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**Author:** Ewa Bogdanowska-Jakubowska

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## Chapter 2

# Multiple contexts of face

*Ewa Bogdanowska-Jakubowska*

### **Abstract**

Face is a sociocultural construct which is based on the person's sense of identity and expectations as to how his/her self-image should be created, and constitutes a property of relationship between interactants (cf. Arundale, 2006; Bousfield, 2008; Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009). As such it appears to be strongly context dependent. Context is understood here as "aspects of the social environment" which become "observable" by their consequences on discourse, or by the influence of discourse on social situations (van Dijk, 2006, p. 164). Contexts of social interactions in which face is constituted are "subjective participant interpretations" of the relevant aspects of the social environment.

The aims of the study are to analyse the mechanisms responsible for face creation during social interaction and to investigate the role of context as a subjective face-constituting factor. Face has a structure which can be compared to lettuce; it gets softer towards its centre. Some aspects of face, the central (internal) ones, are most sensitive and vulnerable to attack or damage; others – the more distant from the centre (external) are less vulnerable to face-threats. It may be assumed that in the majority of cultures people display affective sensitivity to the same aspects of face, the only difference is in the degree of their importance and in their location relative to the centre of face. Irrespective of the degree of sensitivity specific to a particular aspect of face, we can observe different contexts in which particular aspects of face are foregrounded.

### **1. Introduction**

The aims of the study are to analyse the mechanisms responsible for face creation during social interaction and to investigate the role of context as a subjective face-constituting factor. In my study I will try to substantiate the following assumptions:

- Face is an expression of feelings about the self and self-related elements (people, objects and places).
- As an image mutually created by participants during social interaction, face involves much more than the self.
- The meaning of face depends on the context of interaction, perceived subjectively by the individual.

To do so I will follow the broad multidisciplinary approach to discourse advocated by Teun van Dijk, which integrates a detailed and explicit study of text and talk with an analysis of their social and cognitive contexts. The data used in the analysis come from the Polish language and culture.

## 2. Universal human needs and emotions in social context

The realization of our everyday needs is always associated with emotions, those evoked by difficulties we often face, and those resulting from the satisfaction of the needs. This has a strong impact on the way we function in our social environment. The key to understanding human behaviour, as Abraham H. Maslow (1970) claims, is in the basic needs people strive to satisfy during their lifetime. Among them, once the physiological and safety needs have been gratified, there emerge *the belongingness and love needs* and *the esteem needs*. People want to have a place in their group or family, they want to be loved and cherished, or at least accepted by the important others. But apart from relationships, they crave for achievement, for mastery and competence, and for independence and freedom. They have “what we may call the desire for reputation or prestige (defining it as respect or esteem from other people), status, fame and glory, dominance, recognition, attention, importance, dignity, or appreciation” (Maslow, 1970, p. 45). The satisfaction of the needs leads to the feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength and the feeling of being useful and needed by others.

Jonathan H. Turner (2007) writes about *transactional needs*, a group of universal human needs which are activated when people participate in social interaction. The satisfaction of these needs results from the character of face-to-face encounters and is necessary for successful communication. Among them, there are “needs for self-verification,” the participants’ desires for their self-image (face) to be accepted by others; “needs for profitable exchange pay-offs”; “needs for group inclusion”; “needs for trust”; and “needs for facticity,” by which Turner means the needs for sharing a common factual world with other participants. Once the needs are satisfied, participants experience positive emotions which make their interaction go smoothly.

Interpersonal ties and solidarity between interaction participants depend on the emotions they mutually arouse in each other. To strengthen ties and build solidarity, participants have to *attune themselves to others*, reading their facial expressions and body language (Turner, 2007). Another important factor which has an impact on the relationship between participants is ritualization of interaction. Ritual behaviour contributes to shared emotion and is a sign of sociability. As Randall Collins (2004, p. 50) claims, it builds up “mutual focus and emotional entrainment.” The emotions shared by interactants may be positive, such as happiness, friendliness or satisfaction, as well as negative ones, such as sorrow or unhappiness. Performing interaction rituals participants “go on to heighten their sense of mutual participation by becoming strongly aware of each other’s consciousness” (Collins, 2004, p. 49). The transient emotions initiating the ritual produce long-term emotions – feelings of solidarity, confidence or self-satisfaction, which constitute the outcome of the ritual activity (Collins, 2004).

Other solidarity-building factors are exchange of valued resources and conformity to expectations and moral code (Turner, 2007, pp. 32–33). People attach value to objects, gestures and other features of the world; some of them engender positive emotions, others – negative emotions. The attachment of emotional valences is the necessary condition of interaction between individuals (Turner, 2007; Collins, 1993). Conformity to other people’s expectations arouses positive emotions, while failure to do so arouses negative emotions. Satisfaction of all these social needs and experiencing positive emotions resulting from it make social interaction possible.

