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The Chilean Memory Debate: Mapping the Language of Polarisation

by
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A Doctoral Thesis

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ABSTRACT

This research consists of an analysis based on a Discursive Psychology perspective of how Chileans talk about the recent past. The data are focus group discussions produced in 2005 and 2006.

The 11th of September 1973, the Chilean military overthrew the socialist government of Salvador Allende, who had been elected president in 1970. The military installed first a junta and then a military government headed by General Augusto Pinochet. The military regime, which became known for tactics of political repression including assassination, torture and exile, remained in power until 1990, when Pinochet, having lost popular support (according to the results of a national plebiscite), returned the country to civilian rule. Since then, Chile has had four democratically elected presidents, none of whom has been able to avoid dealing with “the legacy of the past”.

Among Chileans, there is no consensus regarding how to name, describe or explain the events leading up to and during the military regime. On the contrary, since the day of the coup, opposing versions of events have been sustained by those who supported the Allende government and those who supported the coup. The controversies about the 11th of September 1973 itself, as well as the antecedents and the consequences of what happened on that day, are still valid concerns for Chileans. These concerns have been studied under the moniker of “collective or social memory”, as attempts to explain the difficulties Chileans have encountered in “coming to terms with the legacy of the past”.

The most frequent explanations for the lack of consensus about the “truth” of what happened in Chile have been based on an appeal to memory processes, shaping a debate about the past as well as about legitimate sources of knowledge of the past. My research explores in detail the discursive and rhetorical devices (handled by the participants of several focus groups) by which the debate is explainable as the result of a systematic and methodical use of the “language of polarisation”.

Key terms: memory, controversies, polarisation, victimization, discursive psychology, discourse analysis, conversation analysis.

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Part I

**INTRODUCING THE CHILEAN
MEMORY DEBATE**

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The day Augusto Pinochet died

The title of this thesis “The Chilean Memory Debate: Mapping the Language of Polarisation” suggests that this work addresses memory controversies, and thus a problematic revolving around how the past is knowable, through the study of language. I borrow from Margaret Wetherell and Jonathan Potter’s *Mapping the Language of Racism* (1992) not only (part of) their title, but also their discursive approach, making this explicit from the beginning.

What could be so problematic in Chilean history? The reader may be aware of who Augusto Pinochet was, since he had to spend almost a year and a half under house arrest in London, waiting for the British government to decide whether he would be sent to Spain to face trial for the disappearance of Spanish citizens in Chile during his 17-year government, or whether he would be returned to Chile expecting to encounter justice in his own land. Probably, when Pinochet was returned to Chile in March 2000, he was hoping to achieve a verdict that could have justified the conservative project he led from 1973 to 1989. However, he died on the 10th of December 2006 while he was facing an accusation of tax evasion. This suspicion about Pinochet’s seemingly untouchable life and manners was like a stab in the back for his supporters – a complete novelty – while for his opponents it was just more evidence of Pinochet’s vileness.

The figure of Pinochet divides Chileans; for some he was the former dictator whereas for others he was the saviour of Chile from the communist threat in the 1970s. In the days immediately after his death, the local newspaper *El Mercurio* published two pictures that portray two different Chiles.

