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Mediated discourses of transnational participation: a study of some discursive aspects of transnational networking

The paper deals with the social and discursive aspects of transnational living and participation. By introducing the notion of transnational networking, it articulates transnational participation as a type of social and discursive connecting through which places, practices and aspects of identities become represented, categorized and enacted across and beyond symbolic and geo-political national terrains. The multimodal, social-semiotic discourse analysis focuses on semiotic shifts and discursive transformations through which the actors categorize symbols, artefacts and accounts across and beyond national and cultural memberships and demonstrates how transnational participation is organized not from one national terrain to another, but across diverse social and discursive practices.

Keywords: Transnational networking, participation, multimodal discourse analysis, identity

1 Challenging transnational complexity

Recent decades have been marked by a series of radical transformations which have established formats of living that involve increased mobility of humans, capitals, discourses and meanings. This intensified and multifaceted mobility causes shifts in the established mechanisms of identity construction by making distant the familiar points of reference and disrupting and/or loosening the ties to the spaces of cultural, national and social belongingness involved in the identificational process.

By focusing on the discursive and social mechanisms of transnational networking, this article explores how participation in practices, social spaces and communities, which cuts across and transgresses symbolic and geo-political borders of nationalities, is accomplished and negotiated in the everyday actions and interactions of the actors. Through the analysis of memory and category work which the actors carry out in association with prandial and child-care practices, the paper demonstrates how transnational participation is organized and sustained not from one national terrain to another, but across the dynamic collections of accounts, experiences, knowledges and meanings. In doing so, it makes tangible the social phenomena which are commonly addressed in everyday and academic rhetoric in terms of elusive global flows or pre-existing macro structures and shows the power of multimodal studies of discourse and interaction to grasp the complexity and mobility of contemporary realities.

Theoretically, this is achieved by introducing the notion of **transnational networking**. With this notion I articulate transnational dynamics as a type of social and discursive connecting through which places, practices, aspects of identities and societal arrangements (that are not transnational in themselves and not necessarily associated with national belongingness) become performed transnationally – represented, categorized and enacted across and beyond symbolic and geo-political borders of nationality.

I examine this connecting through **multimodal social-semiotic discourse analysis of social interaction**. By focusing on the different types of linking which are involved in transnational networking and which intertwine diverse technologies, modalities, materialities and normative

regimes, I uncover how the transnational phenomena which appear to be accomplished, context-like, and agency-deprived, in fact undergo continuous construction in the actors' practices and interactions.

This analytical work is based on data collected through **nexus analysis** (Scollon & Scollon 2004) of the actions and interactions of members of the Russian-speaking community in Northern Jutland, Denmark, performed within and across three sites of their engagement: a computer-mediated social space Rusforum, a grocery store "Sadko" (the so-called Russian shop in Alborg) and Rusmam/the Russian school, a network initiated by Russian-speaking parents in 2006.

2 There is a method to every mess: a multimodal social-semiotic discourse approach to analysing transnational participation

Investigating transnational participation through the prism of transnational networking implies abandoning the assumption that transnational practices should be studied through transnational methods and focusing instead on the so-called members' methods (Rawls 2002) – the embodied practices in which human actors engage in producing transnational associations and the competencies required to recognize and repeat this production.

I followed these methods by examining the ways in which they are represented, accounted for and enacted in discourse viewed as language in-use-in-interaction with other elements of social realities, which are not necessarily linguistic. Within the framework of my research, collecting and analyzing data involved looking for and documenting what was meaningful to the actors by examining how it was made meaningful (Sacks 1992: 236). This implies that whenever a specific category or an account was made relevant by the members, in order to retrieve the meanings assigned to it, I inspected how the members discriminated it from the other categories and accounts. In doing so, I avoided seeing categories or experiences that the actors refer to as a 'whole', as an accomplished and closed totality of knowledge that is being shared, ignored, rejected, etc. Instead, I traced and made visible what element(s) of this knowledge, discursive inscription (e.g.

label, name, description), material form, visual presentation (e.g. package, colour, image), sensory perception (e.g. taste, smell), is/are being shared, ignored or rejected.