### 3. Face and emotions

Face is a multifaceted construct based on the person’s sense of identity and expectations as to how his/her self-image should be constituted during social interaction. People perceive themselves as having certain attributes; they want to be characterized by attributes which are socially desirable, and reject those which they disapprove of or which are not accepted by others. Thus, face “is associated with these affectively sensitive attributes; however, exactly which attributes are face sensitive can vary from person to person and from context to context” (Spencer-Oatey, 2009, p. 14; Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009). The individual’s expectations concerning his/her self-image depend on his/her feeling of self-worth and his/her interpretation of past social experience, that is “the context of previous, similar encounters (with whom one is meeting, the situation the interactants are in, and so on)” (Bousfield, 2008, p. 39). Face un-

derstood in this way provides a “frame of reference for human communication” (Terkourafi, 2007, p. 316). Constituting one’s own face is the main motivation for talk exchange, which may also involve constituting or threatening the other’s face in the process (Terkourafi, 2007, p. 316). The individual’s self-concept and his/her expectations form the basis on which face is created. But depending on the situation of talk exchange and other participants and their expectations in particular, different aspects of the person’s face, relevant in the context, are foregrounded. As Spencer-Oatey (2007, p. 647) states, “face entails making claims about one’s attributes that in turn entail the appraisal of others, so in this sense the notion of face cannot be divorced from social interaction.” Arundale calls face “an emergent property of relationships” (2006, p. 201). Thus entering social interaction, individuals at the same time build relationships with other participants, which depend on their past contacts, social roles, expectations and personality. The relationships are not stable but are negotiated during interaction.

Self is both a set of cognitions and emotional valences about a person that is mobilized in face-to-face interaction; and because interaction is so mediated by the give and take of gestures (rather than being driven by “group instincts”); interaction involves a considerable amount of negotiation. During these negotiations, individuals mutually communicate not only who they are but also their willingness to accept the self-presentations of others. With a sense of self on the line during interaction, the emotional states are dramatically raised because individuals want to have their views of themselves verified. Indeed, interaction is dominated by the reciprocal presentation of self and the willingness of audiences to verify this self. (Turner, 2007, p. 102)

As a result, the emerging face is not fixed either but it is negotiated during interaction (Geyer suggests the term “interactional face” to stress the fact (2008, p. 51)).

As has already been mentioned, interaction with other people often evokes emotions. Face is one of the main reasons for experiencing strong emotions, as its creation and maintenance is strongly related to the satisfaction of the social needs. As a property of the individual and of his/her relationship with others, face evokes strong emotions attached to his/her self-worth and the self-worth of others (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005, p. 73; Terkourafi, 2007; Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009; Culpeper, 2011).

From a cognitive perspective, emotions are conscious feelings about self and objects in the environment. From a cultural perspective, emotions are the words and labels that humans give to particular physiological states of arousal. (Turner, 2007, p. 2)

The emotional significance of face has been signalled by Goffman (1967, p. 23):

It is plain that emotions play a part in these cycles of response, as when anguish is expressed because of what one has done to another's face, or anger because of what has been done to one's own. I want to stress that these emotions function as moves, and fit so precisely into the logic of the ritual game that it would seem difficult to understand them without it.

Apart from anguish and anger, mentioned by Goffman, negative emotions related to face include also contempt, embarrassment and shame. A threat or damage to the person's face (e.g., an insult, denigration of the person's appearance or performance, or the person's failure to meet other people's expectations) often produce *anger*. There are, however, different types of anger, and this emotion varies in strength, depending on the amount of face threat.

The word anger covers many different related experiences. There is a range of angry feelings, from slight annoyance to rage. There are not just differences in the strength of angry feelings, but also differences in the kind of anger felt. *Indignation* is self-righteous anger; *sulking* is a passive anger; *exasperation* refers to having one's patience tried excessively. *Revenge* is a type of angry action usually committed after a period of reflection about the offense, sometimes of greater intensity than the act that provoked it. When it is brief, *resentment* is another member of the anger family of emotions, [...] [i]f a person has acted in a way you feel was unfair or unjust [...]. (Ekman, 2003, p. 111; the emphasis is mine)

The emotion which is often triggered by face is *contempt*. People feel contempt for those who behave in a way which does not agree with the line they have taken and for those who lose their face (e.g., when the person turns out to be a liar).