The 11th of December 2006, a Monday



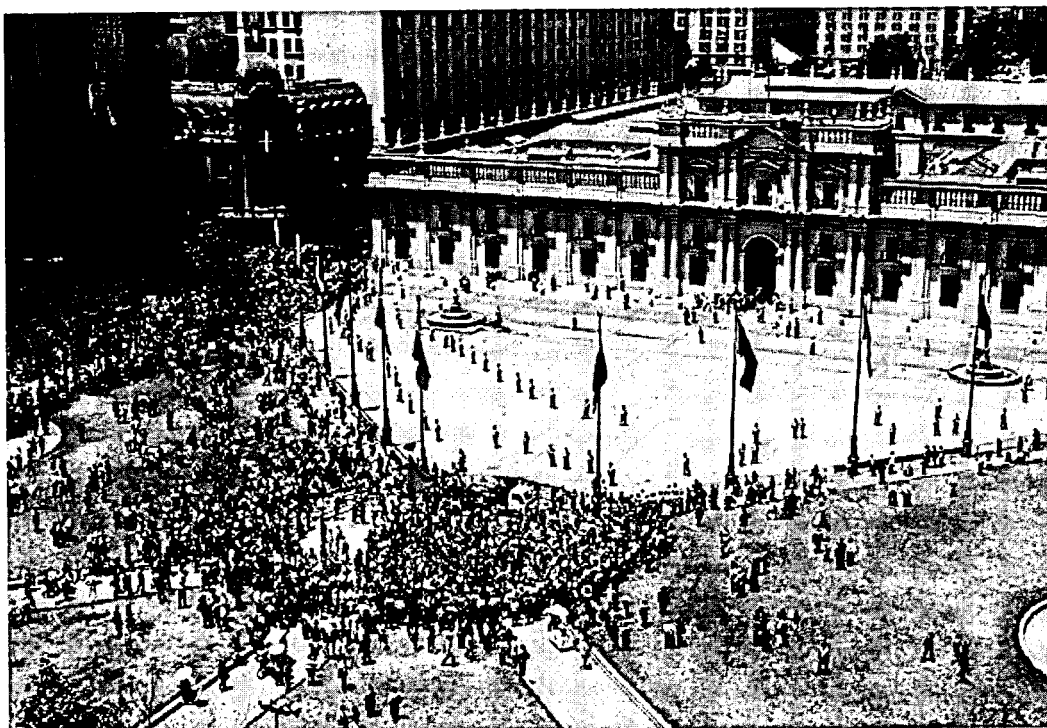
Pinochet el último adiós de sus seguidores

Cientos de simpatizantes del ex general Augusto Pinochet aprovecharon la posibilidad de ingresar hasta el hall central de la Escuela Militar a darle la última despedida. Desde las 10:00 horas, quienes aguardaban en las afueras del recinto pudieron llegar hasta la urna abierta del militar, cuyos funerales se realizarán mañana.

Pinochet the last goodbye from his followers

Hundreds of sympathizers of former general Augusto Pinochet entered the central hall of the Military Academy to give him their last farewell. From 10 am, those we were expecting outside the precinct could reach the military funerary urn, whose funeral will be held tomorrow.

While the next day, the 12th of December 2006, the day of the funeral



Opositores a Pinochet se reunieron en la Plaza de la Constitución

Varios centenares de personas se manifestaron hoy en el monumento al ex Presidente Salvador Allende, ubicado en la Plaza de la Constitución, en homenaje a las víctimas de la dictadura de Augusto Pinochet, cuya misa fúnebre se celebraba al mismo tiempo en la Escuela Militar

Opponents of Pinochet gathered at the Plaza de la Constitución

Hundreds of people protested today at the monument of former President Salvador Allende, located in the Plaza de la Constitución [behind the government palace La Moneda] in homage to the victims of Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship, whose funeral mass was being celebrated at the same time at the Military Academy.

Put together these two images and texts, it becomes apparent that Augusto Pinochet and Salvador Allende are somehow sequentially linked. Also, that both figures are related with “victims”, as people gathered in front of the Allende monument to render homage to Pinochet’s victims *while* Pinochet’s funeral is taking place. The sequence is that once Pinochet has died in the first image-turn, then his death can be reformulated in the second image-turn as an event that inspires remembrance of the victims of his dictatorship. Hence, the hundreds of people who went to express their last farewell to Pinochet should also take a look at the other hundreds of people who oppose to Pinochet’s death, others’ deaths. In such a sequence, built by myself, yet available from the newspaper’s sources, both images synthesize the phenomenon this research attempts to explicate: how two groups of Chileans share memories about the same people (for instance Pinochet and Allende) which despite their similarity in some respects, are presented as essentially competitive alternatives.

