable noun: “each with its own plot, its own inception and movement towards its close, each having its own particular rhythmic movement” (p. 555). He (Dewey) explained that “an experience” was an ‘original unity’, not a combination: “The existence of this unity is constituted by a single *quality* that pervades the entire experience in spite of the variation of its constituent parts. This unity is neither emotional, practical, nor intellectual, for these terms name distinctions that reflection can make within it.” (p. 556) And he

understood its centrality in personal development: “The unsettled or indeterminate situation might have been called a problematic situation. ... Without a *problem*, there is blind groping in the dark. (p. 229)” (2015, page numbers are from a volume of Dewey’s works.)

Our working definition is in accord with these central points in Blunden’s (2015) work: each *perezhivanie* includes what is done and suffered and also the how of action of the actor/subject; has its own plot and rhythm, and single quality; is not a combination of emotion and cognition but a unity before such distinctions are made, a unity that includes will; grapples with a problem; is both subjective and objective; and, again, includes not just “an experience” but also the working over of this experience, which takes place over time in stages in which people are active participants. Our working definition also draws from many of the same scholars, beyond Vygotsky and Vasilyuk, from whom Blunden (*ibid.*) draws, including L. I. Bozhovich, Dot Robbins and Winnicott. We will contribute a discussion of the work of Schechner and Woolf, in which we relate Schechner and Woolf’s work to *perezhivaniya* (see Ferholt, 2009, 2015) with help from Michael Cole and Robbins, before presenting our list of components and characteristics of a *perezhivanie*.

Performance

For Schechner, performance is a *perezhivanie*. He writes: “Performance means: never for the first time. It means: for the second to *n*th time. Performance is “twice-behaved behavior” (1985, p. 36). Schechner calls this “restored behavior” and adds: “Put in personal terms, restored behavior is “me behaving as if I am someone else” or as if I am ‘beside myself,’ or ‘not myself,’ as when in a trance” (1985, p. 37).

The essence of Schechner’s argument is that there are three parts to the process of performance, not two, and that in performance time flows in more than one direction:

Although restored behavior seems to be founded on past events – ... – it is in fact the synchronic bundle (of three parts) ... The past ... is recreated in terms not simply of a present, ... but of a future ... This future is the performance being rehearsed, the “finished thing” to be made graceful through editing, repetition, and intervention. Restored behavior is both teleological and eschatological. It joins first causes to what happens at the end of time. (1985, p. 79)

Specifically, the way that the flow of time becomes multidirectional is that “rehearsals make it necessary to think of the future in such a way as to create a past” (1985, p. 39). As Schechner explains: “In a very real way the future – the project coming into existence through the process of rehearsal – determines the past: what will be kept from earlier rehearsals or from the “source materials” (1985, p. 39).

Vasilyuk is describing the same phenomenon when he writes of the proleptic nature of *perezhivanie* in the development of Raskolnikov, the main character in Dostoevsky’s novel, *Crime and Punishment*:

Although the given schematism “fault – repentance – redemption – bliss” is formally expressed as a series of contents following one another in time, this does not mean that the later elements in the series appear in consciousness only after the earlier stages have been traversed. They respond to one another psychologically and all exist at once in consciousness, as a Gestalt, though it is true they are expressed with

varying degree of clarity as the series is gone through. Bliss is conferred even at the beginning of the road to redemption, as a kind of advance payment of emotion and meaning, needed to keep one going if a successful end is to be reached.” (1988, pp. 190-191)

Schechner outlines the three stages of this phenomenon (performance):

The workshop-rehearsal process is the basic machine for the restoration of behavior ... (whose) primary function ... is a kind of collective memory-in/of-action. The first phase breaks down the performer’s resistance, makes him a tabula rasa. To do this most effectively the performer has to be removed from familiar surroundings. Thus the need for separation, for “sacred” or special space, and for a use of time different than that prevailing in the ordinary. The second phase is of initiation or transition: developing new or restoring old behavior. But the so-called new behavior is really the rearrangement of old behavior or the enactment of old behavior in new settings. In the third phase, reintegration, the restored behavior is practiced until it is second nature. The final part of the third phase is public performance. (1985, pp. 113-114)

These stages closely match those stages of *perezhivaniya* that Vasilyuk presents, even though Schechner and Vasilyuk’s terms differ.