In contempt there is an element of condescension toward the object of contempt. Disdainful in disliking the persons or their actions, you feel superior (usually morally) to them. Their offense is degrading, but you need not necessarily get away from them, as you would in disgust. (Ekman, 2003, p. 180)

Another emotion related to face is *shame*. Only participating in social interaction the person can experience it; no one is shamed in social isolation from others. Shame is self-focused, usually associated with "negative automatic thoughts of the self." It is dependent on the competencies to construct the social self and that is why it is called a "self-conscious emotion" (Gilbert, 2002, pp. 5–6; Pattison, 2000). Any action which can cause a flaw in the social self

may make the person experience shame. Shame together with guilt function as forces of social control, and arise when the individual's self-presentation does not meet the expectations of others (Turner, 2007).

*Embarrassment* is a form of emotion which is closely related to shame and lies at the heart of the social organization of everyday behaviour. "It provides a personal constraint on the behaviour of the individual in society and a public response to actions and activities considered problematic or untoward" (Heath, 1988, p. 137). The person may experience shame "if expressive facts threaten or discredit the assumptions [he] has projected about his identity" (Goffman, 1956, p. 265), as a consequence he may temporarily lose balance and self-control and he "cannot for the time being mobilize his muscular and intellectual resources for the task at hand" (1956, pp. 265–266). Shame, like guilt, can be felt in situations of moral transgression, while embarrassment can appear in situations of loss of poise or composure (Ho, Fu, & Ng, 2004). These emotions are undeniably face-related. They appear when the person's face is threatened by some unfortunate event, evoked either by his/her action or the action of another person (Bogdanowska-Jakubowska, 2010).

Although every interpersonal communication can cause a potential face-threat, face is not associated only with negative emotions, and facework may have negative as well as positive emotional consequences, both for the self and for the other. Positive emotions related to face include, among others, admiration, satisfaction and pride. *Admiration* is a feeling of pleasure mixed with respect. Admiring others, we find them inspiring or charismatic. People experience *satisfaction*, when they get what they needed or wanted. They feel *pride*, which is a mixture of satisfaction with pleasure, when they, or someone close to them, have achieved something. The feelings of satisfaction and pride often accompany positive self-presentation, when the person's presented self-image agrees with his/her projected self-image and/or with expectations of the significant others. The emotions combine pleasure, enjoyment and happiness triggered by different aspects of self.

Interpreted in this way, as a relational and interactional construct, evoking emotions, face appears to be strongly context dependent.

#### 4. Contextual relevance

According to Teun van Dijk, context refers to "aspects of the social environment" which become "observable" by their consequences on discourse, or by the influence of discourse on social situations (van Dijk, 2006, p. 164). Van Dijk claims that what matters in communication is the subjectively perceived

environment. Contexts of social interactions, in which face is constituted, are “subjective participant interpretations” of the relevant aspects of the social environment. In other words, contexts are subjective definitions of events or situations in which people participate when they engage in talk exchange. They are participants’ mental models of communicative situations, which “are culturally based (and hence variable) schematic structures” (van Dijk, 2006, p. 169). Engaging in talk exchange, people perceive the situation through the prism of their cultural and individual hierarchies of values. And as a consequence, emotional reactions to the situation differ not only from culture to culture, but also from individual to individual:

Nearly everyone feels fear if the chair they are sitting in suddenly collapses, but some people are afraid of flying in airplanes and others are not. We share some triggers, just as we share the expressions for each emotion, but there are triggers that are not only culture-specific, they are individual-specific. (Ekman, 2003, p. 53)

A similar perspective can be adopted in the case of face. To understand the mechanisms responsible for human behaviour in social interactions, three factors have to be taken into consideration, culture, individual differences and context. Whether a given aspect of face is foregrounded in a particular situation depends, on the one hand, on cultural settings, on the other hand, on the person’s emotional attitude to it and his/her perception of its relevance in the particular context.

Van Dijk advocates the broad multidisciplinary approach to discourse, which integrates a detailed and explicit study of text and talk with an analysis of their social and cognitive contexts. Such an approach accounts for both social and cultural as well as for personal constraints. Van Dijk sees contextual relevance “defined in terms of what is now-relevant-for-the-participants” (2006, p. 162). Thus every element of social situation can be subjectively interpreted and dealt with by its participants. This also refers to the individual face: in the ‘same’ situation, different persons perceive face in a different way, have different expectations concerning their self-image, resulting from past experience and individual hierarchies of values, and enter into different relationships with other participants. Analysing face and facework in social interaction, we always have to take into consideration what is relevant for each participant in a particular situation.



## 5. An extended model of face

Goffman (1967, p. 6) defines face as “an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes.” However, if we think about face sensitive issues, we can see they go far beyond the self. The self understood as “the inner psychological entity that is the centre or subject of a person’s experience,” perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about oneself (Leary & Tangney, 2003, pp. 6–8), or “the set of meanings we hold for ourselves when we look at ourselves” (Stets & Burke, 2003, p. 130).