1.2 The Argument of the Thesis

However, this is not only a matter of images and texts, it is a story about life, death, projects, values, friends and enemies which go into “the hearts and minds” of Chileans (Stern, 2006). The struggle of Chileans’ collective or social memory was the point of departure of this research when I started my PhD at Loughborough University. I was particularly intrigued by forgetting, wondering what people means by forgetting and how it is supposed to work (and I still am). Because of the many accusations from each side to the other of having forgotten, in the end one could not be sure who was forgetting and what had been forgotten. I was also interested in the many problems posed by the notion of trauma for the functioning of memory. The two concepts put together can work to express at least three views on the effects of trauma on memory. First, traumatic memory can simply refer to memories (images, remembering) of traumatic events. Second, and while more complicated, also part of common-sense knowledge of psychological issues, traumatic memory can mean a traumatized memory: one whose processes are degraded because of a traumatic experience. In this case, forgetting as well as obsession can be the pathological results of trauma. And

third, the term can reference a 'traumatizing memory', a construction of the past which prolongs victimization over time. But these are only preliminary thoughts.

I was also interested in the stories Chileans tell to each other, in the content of their remembering together. As a Chilean born in 1972, I was too young to have had the opportunity to get a sense of what was going on. So, my curiosity about a past which has produced so much controversy has been as well a motive for me to conduct this research.

However, time has passed since 2001 when I started my PhD studies, and I have worked intensely on analyzing how people talk about the past, so today, in June 2008, I think I can say a few things about what I have come to name "the Chilean Memory Debate". What stories people remember together turn out to be as important as how the stories are told. I have moved from memory as a topic to how memory is topicalized. And in doing so, what has seemed evident to me for so many years, that us Chileans are polarised because of our past, became something that I needed to understand and explain.

I am afraid that Chilean readers may find my point on polarisation quite simplistic and obvious. Political polarisation has been massively invoked in memory studies from the late 1990s (and even before) as a characteristic of Chilean society. But what has not yet been explained is precisely how polarisation operates. From the way in which polarisation has been used, there seems to be a circularity between political conflict and political polarisation, such that polarisation explains the maintenance of conflict, when the conflict is what requires explanation; and despite the fact that the conflict reinforces the parties' divergence and distance from one another, polarisation itself remains unattended.

The data of this research are audio recordings and transcriptions of several focus groups in which people were invited to talk about the past. During these conversations participants shared their memories and discussed different perspectives about the past, stressing that the past is *still* a significant element in understanding the current political scenario in Chile. In almost every group, at some point, participants describe what they are doing as an analysis of a very

complex situation, stressing how controversial it is to settle on a single account or depiction of the recent past which could satisfy all of the positions in dispute. Furthermore, participants explicitly present themselves as analysts of this controversial history, shaping it as a highly polarised debate about the past and the present. Hence, focus group participants produce rich material which permits a detailed analysis of how ordinary people contribute to the maintenance (implying both continuity and change) of the "Chilean Memory Debate".

Among friends or at home, when people comment on the news for instance, they contribute to the making of the Chilean Memory Debate. What researchers have written about this phenomenon is not disconnected from ordinary Chileans' accounts and explanations of past events. In fact, during the conversations I have recorded, participants converge to the notion that in Chile there was a very significant political conflict in the past which continues to make sense in the present, highlighting the dilemmas and ambivalence they face when expressing opinions about recent history. Participants deploy images of controversies and debates, or even battles and "wars", regarding the dictatorship in Chile, to characterize the topic they are talking about. In this respect, the analysis of the material I have produced about the Chilean Memory Debate reflexively considers that while participants are analysing it, they are also contributing to its reproduction.

Applying a Discursive Psychology perspective (Edwards & Potter, 1992, 2001, 2005; Edwards, 1997, 2004; Potter, 1996a), based on the analytical principles of Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis, I observed that from the focus group participants' perspective, a particular notion of polarisation appears to be central in accounting for conflicts in the past. This notion forms part of explanations, reasons or causes used for understanding why conflict occurred in the first place, how it was handled at the time and how people continue to deal with it today. Due to the recurrence and centrality of both how this notion of polarisation is explicitly employed by participants and how participants skilfully deal with it in all of the three interactional settings in which the data was produced (right-wing, left-wing and politically mixed focus groups), polarisation is utilized as the axis for structuring the analytical chapters of this research. In other words,

through the discursive analytical process, polarisation, both as an explanatory category and as a discursive practice, emerge as a very significant phenomenon for the understanding of how the debate is currently managed and articulated.

