

Review of: "On the subject part I: what is the subject?"

Eirini Chatzikoumi¹

¹ Universidad de Las Américas

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This is a very well structured paper on subjectivity from a mostly philosophical point of view. The writer presents what he considers to be the four components of subjectivity (collectivity, consciousness, complexity and urge) and concludes that subjectivity has an impact on the outer world.

From a linguistic point of view, I can certainly corroborate the components of collectivity and consciousness. Specifically, in the field of Discourse Analysis, these two components have been largely developed by several authors.

When explaining collectivity, the author introduces the concept of ideas or collectives, that determine the way we perceive the outer world and react to it, ultimately defining what we are. He goes on to claim that individuals construct their identities through the collectives to which they belong and that an individual is made up of collectives and vice versa, as schematically presented in Figure 1. From the field of discourse studies, we could mention a few of the authors that share this view. First of all, Mikhail Bakhtin coins the concept of *polyphony*, where *-phony* stands for the voice of an individual that transmits this individual's points of view, beliefs and opinions. However, as an individual only exists in a social group, their voice also transmits the points of view, beliefs and opinions of the social group they belong to. On the other hand, the French line of Discourse Analysis, e.g. Patrick Charaudeau, have claimed that the subject's identity is constructed in discourse, which is a social practice. Finally, we could mention Geoff Thompson and Susan Hunston, who also believe that speakers do not exist in a vacuum but in a culture, sub-culture, or society, the values of which are transmitted and validated by the speakers. All of these views, which are only an example of a long list of authors, corroborate or fit in the figure proposed by the author.

On the other hand, when detailing the component of consciousness, the author points out that we should see it as a continuum, in other words, that there are different degrees of consciousness. What I consider the most important point related to this statement is the idea that different degrees of consciousness involve different degrees of freedom to act upon the outer world. If we consider this from a Discourse Analysis point of view, where discourse is seen as a practice that acts upon the outer world, we can come to see how these different degrees of freedom are enacted in discourse. Discourse has an impact on what the author calls the "real world" (or what we could call "the everyday life") in a great variety of ways and to different degrees. One could simply think of the impact that the Nazi discourse had on the whole world. Or of the media discourse on crime and the impact it has on citizens, who live terrified, avoid certain neighbourhoods and install alarms in their houses. And as far as freedom is concerned, discourse is a practice with many restrictions (situational, social, etc.), but there is also a range of freedom within these restrictions. Patrick Charaudeau sees this freedom in strategies, others find it in the creativity used in language and so on.

Although I find the paper straightforward on a conceptual basis, I do consider that there might be some confusion concerning the concepts of *idea*, *collective* and *social system*, which are treated as synonyms but this is not made explicit nor is it argued for. I would appreciate some clarification on this terminological as well as conceptual issue.

Finally, I would like to pose a question; not a question that I consider that should have been answered by this paper but a question that certainly emerges from it: in Figure 1, which would be the place of AI?