A person’s self-concept is typically represented as a set of self-aspects (*multiple selves*) (Showers & Zeigler-Hill, 2003). In the unity of the self there is multiplicity of identities. The basis for the multiple self-concept varies from individual to individual; it usually includes distinct social roles, contexts, relationships, activities, traits, and states (Showers & Zeigler-Hill, 2003). All of them shape the individual’s face expectations and have an impact on the process of face-constitution during social interaction. However, self-aspects are not equal in significance, and what is more, their significance varies across cultures, for different individuals and in different social situations.

Face in its structure can be compared to lettuce, a leafy vegetable whose leaves get softer towards its centre. Similarly, some aspects of face, the central (internal) ones, are most sensitive and vulnerable to attack or damage; others: the more distant from the centre (external) they are, the less vulnerable to face-threats they become. A similar conceptualization of face has been presented by Liu (1986; cf. Turner’s self-conception (2007)). His concept of face consists of concentric circles with the most face-laden closest to the ego. The person’s feeling of face is related to the elements concerning his/her everyday life, which constitute the extensions of the ego.

The face elements differ from each other in emotional valence (cf. Turner, 2007). The more distant the element is from the ego, the smaller impact it would have on the person’s face and the weaker emotional consequences of its foregrounding will be during social interaction.

The *lettuce model of face* consists of elements which belong to six main categories:

1. *Personhood* (character, behaviour, moral integrity, biography, independence, appearance);
2. *Prestige* (social status, deeds, education, job, achievements);
3. *Competence* (abilities, knowledge, skills);
4. *Family* (parents, children, husband/wife, relatives);
5. *Affiliation* (nationality/ethnicity, world-view, religion, sexual orientation, social group, profession, beliefs);

6. *Background* (place of birth, place of living, schools, friends, interests, property).

The first three categories of face-elements (Personhood, Prestige and Competence) refer to the self as an individual, the other three categories (Family, Affiliation and Background) refer to the self as a group member and the self in relationship with the outer world (people and things) (cf. Spencer-Oatey, 2009). The elements belonging to the category Personhood constitute the most sensitive area of face. However, they are not of equal importance in different cultures. The desire for proximity and approval and the desire for distance and independence are inherently present in every individual, in every culture (cf. Brown & Levinson's (1987) positive and negative face), but they differ in intensity.

The category Prestige involves various social status indicators based on personal effort and achievement, such as educational attainment, occupational status and income (cf. Ho, 1994). High social status often results from the individual's competence and expertise. So there is a strong connection between these two categories of face-elements. In the category Competence, the individual's abilities, knowledge and skills are a measure of his/her achievement.

The category Family matters in many cultures, but it is especially important in collectivistic cultures, where individuals are bound by in-group solidarity, and mutual role obligations and duties (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). The individual's identity is based on relationships and group memberships (Triandis, 1995). In such cultures, the relation between the self and others is construed as interdependent and interconnected. The category Family involves relational attributes based on birth, blood and marriage ties, and social status indicators, such as wealth and social connections acquired through marriage or inheritance (cf. Ho, 1994). The Affiliation category locates the individual in a broader sociocultural context. This category can also be characterized by in-group solidarity. This time, however, in-group solidarity is not connected with kinship, but with common goals, interests, ideology or beliefs (cf. Spencer-Oatey, 2009). The Background category, although peripheral to the self, cannot be neglected as it completes the self-image, providing the details which may have an explanatory function and justify the individual's face expectations.

All these aspects of face exist in the majority of cultures, but they differ in the degree of importance and in their location relative to the centre of face. This results from the fact that members of different cultures are face sensitive to a wide variety of attributes related to different hierarchies of values (cf. Spencer-Oatey, 2007).

## 6. Selected face contexts in Polish culture

Face-elements within one category do not have to be of equal importance. This differs from individual to individual and depends on context of social interaction. Irrespective of the degree of sensitivity specific to a particular aspect of face, we can observe different contexts in which particular aspects of face are foregrounded. I will refer to them as *multiple contexts of face*. Scollon and Wong Scollon (2001, p. 48) claim that “[t]here is no faceless communication.” Thus, every social context in which interaction between people takes place is a context of face. According to Terkourafi (2008, p. 47), the “use of language can never be innocent with respect to face considerations,” and, “in effect, interactants always come out of an exchange feeling that their faces have been constituted or threatened to a greater or lesser extent” (Terkourafi, 2008, p. 47). And very often more than one aspect of face is involved.