It is important to underscore that I do not intend as analyst to take a side in these controversies. The polarised character of the debate is evidenced by its 'terminological undecidability': for example, there is no single name for the 1973 coup, *the* event that is omnirelevant for the whole discussion, just as there is no unique name for the years Pinochet governed; it is either "the dictatorship" or "the Pinochet government/ regime". Such details imply the considerable personal effort in symmetrically addressing the two main narratives that shape the past; because, as a Chilean, I am also accountable for my own polarised approach to this past. Yet, I insist, it is not up to me as analyst to close the debate and declare who the winner is, by virtue of showing which view is more accurate with respect to what happened. And even if I were willing to do so, I honestly would not know where to start. Controversies like this one instill scepticism and uncertainty about 'truth status'.

However, I know perfectly well which version I sustain, if not which version is 'more accurate', on the basis of the values I favour. But this is another discussion for a cup of coffee and a chat among people who are willing to talk about values. Unfortunately this argument might be heard as coming from one of those "who don't know and don't care, for whom anything goes and commitment never comes". No, no, I have learned how to take advantage of being a "*methodological* relativist, *moderate* constructivist, and a *pragmatic* pragmatist" (Edwards, Ashmore and Potter, 1995: 26, original emphases though other slight differences).

1.3 Overview of the Chapters

The next chapter provides *a* context for *this* research, rather than *the* context of *the* memory debate in Chile. Through Chapter 2, I hope the reader may get a general overview of the important details – events, figures and times – embedded in the Chilean Memory Debate. Following dictatorships, wars, and periods of political violence, expressions such as "coming to terms with the past" or "with the legacy

of the past” are often used as euphemisms which can encompass all sorts of demands, including acknowledgment of previous victimization, reparation and reconciliation. All these issues in addition to memory studies which focus on the Chilean case, are reviewed from the literature in order to delimitate what we will understand by “the Chilean Memory Debate”.

Chapter 3 offers a review of the paradigm and method for the study of collective memory. I take Discursive Psychology as an epistemological as well as theoretical and methodological perspective for understanding memory practices and for respecifying the debate I am interested in. I also review the discursive and conversation analysis principles that I have used in the analysis of my data. Subsequently I discuss some of the major common features in the field of memory theories. In the second part of this chapter I give an account of the practical methods by which the data were produced, and a justification for having chosen to use focus groups. Finally, I deal with the issues of transcription and translation which are pertinent since my data are in Spanish.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 are devoted to the analysis of the language of polarisation, but prior to this, I provide a Prelude, in the form of two different descriptions of the same events presented at length, as a way of provoking you, the reader, to produce your first analytical bets. Chapter 4 addresses polarisation as a participants’ concern. This first analytical chapter provides an initial approach to how focus group participants describe the debate about Chile’s recent past in terms of a controversy. In doing so, the participants exhibit several discursive resources, such as explaining the debate as the result of *polarisation (as an explanatory resource for the debate)*, through invoking membership categories and presenting their self-understanding of *polarisation as an underlying social dynamic* governing Chileans’ approaches to the past. The result is to portray *polarisation as an unavoidable source of conflict* which, despite how regrettable its effects may be, is seen as an inescapable feature of the debate.

Chapter 5, the second analytical chapter, takes a different point of departure to explore those discursive resources which may account for the maintenance of the debate. From a Discursive Psychology perspective, the so-called “polarisation

dynamic” is analyzed as a discursive practice, that is to say, as the result of the systematic employment of a set of discursive devices. In this context, this chapter focuses on how *polarisation as a discursive practice* is achieved *through the dialogical construction of temporality*. The articulation of a binary temporality of the past in shaping the two main narratives of the past is achieved through a set of two discursive devices. The first discursive device is that of *the rhetorical articulation of preference for one or the other period*, which simultaneously implies the rejection of the other period. The second discursive device is that of *asserting the victimization of one’s side*, through establishing categories of victims versus victimizers, or “us” versus “them”. Thus, the reference to the “other” is present implicitly or explicitly in participants’ discourse, an indication of the *dialogical* character of the debate.