Because these meaning-making practices unfold across multiple interactional events and modalities I analyzed procedures through which the actors made use of the affordances of diverse modalities and media by employing a multimodal social-semiotic approach to analyzing discourse and interaction (Iedema 2001; Kress 2010; Prior & Hengst 2010).

This analytical approach enabled me to examine how the actors, through category work, represent and construct some parts of the world by making relevant other parts of the world, linking and recontextualizing various discursive perspectives – i.e. it allowed me to trace and address ‘interdiscursive hybridity’ (Fairclough 2003: 35).

The analysis was carried out on the data archive generated by using the strategies of nexus analysis (Scollon & Scollon 2004). This entails that my empirical focus was not directed towards a particular group of people, culture or location, nor towards a fixed and accomplished form of human activities inherent to specific phenomena (such as ‘transnationalism’). Instead, the object of my ethnography was ‘mediated actions’ (Scollon 2001) – the ways in which mundane acts and activities of the actors are made repeatable and recognisable in association with diverse sites of their engagement and diverse aspects of social realities.

In my study, I did not decide in advance what social structures and discursive mechanisms enabled the transnational participation, nor did I decide in place of the members what methods, i.e. what actions, discursivities and materialities, they mobilized to organize it. Instead, by merging diverse participatory and ethnographic activities (e.g. video and audio recording, participant observation, unstructured interviewing), I identified the sites of the actors’ engagement and the interaction orders through which the discourses and actions that were relevant and meaningful to the actors circulated – the “point at which historical trajectories of people, places, discourses, ideas, and objects come together” (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 159) to enable transnational networking.

By following the actors' actions and interactions across this nexus of transnational networking practices, I was gaining access to and registering diverse multisemiotic materials mediating these actions (e.g. co-present and computer-mediated conversations; goods, books, posters, menus displayed in the "Russian" shop "Sadko"; food products brought to the Rusmam/Russian School meetings) – i.e. I was data archiving. By putting these materials through a preliminary analysis, I was circumferencing the nexus of practice in focus – mapping out the circulation of actions, interaction orders and discourses between these sites. At the same time, I was also triangulating my analytical focus – identifying those moments of interaction, category work, discursive and interdiscursive constructs that were significant to this circulation and those data segments within which they were made significant and recognized as such (see figure 1).

It is through this analytical and ethnographic work that I identified the discourses whose construction and reproduction I map out and unpack in this paper – prandial and child-care discourses. It is also through this process of data archiving and data selecting that I arrived at the position from which I carry out the analytical examination in the next section.

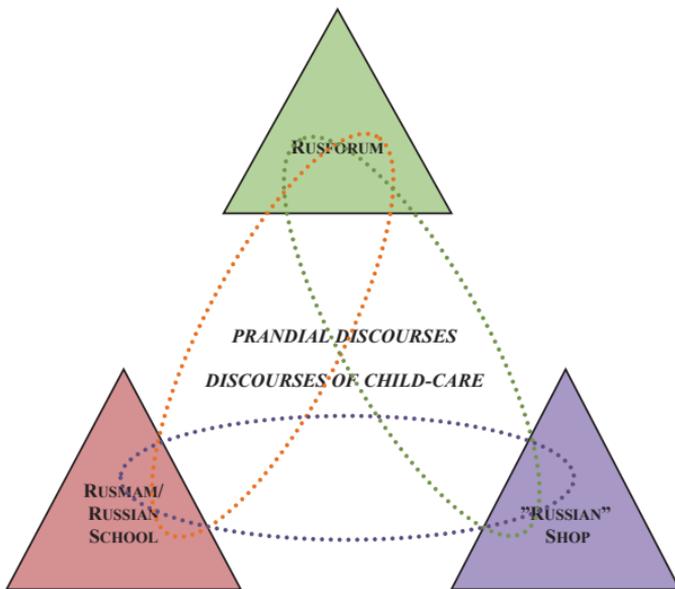


FIGURE 1. Navigating the nexus of practice – Circumferencing the analysis.

3 Prandial discourse and the construction of the familiar

As noted earlier, one of the discourses which circulate across the nexus of practice in focus is prandial discourse. One of the central categories through which it becomes constructed and invoked in actors' interaction is the category of *our* or *Russian food*.