An analysis of the following real-life examples from Polish culture is to show the role of context as a subjective face-constituting factor. I have chosen face contexts which greatly contribute to face constituting in majority of cultures, Polish culture included, namely these contexts in which the person’s character and moral integrity, social position, competence, family, affiliation and background are the focus of the interactants’ attention.

**Personhood (character, behaviour, moral integrity, biography, independence, appearance).** The contexts in which the Personhood aspect of face is foregrounded are those which put the person’s character and morality to the test, and his/her behaviour and appearance are evaluated by other interactants. In Example 1, during a TV interview a Polish Member of the European Parliament (MEP1), from a national-conservative party, makes a critical comment on another (MEP2), from a liberal-conservative party. In spite of the fact that he shows respect to her by referring to her *moja szanowna koleżanka* (my honourable friend) and stresses common ground (*dobra znajoma od wielu lat* (a good old friend)), MEP1 accuses her of morally dubious behaviour. At the same time, he engages in positive self-presentation showing himself as a person of high moral standards. In addition, he tries to embarrass her: shame is what she should feel due to the misbehaviour she has committed. The whole utterance is an attack on MEP2’s face, moral integrity in particular.

### Example 1

MEP1: *I teraz, kiedy zbliża się święto Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, pani poseł, moja szanowna koleżanka i dobra znajoma od wielu lat, (pointing to MEP2) dla celów kampanii wyborczej i wyborczego lansu działa na szkodę Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, szkodzi Uniwersytetowi Jagiellońskiemu. Takich rzeczy robić nie wolno. To wstyd! (<http://www.tvn24.pl/kropka-nad-i>)*

(MEP1: And now when the Jagiellonian University jubilee is approaching, Lady Representative, my honourable friend and good old friend, (pointing to MEP2) for the election campaign purposes and for publicity, is acting to the detriment of the Jagiellonian University, she causes damage to the Jagiellonian University. One mustn't do that. Shame!)

**Prestige (social status, deeds, education, job, achievements).** The *Prestige* aspect of face often depends on professional achievements, which directly result from *Competence* (the individual's abilities, knowledge and skills), and on the generally understood *Background* (the individual's place of birth, place of living, schools, friends, interests and property). Example 2 presents the Polish pianist and composer Leszek Możdżer, who is appointed a jury member in the competition Poles with Verve (for those who have a lot of energy to work and play), organized by one of the Polish petrol companies. The text provides the information which attests to his professional success and high social status. The mention of his professional achievements (*w dorobku ma zarówno płyty autorskie, jak i projekty z międzynarodowej sławy muzykami*) and artistic versatility (*Gra jazz, muzykę filmową, piosenki rockowej Nirwany, utwory Chopina, a nawet religijne*) constitutes the enhancement of the Competence aspect of his face. He also owes his success to other distinguished musicians and artistic personalities (Lars Danielsson, Marcus Miller, Ryszard Tymon Tymański and Zbigniew Namysłowski). Work or at least contact with the significant others enhance the Background aspect of his face. Both his competence and background contribute to the creation of his social and professional status, and at the same time to the enhancement of his Prestige face-aspect.

### Example 2

*Leszek Możdżer, pianista i kompozytor, który w dorobku ma zarówno płyty autorskie, jak i projekty z międzynarodowej sławy muzykami, jak szwedzki kontrabasista Lars Danielsson czy amerykański basista Marcus Miller. Gra jazz, muzykę filmową, piosenki rockowej Nirwany, utwory Chopina, a nawet religijne. Rozwój muzyczny zawdzięcza takim osobowościom artystycznym jak balansujący czasem na granicy kiczu enfant terrible polskiej sceny muzycznej Ryszard Tymon Tymański czy Zbigniew Namysłowski, jeden z największych polskich saksofonistów jazzowych.* (<http://polska.newsweek.pl>)

(Leszek Możdżer, a pianist and composer who in his output has both original records and projects carried out with musicians of international renown, such as the Swedish double bass player Lars Danielsson, or the American bass player Marcus Miller. He plays jazz, film music, rock Nirvana songs, Chopin's works and even religious music. He owes his musical development to such artistic personalities as the enfant terrible of the Polish music stage

Ryszard Tymon Tymański, balancing sometimes on the verge of kitsch, and Zbigniew Namysłowski, one of the greatest Polish jazz saxophone players.)

Prestige and high social status may also result from the possession of power and authority. To deny that an individual is an authority involves a threat to his/her Competence and Prestige face-aspects. According to *Oxford English Dictionary*, *authority* is “a person with extensive or specialized knowledge about a subject; an expert.” The recognized knowledge gives the person the right and power to influence others. In Example 3, during a TV interview a conservative member of the Polish Parliament (MP2) questions the other’s (a liberal left-wing party) (MP1) expertise, which causes damage to MP1’s Prestige aspect of face.