Chapter 6 focuses on how *polarisation as a discursive practice* is accomplished through the process of *justifying the pervasive sense of polarisation*. Interestingly, appealing to polarisation’s pervasiveness appears in participants’ talk in response to their attempts to depolarise the debate, such as when they address the notion of *polarisation as a threat to the search for objectivity*. To establish the pervasiveness of the so-called “polarised dynamic” from the participants’ perspective (in addition to the analysis presented in Chapters 4 and 5), in Chapter 6, I explore how participants account for their inability to acknowledge the other’s perspective on the basis of *the epistemic consequences of the dynamic of polarisation*, which are blamed for the maintenance of polarisation. In doing so, participants deal with their own (and their group’s) accountability with respect to key issues: from a left-wing perspective, the impossibility of preventing the coup d’état, and from a right-wing perspective, the impossibility of preventing the victimization of the other.

Finally, Chapter 7 provides some concluding remarks, based on the empirical findings of this research, pointing to the relationship between memory and polarisation. What is suggested is that polarisation, understood as a discursive practice, can also be seen as the “ethno method” the Chilean folks use in their collective construction of the past.

Chapter 2

A CONTEXT FOR THE CHILEAN MEMORY DEBATE¹

2.1 Goals of this Chapter

A reader who is unfamiliar with Chile might expect this chapter to provide a general overview of the last four decades of Chilean history; a context that would provide background on the significant events and explanatory social processes which have given shape (and continue to do so) to the Chilean Memory Debate. Nevertheless, providing such an overview is – given the approach of my research – a necessary but perhaps impossible task. Theoretical and practical arguments converge to support this point. However, I do believe it is necessary to provide the reader with some fundamental information that will enhance his or her reading of my dissertation. In particular, it will help to make sense of many of the references contained in the talk of those Chileans who kindly accepted my invitation to discuss the past in focus groups held in 2005 and 2006. Their conversations constitute the empirical data for analysing the language of polarisation.

Thus, in developing the context, I face a multi-faceted dilemma: First, how to describe the last few decades of Chilean history, and in doing so, how much information should I include? The amount of literature on this topic, produced within Chile and abroad, is enormous. Second, for what purpose? I believe that it is necessary to provide certain basic information², through a critical review of

¹ I am grateful to the following scholars for their insights into the development of what I refer to in my research as the “Chilean Memory Debate”: retired General Ernesto Videla; Freddy Timmerman, historian; Alfonso Nespolo, journalist; Alfredo Joignant, Director of the Political Science Department of the University of Chile; María José Reyes, psychologist, currently writing her doctoral thesis on the Chilean reconciliation at the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona; and Andrés Haye; PhD in Psychology from the University of Sheffield, UK and Lecturer in Psychology, P. Universidad Católica de Chile. I interviewed all of these scholars in January 2008 to discuss some of the analytical findings of my investigation. I also asked them about their views on the existence of a “memory debate” in Chile.

² David Silverman (1999) discusses the issue of “context” and institutional talk within the Conversation Analysis tradition in dispute with other qualitative research methods. How much

how the events, their causes and consequences have been addressed by other scholars. This review is a coherent way to resolve the facets of this dilemma, including how for Chileans, the recent past became, and to some extent still is, a battlefield.

The theoretical arguments I make regarding the impossibility of producing an historical overview that is satisfactory enough to be *the* context for the controversies I investigate in this dissertation are taken from the meta-theoretical perspective approach of this research. Briefly, the Discursive Psychology perspective (Edwards & Potter, 1992, 2001, 2005; Edwards, 1997, 2004; Potter, 1996a) has opened up the “realm of factual description” as a field of research for those attempting to explain the psychosocial process by which persons organise and account for their everyday practices. In other words, the ways in which individuals (any individual, including academic scholars) talk about events in terms of facts, realities, or representations of the objects they refer to, are elements of intricate discursive procedures by which, finally, they attempt to make the factuality of these events obvious. But, for a version of reality to be understood as such, there is a complex – yet taken for granted – synchronic and diachronic process of negotiation among human beings about precisely what a reality is according to what is possible to communicate with language. In this sense, “the realm of factuality” is a discursive accomplishment; it is not a point of departure for research, but a destination³.

contextual information should be given by the analyst in addition to the data (audio and transcription of conversations)? While broader qualitative methods tend to rely on contextual information for the reader to make sense of the analyst’s suggestions, within Conversation Analysis there is a strong appeal not to do so, the argument being that the data itself is sufficient and any extra information which is not contributed by the participants in their “talk-in-interaction” should not be added by the analyst in order to prevent over-interpretation. The analysis must be sustained on the basis of the data; if it is not there, it cannot be attributed. On the other hand, it has been argued that talk is always contextually organised and thus, some contextual elements are relevant, particularly when the audience is unfamiliar with the subject. I believe this is true in this case.