In network terms, prandial practices represent an assemblage of relations that mediate on-going connecting between material, human and technical agencies and physiological, discursive and economic practices across numerous sites of engagement (see figure 2). Such discursive inscriptions as *Russian* or *our food* invoke particular prandial practices, the sharing of which would presume the sharing of the whole set of relations and recognizing material and human agencies that participate in the making of these relations.

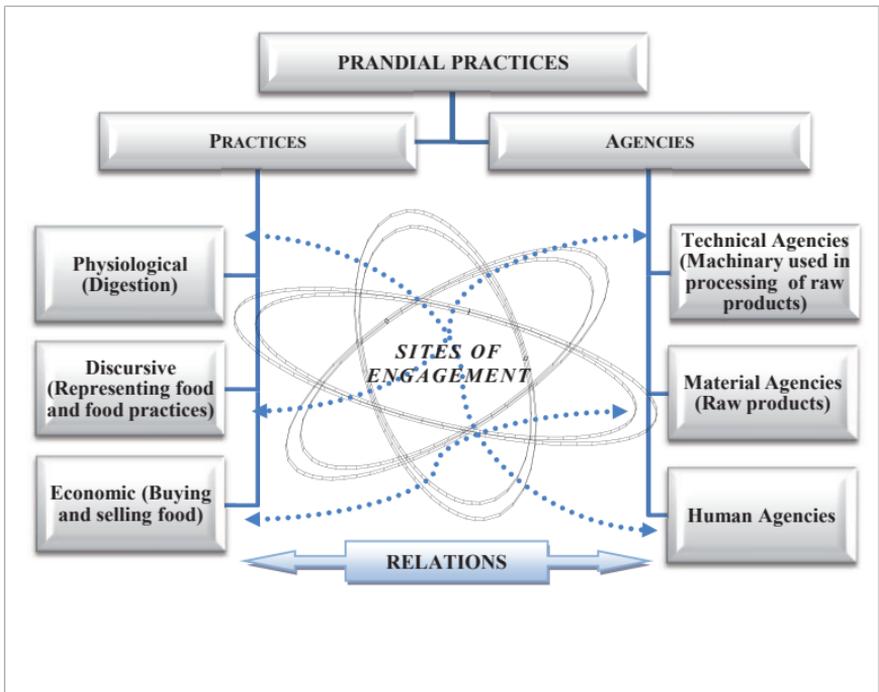
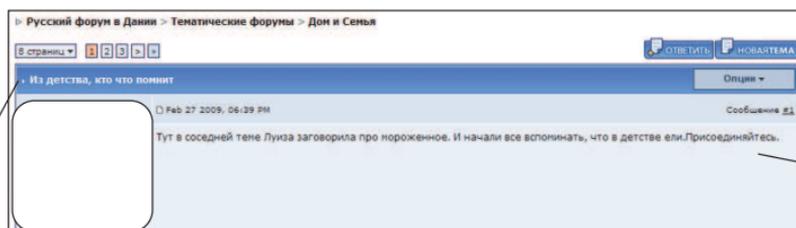


FIGURE 2. Prandial practices.

However, the analysis of the categorization work which relies on these inscriptions shows that those aspects of realities, memberships and points of reference that the actors class as familiar and shared are not homogenous and not at all accomplished. When analytically unpacked, the categories marked and invoked as common and known emerge as compound collections of accounts, experiences, knowledges and symbols that the actors construct and re-negotiate in the course of their interaction. Moreover, the items that the actors list under these categories are not clustered in one geographic-political territory and not all anchored in the matters of national belongingness. This is demonstrated in the analysis of the actors' interaction which took place in one of the many discussions devoted to food-related practices on Rusforum: discussion topic "From childhood, who remembers what"¹

(1)²



From childhood, who remembers what

Here in the neighbouring topic [NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT] started talking about ice-cream. And everybody started recollecting what they ate when they were children. Join us

While the title of the discussion topic frames it as a symbolic journey into a broad spectrum of childhood memories, its thematic description firmly positions the concept of childhood within the framework of prandial

1 *Из детства, кто что помнит*. Retrieved February, 2009, from <http://rusforum.dk/index.php?showtopic=14855>

2 The translations of the Russian original included in the examples are provided by the author.

practices in continuity with the conversation thread that emerged earlier (“the neighbouring topic”).