The Pivot

Cole (2007) has used the term “temporally double sided” to describe the phenomenon of growing back and towards the future and the past simultaneously. (He has used it to relate Dewey’s notion of object to prolepsis.) As discussed above, our claim is that it is the juxtaposition of temporal double sidedness with these stages that creates a *perezhivanie*. What Schechner argues is that this juxtaposition provides the rhythm that allows us to raise ourselves up and hover, suspended momentarily in a state of being simultaneously ourselves and not ourselves: our past and future selves (someone else).²

It is Schechner’s “someone else” that Ferholt (2009) called the “pivot”³ of a *perezhivanie*. As Winnicott writes of play:

Whereas inner psychic reality has a kind of location in the mind or in the belly or in the head or somewhere within the bounds of the individual’s personality, and whereas what is called external reality is located outside these bounds, playing and cultural experience can be given a location if one uses the concept of the potential space between the mother and the baby. (1971, p. 53) (as quoted in Schechner, 1985, p. 110)

According to Schechner, this potential space is the workshop-rehearsal:

The most dynamic formulation of what Winnicott is describing is that the baby – and later the child at play and the adult at art (and religion) – recognizes some things and

² Dewey (1934) made a related point and his use of the word “purpose” brings us back to Vygotsky’s “potential for free action that we find associated with the emergence of human consciousness” and Lilly / Woolf’s interest in “the meaning of life”: “The rhythm of loss of integration with the environment and recovery of union not only persists in man but becomes conscious with him; its conditions are material out of which he forms purposes ... “ (p. 14) Relating life to science as well as to art, Dewey (*ibid.*) adds: “Yet a common interest in rhythm is still the tie which holds science and art in kinship” (p. 156).

³ We are referring broadly to Vygotsky’s 1978 use of the term ‘pivot’ when writing on play.

situations as “not me.” By the end of the process “the dance goes into the body.” So Olivier is not Hamlet, but he is also not not Hamlet. The reverse is also true: in this production of the play, Hamlet is not Olivier, but he is also not not Olivier. Within this field or frame of double negativity, choice and virtuality remain activated. (1985, p. 110)

Schechner explains a central component of the formation of this doubleness by referring to Winnicott’s transitional object (the blanket or stuffed animal that is the first “not-me,” representing the mother (primary caretaker) when she (he) is absent):

Restored behaviors of all kinds ... are “transitional.” Elements that are “not me” become “me” without losing their “not me-ness.” This is the peculiar but necessary double negativity that characterizes symbolic actions. *While performing, a performer experiences his own self not directly but through the medium of experiencing the others.* [italics added] While performing, he no longer has a “me” but has a “not not me,” and this double negative relationship also shows how restored behavior is simultaneously private and social. A person performing recovers his own self only by going out of himself and meeting the others – by entering a social field. The way in which “me” and “not me,” the performer and the thing to be performed, are transformed into “not me ... not not me” is through the workshop-rehearsal/ritual process. (1985, pp. 111-112)

The workshop-rehearsal process allows one to use another person/fictional character as a pivot, to detach emotions that are personal from the self and to relive them through another, and this is the process that allows one to be that which one could not imagine without this process. What Vygotsky writes of the pivot that is art in *The Psychology of Art*, applies directly to the pivot of a *perezhivanie*:

Art is the social technique of emotion, a tool of society which brings the most intimate and personal aspects of our being into the circle of social life. It would be more correct to say that emotion becomes personal when every one of us experiences a work of art; it becomes personal without ceasing to be social. (1971, p. 249)

The Present Moment

The sensation of being at the center of the workshop-rehearsal process is what Schechner calls an experience of the “present moment”:

Actions move in time, from past thrown into future, from “me” to “not me” and from “not me” to “me.” As they travel they are absorbed into the liminal, subjective time/space of “not me ... not not me.” This time/space includes both workshops-rehearsals and performances. Things thrown into the future (“Keep that.”) are recalled and used later in rehearsals and performances. During performance, if everything goes right, the experience is of synchronicity as the flow of ordinary time and the flow of performance time meet and eclipse each other. This eclipse is the “present moment,” the synchronic ecstasy, the autotelic flow, of liminal stasis. Those who are masters at attaining and prolonging this balance are artists, shamans, conmen, acrobats. No one can keep it long. (1985, pp. 112-113)

Schechner also describes this phenomenon through experience in the space of performance:

A performance “takes place” in the “not me ... not not me” between performers; between performers, texts and environment; between performers, texts, environment, and audience. The larger the field of “between,” the stronger the performance. The antistructure that is performance swells until it threatens to burst. The trick is to extend it to the bursting point but no further. It is the ambition of all performers to expand this field until it includes all beings, things, and relations. This can’t happen. The field is precarious because it is subjunctive, liminal, transitional: it rests not on how things are but on how things are not; its existence depends on agreements kept among all participants, including the audience. The field is the embodiment of potential, of the virtual, the imaginative, the fictive, the negative, the not not. The larger it gets, the more it thrills, but the more doubt and anxiety it evokes, too. (1985, p. 113)

Robbins describes this “present moment” and “field of between” of twice-behaved behavior, created in the juxtaposition of temporal double sidedness with the progressive stages of the workshop-rehearsal process, as the “anchor” of a *perezhivanie*. She writes: “*Perezhivanie* ... is an anchor in the fluidity of life, it represents a type of synthesis (not a concrete unity of analysis), but an anchor within the fleeting times we have on this earth, dedicated to internal transformation and involvement in our world” (2007).

Finally, if Dostoevsky shows us and allows us, through Raskolnikov, a *perezhivanie* (see Vasilyuk, 1988), Woolf (1927) both shows us *perezhivaniya* and lets us hear how her characters theorize these *perezhivaniya*. In *To the Lighthouse*, Woolf explores childhood and the creative process through a study of the act of seeing oneself seeing. Central to this work is the description of moments when “life stands still here,” as discussed above, but the quote above is worth reading in some greater context as Woolf’s next words in the novel do not have to do with revelation, but with Lily’s pivot, the person/pivot to whom you owe a *perezhivanie*: “In the midst of chaos there was shape; this eternal passing and flowing (she looked at the clouds going and the leaves shaking) was struck into stability. Life stand still here, Mrs. Ramsay said. “Mrs. Ramsay! Mrs. Ramsay!” she repeated. She owed it all to her,” (1927, pp. 240-241).

Woolf, as the above quotation shows, also grasped the importance of the pivot in *perezhivaniya*. The following stages of *perezhivaniya* can, among other things, be used to reveal the role of the “pivot” in *perezhivanie*. This will allow us to better understand the workings of *perezhivaniya* and will allow us to respond to some of the questions which Blunden (2015) identifies concerning the types of pivots that are needed for *perezhivaniya*, for instance those that are needed at different ages (therapist, more mature friend, adult care-giver, etc.).

Components and characteristics of *perezhivaniya*

Within *perezhivaniya*:

- cognition and emotion are dynamically related;
- the relationship between individual and environment *is* the event;
- and there is the revitalizing of autobiographical emotional memories by imitating another’s (or a past self’s) physical actions.

Perezhivanie is:

- an internal and subjective labor of 'entering into,' which is not done by the mind alone, but rather involves the whole of life or a state of consciousness;

- a coming back to something in your memory, living through it over and over again, until you discover that you have passed through it, and have survived;
- and 'twice-behaved behavior.'

The following qualities of *perezhivaniya* are also parts of this definition and are central to the following discussion of stages of *perezhivaniya*:

- time flows in more than one direction;
- there is a juxtaposition of this temporal double sidedness with stages;
- and there occurs an eclipse, which is the 'present moment', the synchronic ecstasy, the autotelic flow, of liminal stasis: no-one can keep it for long.