³ This claim may be applicable to any topic. An example of this is Sally Wiggins’ (2002) PhD Thesis (*Eating your words: Constructing food and eating practices in mealtime conversation*, Loughborough University). Wiggins’ first interest was to contribute to a new understanding of eating disorders such as anorexia or bulimia. Nevertheless, rather than investigating, for instance, individuals’ accounts of their eating problems (taking the disorders *as such*, as a reality in their own), her research focused on a discursive analysis of “naturally occurring talk” during family

Therefore, it does not make sense if I present you with *the* context as if it were a unique, fully comprehensive and accurate description of the past. I can share my own view of how the events unfolded, but this would also have to be analyzed as part of this dissertation. Instead, what I prefer to do is to problematize others' descriptions of the past, that is to say, to produce an account of the accounts, which is, nonetheless, inherently *my* account of others' accounts, and I take full responsibility for it.

The practical arguments on which I base my inability to produce *the* context of the Chilean Memory Debate are not unique to me. The vast majority of academic articles, books and monographs on the "Chilean case"⁴, published in Chile or abroad, tend to begin by pointing out three features of how Chileans have dealt with the legacy of the past. First, that the "issue" continues to be controversial, despite the number of years that have passed since the events of the 1970s took place. Second, that it is quite difficult to provide a definitive account of "what happened", given this controversy. And third, how controversies about "what happened" still divide Chileans into two highly polarised groups.

A fourth characteristic may be included in this list, one that is widely discussed by political scientists, but not so apparent in other social disciplines. This last feature,

mealtime (spontaneous talk, not produced for research purposes). Thus, Wiggins was able to examine in detail interactions in which "eating healthy" is a participants' concern; where participants themselves construct and reinforce the normative order defining what it means to eat unhealthily. Finally, the obviousness (and in a way, the factuality) of eating disorders does not remain an inevitable consequence of any sum of events. Bulimia and anorexia, for instance, are the result of given social practices, of which we clearly see the outcomes – the "disorders" or the abnormal – but not the accomplishing of the normative and discursive processes which make their existence factual.

⁴ I use the term "the Chilean case" to encompass a variety of studies that will be addressed later, in empirical as well as bibliographical discussions, from various social sciences and humanities disciplines. However, the term "the Chilean case" is not an unusual way to address to recent decades of Chilean history, for instance, to refer to the early 1970s political experiment "the Chilean way to socialism" (the Allende government 1970-1973), or to the 1990s "the peculiar transition into democracy" (1989-2000). Scholars often comment that Chile's experience has often been referred to as a sort of "model" or "case" internationally, such that its public and economic policies have been implemented in other countries (Wilde, 1999; Drake & Jaksic, 1999; Barton & Warwick, 2002; Hite, 2006; Stern, 2004).

it seems to me, is a dilemmatic device for the maintenance of the debate: the legacy of the authoritarian past as a threat to the transition to democracy (Moulian, 1997; Arriagada, 1998; Capponi, 1999; Wilde, 1999; Lechner & Güell, 1999; Aguilar, 2002; Barton & Warwick, 2002; Loveman & Lira, 2002a; Garretón, 2003; García, 2006; Hite, 2006; Joignant, 2007; Reyes, 2007). For instance, during the 1990s, every time there were new revelations (or rumours) of human rights violations, such as information about where bodies of the detained-disappeared were buried, or a testimony from a public figure about their torture or exile, or relatives of members of the Armed Forces making claims regarding victimization, or any time the military openly showed disagreement with the civilian government, it was common to hear politicians, intellectuals and academics commenting on the polarisation of Chilean society and the unfinished “transition to democracy”.

Apart from those texts in which authors explicitly defend a certain perspective on the past (of which there are many examples), those that attempt to analyse the “Chilean case” in order to suggest new insights (which are often said to be for the purpose of depolarisation), avoid including a general overview – as I am doing – and opt instead to justify alternative paths for introducing the significance of their contributions. Given the unsettled and controversial subject, these authors’ refusal to predispose the reader appears to be honest and well-intentioned.