The discursive inscriptions of the supposedly shared food-related practices, which the actors produced in the discussion, are far from being identical. Sometimes, these inscriptions remain completely unrecognized. In this case, the comment posted by one of the participants might be left without a reply or any reaction from the others, as illustrated by example 2:

(2)

The image shows a screenshot of a forum post from a thread titled "Из детства" (From childhood). The post is dated "Отправлено: Feb 28 2009, 05:53 PM". The text of the post is in Russian and includes a smiley face emoji. Below the screenshot are two blue boxes containing English translations of the Russian text. The first translation corresponds to the first line of the Russian text, and the second translation corresponds to the second line. Lines connect the boxes to the corresponding lines in the screenshot.

Из детства

Отправлено: Feb 28 2009, 05:53 PM

я,как зшас понню,рубль нашла в школе-вот радости -то было! на все деньги купила ватрушек по 8 коп.штук, даво было в 1886 году 😊

я почему-то помню все докризисные цены,т.е.98 года,например,шаверна стоила 6 рублей, полкило пельменей-4,пачка масла-3-30

I remember, just like right now, have found a rouble at school – such luck! bought for all of the money vatrushki , 8 kopeks per piece, it was in 1886 😊

I remember all the before-crisis prices for some reason, that is of year 98, for instance, shaverma cost 6 roubles, half-a-kilo of pelmeni – 4, a pack of butter - 3.30

The first line of the post contains a short humorous narration of a childhood experience ending with a “smiley”, which invites the other participants to laugh along with the author of the comment. However, this iconically realised invitation as well as the whole post remains unanswered. As any talk-in-interaction (Schegloff 2007), computer-mediated interaction is characterized by thick and “tremendously powerful structural regularities” (Antaki & Widdicombe 1998: 5) that are normative to the actors behaviour within a specific social space. My long-term observation and examination of interaction within the social space of Rusforum show that such complete ignoring of the comment is highly uncommon and that the missing response to the comment is not a random departure from the sequential organization but a failure to meet the expectations of the speaker, which is meaningful to the interaction. This failure, which Gunther Kress describes as “refusal to

engage” (2010: 36), is indicative of that the experience which the author chose to invoke as a “knowable” (Antaki & Widdicombe 1998: 3) to the other interactants feature of their supposedly unarguably shared past, is in fact not familiar to them.

On the contrary, when only one aspect of the described practice, such as a particular discursive inscription (e.g. the name of the specific food product), does not become recognised by the actors, it initiates a sequence of turns-at-talk that repair troublesome aspect of the actors’ account.

(3)



[Citation]: Personally, what I could afford the most was Alaska Pollock caviar 😊

And who is zat? What kind of animal is it? 😊



[Citation: NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT]: Well, frozen Alaska Pollack was usually bought for cats. Here it is itself on the picture and here is its caviar.

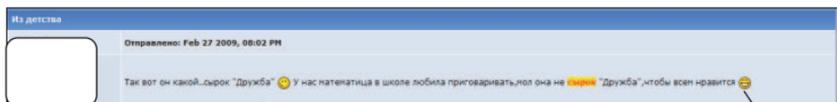
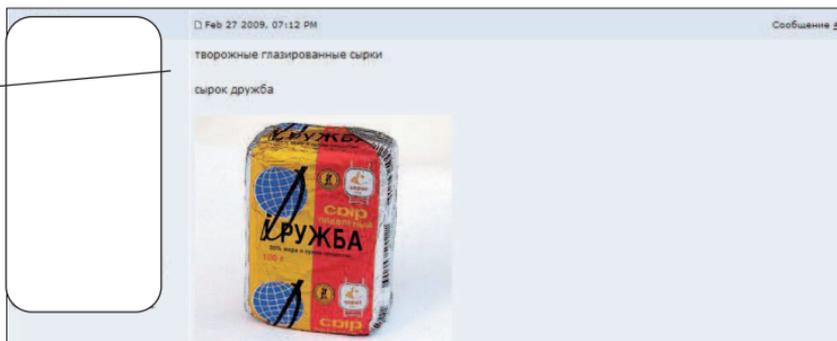
In example 3, a repair (Schegloff 2007: 101) was initiated in relation to the material agency made relevant by one of the participants (*Alaska Pollock caviar*). The repair was initiated in a form of question with humorous undertones realized by transforming orthography of some of the words, so that if these words were pronounced in accordance with this orthography, it

would produce a comic effect (*whu is zat*). The humorous effect is amplified by the second part of the utterance, within which a food product becomes addressed as an *animal*. In addition, the line ends with the insertion of the same emoticon that was used by the previous author, which conveys playful, teasing mimicking.