Concerning the pivot that propels one through the stages of a *perezhivanie*, *perezhivaniya* are here defined as being:

- the potential space of 'not not me;'
- the experiencing of the self, not directly but through the medium of experiencing the others;
- and a form of inter-subjectivity in which we insert ourselves into the stories of others in order to gain the foresight that allows us to proceed (in the face of despair).

Stages of *perezhivaniya*

Blunden (2015) refers to work describing the stages of *perezhivaniya* and discusses the important contribution of Kübler-Ross (1969) concerning grieving, to this work. Blunden (*ibid.*), correctly in our opinion, identifies grieving as a type of *perezhivaniya*. The stages that Kübler-Ross describes, and those Schechner (1985) describes, are similar to each other and to other series of stages, which describe kindred phenomena and which derive from a variety of academic fields as well as religions.

In the following, for clarity, we call the three 'stages' of a *perezhivanie*, which are outlined by Schechner (1985) and Vasilyuk (1988), 'phases'. Within each of these phases we have delineated three stages. These phases and stages are derived not only from the work of Schechner and Vasilyuk but also through analysis of empirical data from a Swedish preschool and from a playworld that took place in an elementary school in the United States (Ferholt 2009).

We only have space to outline these phases and stages in this paper:

Schechner's first phase / Vasilyuk's fault

- 1) Conflict arises
- 2) Boundaries blur
- 3) Traveling into another world

Schechner's second phase / Vasilyuk's repentance

- 4) Interacting in the other world
- 5) The worlds merge
- 6) Becoming a world designer

Schechner's third phase / Vasilyuk's redemption, including the public performance / bliss

- 7) Longing
- 8) Closure in the other world
- 9) Synopsis.

Vygotsky (2004) argued that children bring less prior experience to imagination, but the difference between adult and child imagination is one of degree, not of kind. We have come to posit that while young children bring less prior experience to *perezhivaniya*, there are *perezhivaniya* in early childhood, and that the difference between adult and child *perezhivaniya* is, as it is with adult and child imagination, one of degree, not of kind. Preliminary analysis has led us to believe that all the stages that take place in adult *perezhivaniya* take place in early childhood *perezhivaniya*, in the same order, but in a different time scale. This preliminary analysis has also led us to believe that adult observation of early childhood *perezhivaniya* is made possible through early childhood teaching, and so requires a new form of collaboration between preschools and the academy.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Vasilyuk (1988) called for ethnographers to empirically examine his understanding of *perezhivaniya*. Fernando Gonzales Rey explicitly asks us to think about what sort of methodology is needed to pursue such empirical studies of *perezhivaniya*. And Sutton-Smith warned us that applied study as well as empirical and theoretical study will be required if these most complex of human endeavors are to be better understood.

The need for applied study of *perezhivaniya* may bring us to early childhood education because there are not very many professions that concern themselves with *creating the aesthetic form of consciousness*. Having been preschool teachers ourselves, this seems to us an apt description of the profession. And we have found that many preschool teachers quickly and joyfully appropriate the concept when we introduce it to them.

However, the value of revising the timetable for the emergence of *perezhivaniya* may be greatest for researchers. If young children also pivot in *perezhivaniya* as they pivot in play, using an actual stick for a horse, then the elusive workings of *perezhivaniya* may be made visible and available for study through the study of early childhood *perezhivaniya*. And if teachers as well as artists are brought into the academy, we may come to change the parameters of what we have understood to be knowable (Turner, 1992).

Vygotsky called the separation of cognition and emotion “a major weakness of traditional psychology” because this separation “makes the thought process appear as an autonomous flow of ‘thoughts thinking themselves’, segregated from the fullness of life, from the personal needs and interests, the inclinations and impulses, of the thinker” (1986, p. 10). The study of the fullness of life, or ‘how *moments* add up to *lives*’, is the ultimate concern of our above efforts to understand *perezhivaniya* from multiple disciplinary and professional perspectives, and levels of abstraction; at multiple points in the life span; and through multiple methods. It seems probable that such a study does require the further development of Romantic Science, the “bridge(ing of) segregated and differently valued knowledges, (and the) drawing together (of) legitimated as well as subjugated modes of inquiry” (Conquergood, 2002, p.151-152).

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