Andres Haye (2003), in the introduction to his PhD dissertation *Collective Memory: An Investigation into Its Cognitive and Group Processes*⁵, which is based on a series of empirical studies about how Chileans remember the 1973 military coup, states, “The task of giving a brief account of this event in a dissertation about its memory is not as easy and straightforward as it may seem to be. First of all, the military coup is not yet a finished fact, whose essential features are no longer the object of live controversy. Furthermore, the importance of the topic comes from this controversy and not simply from the facts themselves” (Haye, 2003: 9). He subsequently states that “Opinion polls have often found that this topic divides the population into two polarised clusters (Manzi & Krause,

⁵ Based at the Department of Psychology, University of Sheffield, U.K.

2003)". This statement provides Haye – a Chilean – a justification for ruling out, for instance, historians' accounts, because they reflect what the surveys have shown. Haye's presentation of the key elements of a context that would provide a reasonable understanding of his dissertation follows the strategy of reconstructing "the view of ordinary people, as depicted in recent studies" (Haye, 2003:9). This is my goal as well, but from another perspective.

The focus on the views of ordinary people's supposes a distinction from the perspectives of people who are not "ordinary". Within the various social sciences, it is not surprising to find this kind of distinction. Ordinary people's accounts are supposed to be rather different from scientific accounts, which are assumed to contain accurate knowledge, knowledge that can be effective in explaining and transforming the nature or essence of those positive objects placed in the out-there reality, and which can be measured, observed and so on. I have already briefly mentioned, in terms of a Discursive Perspective, how the factual character of event descriptions is something to be achieved rather than a precondition for individuals to talk about them. Therefore, in ordinary people's views as well as in scientific or political argumentations, one may find the complex discursive and rhetorical justificatory process which permits a given account to be taken as true and accurate in representing the history to which it refers.

Ethnomethodology, a methodological as well as epistemological perspective introduced by Harold Garfinkel (1967), argues that most methodological problems in sociology research can be explained by this illusory distinction between ordinary or lay epistemic procedures and sophisticated professional or scientific methodologies. Garfinkel argues that this distinction is misleading because, to put it briefly, nothing can guarantee the superior epistemological stance (or its "superior" access to reality) of one version versus the other, except for its justificatory internal rhetoric. Nevertheless, is it worth mentioning that scholarly accounts formalise lay accounts or, in other words, folk methods commonly used by people to make given issues intelligible. On the other hand, disciplinary accounts (theories or meta-theories) also cross the boundaries of lay accounts, introducing new arguments for enriching and constraining people's understandings of, for instance, controversial or novel issues, which in turn are

assimilated by disciplinary discourse (Moscovici, 1976; Billig et al, 1988). Consequently, both lay and disciplinary perspectives are equally important for reconstructing my account of the accounts. In fact, both are assumed as the analytical material – the accounts to be addressed – in this chapter.

Thus, my goal in this chapter is first to give a general overview of the literature which has addressed the topic of this research from different perspectives. Then, using the literature I will provide a plausible, but not definitive, story of the last few decades of Chilean history, focusing on when and how controversies about the past have had more impact in the public domain. Finally, I will summarize the main areas of debate to suggest my understanding of the Chilean Memory Debate, a debate which is about the past itself and about the uses of memory as a process and a source of knowledge about the past.

2.2 When does the Chilean Memory Debate arise?

When did all this start? When and how did social or collective memory become a public concern in Chile? When and how did the notion of memory become a weapon in the battleground of Chilean culture and politics? When and how did the weapon become an effective one? And how has the manoeuvrability of the weapon changed over time?

These questions are formulated as historical concerns, as if their answers could be found in the past, by looking back in time to recover a precise date or the elements that account for a change dynamic, as what seems obvious from the questions is that there have been changes with respect to the uses of memory. Yet these questions are posed in 2008 and today's answers will not remain immutable in the future, as they have not been so in the past. However, the temporal value of today's answers, based on our Chilean collective memory, as Halbwachs suggested (1950), are inherently oriented to sustain the continuity of a social group's identity and the interests of the present. Because we now know the outcome of the story, I need to be cautious about over-simplifying accounts of the past. There is a risk of approaching the present as the obvious result of the past, when the past is methodically treated to produce a sense of fatalistic determinism.