The next comment accomplishes the initiated repair and clarifies the troublesome element through verbal and visual resources: *Well, frozen Alaska Pollack was usually bought for cats. Here it is itself on the picture and here is its caviar*. The second part of the line serves as a caption to the images displayed below *Here it is itself on the picture and here is its caviar*.

The next analytical segment focuses on the interactional event within which a discursive inscription of a food product is what is familiar to most of the participants, while its material modality is unknown or in question:

(4)



Glazed cottage-cheese bar
Cottage-cheese bar "Friendship"

So this is what the cottage-cheese bar "Friendship" 😊 looks like. Our maths teacher at school used to say, like she is not a cottage-cheese bar "Friendship" to be liked by everybody 😊

Example 4 represents a conversational pair composed of two posts. In the first post, the participant makes relevant a particular material agency – a food product, a glazed cottage-cheese bar – by mobilizing two semiotic resources: a written (*the cottage-cheese bar “Friendship”*) and a visual (a photographic image of the product invoked). By introducing this, the author of the post lists the particular intersection of material agency and discursive description under the category of familiar, shared prandial experiences negotiated within this conversation. However, the next conversational line demonstrates that only the discursive aspect of the invoked item is familiar to the other participant, while the material aspect is not recognized: *So this is what cottage-cheese bar “Friendship” looks like*. This is conveyed through the use of written language on a pair with a sceptical expression given by an emoticon. This is followed by an account of the experience in relation to which the author of the post became aware of a discursive description which he/she did recognize - an anecdotal story about *a maths teacher*.

The analysis above shows how the negotiation of meanings, values and routines which the actors list in constructing the categories of *our* and *Russian* conflates the accounts of individual experiences with the elements of shared, social habitus. Further analysis demonstrates how, through this memory work (Middleton & Brown 2005: 3), the actors continuously shift between nostalgic accounts of the supposedly shared past and the aspects of realities immediately and presently relevant to their lives. In juxtaposing and verifying these discursive descriptions against each other, they do not only negotiate the categories of familiar and shared but also imagine and project the sets of relations invoked through these categories onto their current lives.

4 Memory work in organising transnational networking

Figure 3 demonstrates the conversational event organized multi-sequentially through the use of a “citation” function available within Rusforum where the captured interaction took place.

Tehtävä 1. Esittely, kysyminen ja vastaaminen

- a) Kertokaa kumpikin nimenne ja mitä koulu käyttää.
- b) Tiedustelkaa toisiltanne 3 asiaa seuraavista ruotsiksi:
- perhe
 - vapaa-aika
 - asuminen
 - kaverit
 - koulumatka
 - tulevaisuudensuunnitelmat
- c) Vastatkaa toisen kysymyksiin kumpikin vuorollanne.

Tehtävä 2.2. Vaateostoksilla (Att handla kläder)

A	kysyy, missä on collegepuseroita.	
B		opastaa ja kertoo, että kassan lähellä on lisää.
A	kysyy, mitä värejä on saatavana.	
B		kysyy, minkä värisen asiakas tahtoisi.
A	vastaa, että harmaa tai sininen sopisi farkkujen väriin.	
B		pahoittelee, että näitä collegeja ei ole muunvärisinä ja kysyy, kävisikö villapaita.
A	Myönny, kunhan se ei ole kauhean paksu.	
B		esittelee harmaita neuleita ja tiedustelee kokoa.

FIGURE 3. Memory work and the construction of transnational networking.