### Example 3

MP1: *Człowiek, który uważa, że homoseksualizm się leczy, nie powinien reprezentować Polski w Parlamencie Europejskim.*

MP2: *Pan naprawdę tu nie jest autorytetem, żeby mówić kto ma reprezentować Polskę w Parlamencie Europejskim, a kto nie ma.* (<http://www.tvn24.pl/kropka-nad-i>)

(MP1: The man who thinks that homosexuality can be cured should not represent Poland in the European Parliament.)

MP2: You are not an authority to say who can represent Poland in the European Parliament and who cannot.)

**Competence (abilities, knowledge, skills).** Competence does not always relate to high social status, it can also be ideologically grounded. In Example 4, MP1 says to MP2: *My się różnimy* (We are different). Stressing the fact, he distances himself from what she believes in and who she is, at the same time implying that he does not approve of her world-view, which constitutes a threat to her face. In fact, MP1’s statement is an attack on the individual face of MP2, especially its moral and competence aspects. It is also an attack on the group face: MP1 attacks also Tomasz Adamek, a candidate for the European Parliament, which constitutes a face-threat to MP2, as she and Adamek are members of the same political party, a group of people having a radically conservative world-view. First, MP1 attacks Adamek, stressing his lack of necessary knowledge and suggests that he should take lessons in sexual education. Second, he attacks MP2, calling her views pseudo-scientific. MP1 resorts to irony and comments on MP2’s limited cognitive abilities. At the end, he assumes the role of an expert who knows what one should not do. By doing so, he again implies the difference between MP2 and himself, presenting himself as morally superior.

**Example 4**

MP1: *My się różnimy: pani uważa, że została stworzona przez Boga, a ja wiem, że zostałem stworzony przez rodziców. I taka jest między nami różnica. I pan Adamek tego też jeszcze nie wie. Może powinien pójść na jakieś lekcje wychowania seksualnego i dowiedzieć się, skąd się ludzie biorą na świecie. A jeżeli chodzi o te pani pseudonaukowe teorie, o tym, że człowiek jaki się rodzi taki musi być do końca, to naukowcy właśnie stwierdzili, że wśród niewielkiej części populacji zawsze zdarzają się ludzie, którzy urodzili się w niewłaściwym ciele.*

Interviewer: *Są nieszczęśliwi w swoim ciele, i dlatego chcą zmienić płeć.*

MP1: *W sumie czują się kobietą, a są mężczyzną, lub odwrotnie. Ja wiem, że pani to ciężko jest sobie wyobrazić, ale tak rzeczywiście jest i takim ludziom należy pomagać. I nie należy z nich drwić i z nich się wyśmiewać.* (<http://www.tvn24.pl/kropka-nad-i>)

(MP1: We are different: you think that God created you. I know that I was created by my parents. That's what makes us different. And Mr Adamek does not know it yet either. Perhaps he should take a sexual education course and learn how people are created. And as to your pseudo-scientific theories, that the man stays the same from his birth to his death – some scholars have just proved that in a small part of the population there are always individuals who were born in a wrong body.

Interviewer: They are unhappy in their body, and that's why they want to change their sex.

MP1: In sum, they feel they are a woman, but they are a man, or the other way round. I know that it can be hard for you to understand it, but it is true and we should help such people. And we should neither mock nor ridicule them.)

**Family (parents, children, husband/wife, relatives).** In Polish culture, in which family bonds constitute the basis of interpersonal relations, loyalty to one's family and the idea of solidarity are very important. For members of Polish culture, family constitutes a point of reference and provides support of all kinds. A threat to the person's family face or to the face of a family member is a threat to his/her face, and requires some supportive and redressive actions. Any critical mention or negative comments on the person's family matters made by someone who is not a family member may be interpreted as an attack on his/her face. However, it is acceptable to criticize one's own family and family members; then no face threat is involved. A threat to or attack on the Family face-aspect may also result in the damage of the Prestige face-aspect. In Example 5(a), the accusation made by the neighbour against the child is interpreted by his mother as an attack on her own face and the face of her whole family. To support her son and save their family face, she makes a positive comment on his behaviour. In a similar context of a child's misbehaviour (see Example 5(b)), the exclamation made by his mother does not constitute a threat either to

her own face or to her family face. Such a subjective interpretation of context results from the requirement, common in Polish culture, of expressing support and solidarity for members of one's family irrespective of circumstances. The operation of the requirement can also be observed in the exchange in Example 6: the wife can criticize her husband, but she does not accept the situation when he is criticized by somebody else.

### Example 5

- (a) A (a neighbour to the child's mother): *Twój dzieciak znowu zbil szybę w oknie!*  
(Your kid has broken the window again!)
- B (the child's mother): *To na pewno nie on, to takie spokojne dziecko. Nigdy nie mamy z nim kłopotu.*  
(He couldn't have done that, he is so quiet. He has never been giving us any trouble.)
- (b) B (the mother about her child): *Nie mam siły do tego dzieciaka!*  
(I can't put up with this kid any longer!)
- C (the mother's friend): *Wyrośnie z tego.* (smiling) (He will grow out of this.)

### Example 6 (an exchange between three close friends)

- A: *Mój mąż tylko by siedział przed telewizorem i pił kawę.*  
(My husband would only sit in front of the TV set and drink coffee.)
- B: *A mój najchętniej składałby modele samolotów. To jego główne zajęcie w domu.*  
(Mine would assemble aircraft models. This is what he mainly does at home.)
- C: *Powinnyście coś z tym zrobić. Nie mogą tak was wykorzystywać.*  
(You should do something about it. They can't exploit you like that.)
- A: *Daj spokój. Nie jest znowu z nimi tak źle. Mój czasem nawet umyje mi naczynia.*  
(Leave it alone! It is not that bad. My husband even washes the dishes for me sometimes.)

**Affiliation (nationality/ethnicity, world-view, religion, sexual orientation, social group, profession, beliefs).** The belongingness need is satisfied not only by participating in family life but also by affiliation to a group of people with whom the person has something in common. For many Poles, the affiliation to the Roman Catholic Church is an important element of their identity, for some – even the most important one. Religion and church used to have one of the

highest positions in the value hierarchy in Polish culture, constituting the ideological basis for patriotically-oriented Poles, especially during hard times (e.g., the partitions of Poland, and the First and Second World Wars). God and the Roman Catholic Church were for a long time, and still are, extremely important to the majority of Poles. The Church played a consolidating role, gathering and supporting people (Bogdanowska-Jakubowska, 2010, pp. 175–176). For Poles, religion is an extremely sensitive face issue. For example, many Polish Catholics have been outraged at jokes about the newly elected Pope Francis. Their reaction is interpreted by the Polish psychologist, Prof. Bartłomiej Dobroczyński, as resulting from an identity problem. The Roman Catholic religion constitutes for many Poles the only point of reference:

### Example 7

*W Polsce jest taka atmosfera, że o religii nic nie można powiedzieć. To się wiąże też z tym, że Polacy mają problemy z tożsamością. Dla wielu ludzi katolicyzm jest jedynym dostępnym sposobem określenia własnego ja. [...] Sądzę, że ludzie w Polsce tak źle reagują na żarty o ich religii, bo odbierają to jako atak na nich samych. Żart z papieża ośmiesza mnie, a nie papieża – myślą. To dowód bezsilności.* (Dobroczyński, *Newsweek*, 12/2013, p. 67).

(In Poland there is such an atmosphere that one cannot say anything about religion. This is related to the fact that Poles have problems with their identity. For many people, (Roman) Catholicism is the only thing available to identify themselves with. [...] I think that people in Poland react so badly to jokes about religion, because they interpret them as an attack on themselves. A joke about the Pope humiliates me, not the Pope – they think. This is a proof of their helplessness.)

Belonging to a certain group, whether it is a religious community, an ethnic community or a group of people representing a certain profession, involves cherishing a certain set of values and adhering to a certain code of ethics. Failure to comply with the code may be detrimental to the individual's face and to the face of the group he/she belongs to; in some cases it may result in his/her expulsion from the group. In certain face contexts, the individual's affiliation to a particular group may increase the risk of face loss. The commentary in Example 8 refers to anti-Semitic statements (damaging to the group face of the Jews) made by the Polish scholar, Professor Jasiewicz, published in the special edition of the Polish magazine *Focus Historia*, issued on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The author of the commentary perceives Professor Jasiewicz's statement first of all as a threat to the face of Polish Academia. He also sees it as a threat to Jasiewicz's face, in particular to its Selfhood aspect and moral integrity (e.g., *wyrzucił z siebie coś tak nikczemnego*). In the commentary author's opinion, the anti-Semitic and anti-Polish overtones of Professor's



text make it despicable. It is also considered damaging to the Competence aspect of Professor's face, as the author claims that the text has no academic value. The damage to Professor's face, its Prestige aspect in particular, is even greater due to his high social status (e.g., *utytułowany, nagradzany i honorowany*). The saying *noblesse oblige* may be read here as "one must act in conformity with one's position and reputation." Respectable people are expected to have higher standards of behaviour. According to the author, Professor Jasiewicz, a representative of Academia, does not conform to the position he has.