Line 1 represents a reply to the comment in which one of the forum's participants makes relevant a particular aspect of prandial practices through the discursive account of his/her personal experience associated with this aspect. The reply produced in line 1 confirms the experience described in the previous comment and cited in the post by elaborating on one of its elements: *That' right juice in three-liter jars :-)*. Similarly, in line 2, another participant continues the chain of associations, which is being constructed in relation to this particular product, by confirming the account made previously and adding to it a set of new experiences: *Also tomato juice ☺ and milk cocktail*

for 3 kopecks! 😊). The avowal is accomplished through both elements of verbal language (the adverb *also*, which acknowledges and verifies the preceding utterance) and of visual language (the graphic projection of a smiling emoticon used in response to the smiling expression given in the preceding comment). Thus, in lines 1 and 2, by constructing discursively the chain of associations that links several personal experiences related to the invoked aspect of prandial practices, the actors negotiate the category of the familiar anchored in the shared past.

What then happens in the next two lines (lines 3 and 4) is that their author picks up two of the links in the aforementioned associative chain (by citing two segments of the previous comment *Long John cakes* 😊, line 3, and *Also Tomato juice*, line 4) and incorporates them into the accounts of three experiences situated in the current living context:

There are profiteroles in Super Best sometimes, small in the box, they are lying next to ice-creams and sorbets. There are 250 gr of them there, cost 15 kr)))

In Netto there are sometimes på tilbud seeeeldom, after all it is a delicacy in Denmark:-/

There is absolutely the same juice here as well, just in slightly smaller jars 😊

In doing so, the participant links the discursive accounts of which the associative chain constructed in the previous lines is composed (and, thereby the categories of *our* and familiar and the reconstruction of shared past invoked by these accounts) to the current living context – to a different national, political and cultural *here* (line 4), whose concrete national context is discursively indicated in line 3 through naming (*Denmark*) as well as through the use of Russian transliteration of the Danish expression *på tilbud* (“on special offer”).

In the next line, this discursive projection of ‘past’ into ‘present’ and of ‘there’ into ‘here’, which takes place across national and linguistic borders and which compresses both time and distance, is continued through the “imagining” (line 5) of a particular scenario: *Kvas in barrels! Imagine such a barrel in the Town Hall square in Copen ?* 😊). The use of *Copen* – a way of addressing Copenhagen which is common in the vernacular of Russian-

speaking immigrants in Denmark – alludes to the concrete details of what ‘here’ means for the author of the post. The humorous effect of the utterance fulfils the closing function in the organization of the conversation in focus and also confirms the articulation of the difference between ‘here’ and ‘there’ initiated by the author of line 3 through the sarcastic remark *after all it is a delicacy in Denmark* reinforced by the use of the graphic projection of the skeptical emoticon :-/.

Remarkably, the discursive mechanisms involved in the memory work, which I mapped out above, are also traceable in the discursive descriptions collected at the other site of actors’ engagement, the “Russian” shop in Aalborg.

5 Making transnational participation tangible: interdiscursivity

By examining the assortment of the products available in the shop, I identified that the marketing strategies of the food industry targeted at the Russian-speaking migrants in Europe play upon the same acute awareness of the connection between nostalgic re-imagining of the categories *our* and *Russian* and food-related practices. This becomes visible in the discursive inscriptions on the labels of “Russian Kvas” and salted tomatoes produced in Germany and sold in the “Russian” shop in Aalborg.

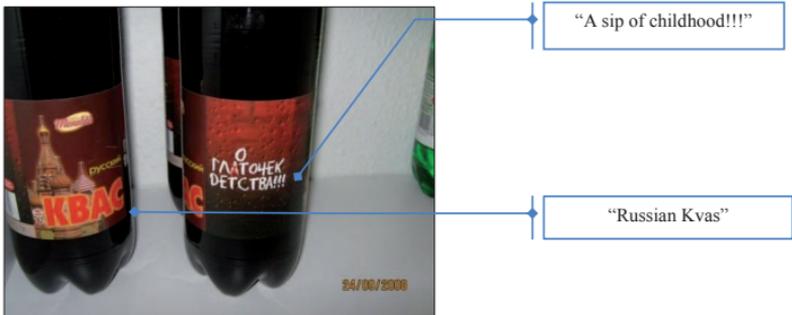


IMAGE 1. Sadko, 24.09.2008.