### Example 8

*Dla mnie zagadką jest to, jak prof. Jasiewicz mógł powiedzieć to, co powiedział, jeśli był w pełni władz umysłowych, i jak się mógł zgodzić, by to opublikowano w zeszycie o tematyce polsko-żydowskiej. Tezy i język nie nadają się do komentowania czy dyskusji. To jest materiał nie tylko antysemitki, ale także antypolski. Bo to wstyd dla nauki polskiej, że jej utytułowany, nagradzany i honorowany przedstawiciel wyrzucił z siebie coś tak nikczemnego, a zarazem pozbawionego wszelkiej wartości naukowej. (Gra w klasy, Adam Szostkiewicz's blog, accessed April 4, 2013)*

(This is a puzzle to me how Professor Jasiewicz could say what he said, if he was in full possession of his mental faculties, and how he could consent to their publishing it in the edition [of the magazine *Focus Historia*] on Polish-Jewish issues. His theses and language deserve neither to be commented on nor to be discussed. This material is not only anti-Semitic but also anti-Polish. Because it is a disgrace to Polish Academia that its titled, award-winning and honoured representative let loose something so despicable and of no academic value at the same time.)

**Background (place of birth, place of living, schools, friends, interests, property).** According to William James (1890), one of the important self components is the *material self*, which refers to tangible objects, people, and places, talking about which/whom one can use one of the possessive pronouns *my* or *mine*. We use such pronouns talking about our family, and about our friends, place of birth, place of living, schools, interests and property. Like in the case of the Family aspect of face, in the contexts in which the person's Background is an issue, two different perspectives can be taken:

- The other-oriented perspective, which may involve a threat to the person's face (see Examples 9(a) and 10(a)).
- The self-oriented perspective, which does not involve a threat to the person's face (see Examples 9(b), 10(b)).

A critical comment on the other's property (Examples 9(a) and 10(a)) threatens his/her face. By such a comment the speaker signals lack of approval of the other. A justified use of one of the possessive pronouns *my* or *mine* with refer-

ence to some person, object or place nullifies the face-threatening effect of an action performed. A potentially critical comment on one's own property does not threaten the speaker's face and can be interpreted as a complaint (Example 9(b)) or as a mere statement of fact (Example 10(b)).

### Example 9

- (a) *Ale gruchot! Kup sobie pan wreszcie coś nowego!* (laughing)  
(What a banger! You should get yourself (Mr) a new one!)
- (b) *Już mam dość tego starego gruchota. Ciągle się coś w nim psuje.* (the car owner's comment)  
(I am fed up with this old banger! It breaks down all the time.)

### Example 10

- (a) (an exchange between neighbours)  
A: *Słyszałam, że wasz dom nie ma fundamentów.* (I've heard that your house does not have foundations.)  
B: *Ależ skąd, przecież to porządny dom, budowany jeszcze przed wojną!*  
(But that's absurd! It is a solid house built before the war!)  
A: *Tak, tak.* (smiling doubtfully) (Yes.)
- (b) (an exchange between members of one family)  
B: *Próbowała mnie przekonać, że nasz dom nie ma fundamentów.*  
(She tried to convince me that our house does not have foundations.)  
C: *Chyba rzeczywiście nie ma. Pod podłogą był sam piasek.*  
(I think it really doesn't. There was only sand under the floor.)  
B: *Ale fundamenty mamy i już!* (laughing) (But we have foundations and that's that!)

The face-threatening effect of an action (like the face-enhancing effect) depends always on the context in which the act is performed, in particular it depends on who makes it, to whom, and in what way.

## 6. Conclusions

The individual's face is a complex, multifaceted construct. Its different areas do not constitute separate zones, but are rather overlapping. This overlap can also be observed in facework, positively marked (involving actions intended to enhance face) as well as negatively marked (involving actions threatening or damaging face).

The process of face creation/negotiation takes place during social interaction, whether it involves face-to-face, written or computer-mediated communication. The factors having an impact on the person's face can be divided into two categories:

1. Factors related to the self:

- the person's sense of identity,
- affectively sensitive attributes with which the person wants/does not want to be identified,
- his/her expectations as to how his/her self-image should be constituted,
- his/her interpretation of past social experience,
- his/her mental models of communicative situations which are culturally based.

2. Factors related to the other:

- other participants' expectations concerning the person and his/her self-image,
- the relationship between the self and others.

The structure of face, as presented in the extended model – *the lettuce model of face*, reflects the person's individual set of values, both in its content and hierarchy. One of the important face-constituting factors is context of interaction, which is the person's subjective interpretation of the relevant aspects of the social environment. The person's subjective interpretation of the context of interaction determines which of his/her face aspects are foregrounded, and in this way shapes his/her self-image.

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