“Let it always be tasty!”

IMAGE 2. Sadko, 24.09.2008.



“The familiar taste from your childhood!”

IMAGE 3. Sadko, 24.09.2008.

Image 1 illustrates how by coupling the verbal message of the slogan, represented with graphics mimicking wobbly and faulty children’s writing, with the physical attribute of the national landscape – “the iconic image of urban (capital) heartland” (Jaworski & Thurlow 2010: 7) – domes of Saint Basil’s Cathedral, the German producers and distributors of “Russian” food anchor their product discursively in the construct of Russianness, as temporally and geographically distant ‘lost land’ of the actors’ childhood memories. The same rhetorical purpose is achieved through the discursive descriptions on the product packages represented in images 2 and 3, both of which appeal to the category of familiar and supposedly shared past. The message illustrated in image 2 invokes this category through the transformed (most likely with a humorous intent) first line of a propagandistic child song famous in Soviet times: *Let it always be sun!*, while the discursive description illustrated in image 3 makes it relevant through the explicit reference to *the familiar*

taste of your childhood. The above-described marketing strategy operates, firstly, through the articulation of temporal and spatial disentanglement from the familiar, reliable and shared experiences (*taste, sip* or a children's song) to trigger nostalgic emotions. Secondly, it encourages the potential customers to recollect and re-imagine these experiences by providing them with a tangible and an achievable product, which discursively and iconically represents the imagined Russianness.

Such direct incorporation into the trading and advertising mechanisms of the discursive constructions, acts of remembering, matters of belonging which the actors involve in categorizing and organizing the more or less distant (temporally, geographically and symbolically) aspects of realities demonstrates that transnational living is not organized on the separate scales of the economic, the social and the personal. Instead, it takes place at the intersection of the diverse sets of relations as well as of the discourses and genres on which these relations rely.

Another set of interdiscursive chains which I identified through my analysis ties up food-related discourse with the discourses of child-care. This is illustrated in example 5 which represents a transcript of a conversation that took place during one of the Rusmam meetings. The segment features Z, a Rusmam member who came to Denmark from Kazakhstan, telling the researcher and the rest of the group about her most recent successful attempt to acquire for her son a "real" Russian food product.

- (5) 1. Z: <<Listen listen>> *I bought this Russian soup for children yesterday*
2 *you KNOW with chicken <red> hen its name is..*
3. Researcher: *Where did you buy it?*
4. Z: *In the Asian shop OF COURSE << it is owned by an Afghan couple*
5. *she speaks Russian a little>>..*
6. << *the soup is Polish of course>> but it tastes like in my childhood*

The account of the experience begins in the first line and is introduced with the imperative *listen* repeated in fast tempo, which immediately marks the upcoming conversational unit as having a high novelty and interest factor to the listeners, and which reveals the speaker's excitement in relation to it.

This introduction is followed by the actual topic of the conversation: *I bought this Russian soup for children yesterday* (line 1). Before the other participants get a chance to use their conversational turn to respond to the information introduced, Z extends this topical line by an elaborating utterance (line 2) related to the invoked food product (*Russian soup*). The clarification made by the speaker in this line is connected to both the material aspect of the product (*with chicken*) and its discursive form (*red hen its name is*). The emphasis on *red* signals that it is the latter, discursive form of the food product in focus which is particularly significant in identifying this product correctly. This elaborating line begins with the assertive *you know*, where *know* is accentuated emphasizing the speaker's confidence in the known character of the feature that she makes relevant in her discursive account.

After a short pause signalling that Z has completed her turn, the researcher is curious about the product that has brought up such an obvious excitement with the speaker and asks a question regarding the place where this soup was bought. The next three lines of the conversational event comprise Z's answer to this question.

(1)

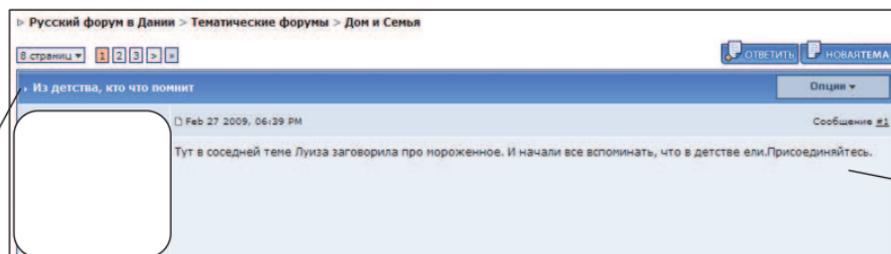


FIGURE 4. Transnational networking in the construction of national category.

As illustrated in figure 4, the answer represents a summary of transnational connecting that has generated the product which Z assigns to the known and knowable category of *Russian food*, and to which she attributes the symbolic value of being a carrier of her childhood memories: *but it tastes like in my childhood* (line 6). The use of the contrasting coordinating conjunction

but signals that the attributed function of the product in focus is realised not due to but despite the transnational ties listed by the speaker. Geographical, national, cultural and discursive crossings involved in the construction of the aforementioned ties are remarkable in themselves. The discursive description *Russian* soup is produced by Z to denote a material product produced in Poland, bought in the Asian shop, which is owned by an Afghan couple, and where one of the owners *speaks Russian a little*. All of these border crossings accomplished in relation to national, ethnic and linguistic aspects of belonging, which would seem to be disturbing rather than generating the links to the national category “Russian” and making it more distant rather than tangible or accessible, do not disrupt the experience of buying *Russian* soup and serving it to the child. Nor do they disable the mechanism of constructing and sustaining attachment to the familiar, shared categories by invoking a discursive description, material feature or practice associated with them (examined in relation to category and memory work earlier in the paper). Moreover, as is visible in the interactional event in focus, such intense and complex transnational connecting is recognised and accepted by the speaker as a routine, known mechanism which she employs in the course of her daily life. This is indicated by the multiple use of the adverbial modifier *of course* – *in the Asian shop of course* (line 4), *the soup is Polish of course* (line 6). It is also conveyed by an increased tempo through lines 4, 5, and 6, which signals the habitual, regular, normalised character of the described practice and of the making of the description itself.

6 Understanding the dialectics of transnational participation

Thus, by examining the acts of remembering involved in category work, I was able to see beyond the easily observable nostalgic undertones and to uncover how the actors continuously and skilfully mobilize the categories associated with temporally-distant experiences to make sense of their current arrangements and engagements and to organize the actions and activities that are immediately relevant to their living.

The analysis presented in this article demonstrates that while certain aspects of realities are made recognizable and recognized by the actors as familiar, and while the familiar is sometimes associated with a more or less distant past, it is neither fixed nor accomplished prior to the interaction, nor entirely national.

Actors' social memberships are constructed not from one closed and complete national or cultural category to another, but across compound lists of accounts, experiences and meanings to which the actors relate through the discursive acts of disavowing or recognizing, challenging or affirming made visible and described in the course of the analysis. Some of these accounts have strong associations with political and symbolic manifestations of nationality, some do not.

The article shows and claims that the practices of transnational networking do not erase nationality as a point of reference in organizing transnational participation, nor do they make it completely insignificant to the people involved in transnational living. However, they do transform the ways through which both nationality and transnationality become accomplished discursively and socially by dissociating nationality from fixed political and linguistic borders and by distributing it across multiple discourses and sites of engagement along with the actors' practices into which matters of national belonging become embedded.

The examination of actors' interaction reveals the dialectics of actors' participation in social practices, communities and engagements across borders of national belonging, i.e. the dialectics of transnational participation. This dialectics entails that national memberships are being constructed and sustained through complex and dynamic transnational connecting, that this connecting, in its turn, often relies on national and ethnic attachments, and that both national and transnational associations are formed through and at the intersection between discourses, practices and frames of reference that exceed "the national mentality and its fundamental categories" (Aksoy & Robins 2003: 90).

Moreover, the analysis demonstrates that this hybridization of national and transnational methods of organizing participation and belongingness as well as the merging of them with other identity repertoires (such as doing

being a parent), other practices (such as prandial practice), other genres (such as promotional genres) – all that complexity of transnational participation which I grasp through the notion of transnational networking – is in fact a recognizable and durable aspect of transnational living.

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