When the present is subject to “historisation”, through the demarcation of distinct periods of time, scholars do not necessarily explain the past itself⁶, but rather the past of the present.

However, it is possible to argue that a few seminal manifestations of a concern in Chile about the way in which the political conflict of the 1970s would be remembered in the future may be found even before the coup d'état, in politicians' speeches and the local press. At the time, there was a shared sense of the uniqueness and importance of the events of the early 1970s (Stern, 2004).

During the three years (1970-1973) of the *Unidad Popular's* (Popular Unity) government⁷ headed by Salvador Allende, a process of growing political enmity took place between those who supported the socialist vision and those who rejected it – in broad terms, the Left and the Right. Each group had its own impenetrable perspective about “what was happening” and the preferred solution to the highly polarised and untenable political situation. The conflict reached beyond the political arena, into the lives of ordinary people. The divergent visions for the country's future, based on opposing views about the present and the past, implied mutually exclusive values, principles and ideologies. Yet both groups argued (and continue to do so) that its vision was the most beneficial for the country.

⁶ Another discussion revolves around whether the past itself is knowable “as it was” now that it has disappeared. However, such an analysis is beyond the scope of this chapter.

⁷ The *Unidad Popular* (Popular Unity) or UP was the coalition of political parties that enabled Salvador Allende to win the 1970 presidential election. The coalition included the Communist Party, the Radical Party, the *Movimiento de Acción Popular Unitario* (Movement of Unified Popular Action, or MAPU) and the *Acción Popular Independiente* (Independent Popular Action, or API), as well as the former *Frente de Acción Popular* (Popular Action Front, or FRAP). Allende had run for president three times before winning the 1970 election. In 1952, as the Socialist Party candidate, he obtained 5.4% of the vote; in 1958, as the candidate of the left-wing coalition FRAP, he obtained 28.5%; in 1964, also representing the FRAP, he obtained 39% (but lost to Eduardo Frei Montalva, founder of the Christian Democratic Party, who received 56%); and finally in 1970, as the candidate of the UP, he obtained 36.3% of the votes. According to the 1925 Chilean Constitution, because he had more than one-third of the votes, Allende's ascension to the presidency had to be ratified by Congress. Although his election was ratified, his government lacked the support of the other two-thirds of the population, which was represented by the traditional Right (the largest party of which was the National Party) and the centrist Christian Democratic Party. Despite the constitutional backing of Allende's election, the enmity between the parties of the UP and their political opponents only sharpened after he assumed the presidency.

On the 11th of September 1973, Chile's Armed Forces attacked the government palace, *La Moneda*, while Salvador Allende and his closest collaborators were still inside the building. In the early afternoon on that day, a military junta was constituted, and its first actions were the dissolution of Congress, the prohibition of political parties, and the assumption of total control of the executive and legislative branches; only the judiciary branch remained intact. Having overthrown a duly elected government, the junta did not set a deadline for return to civilian rule. According to official statements, because the junta's actions were inspired by goals, it could not anticipate how long it would take to restore the order that had been completely eroded by the Allende government (Junta Militar, 1974).

The military junta was initially composed of the three commanders of the Armed Forces (Army, Navy and Air Force) and the General Director of the uniformed police *Carabineros de Chile*⁸. In 1974, Augusto Pinochet (the army's representative) became the president of the junta, and subsequently proclaimed himself the President of Chile. In 1981, under the constitution approved in 1980, Pinochet was replaced in the junta by another general, although he remained president. The 1980 Constitution implied the separation of the executive power from the junta's duties, which remained in charge of the legislative power.

However, by the late 1970s the military regime had become embodied in the figure of Pinochet, such that even today the period 1973-1989 is known interchangeably as the military government, Pinochet's government, the military regime or Pinochet's dictatorship, to name just a few of the common descriptions. For Chileans, there is no single agreed-upon name for this period, nor is there one name for the events of the 11th of September 1973, which the military early on called a "*pronunciamiento militar*" (in English, literally, "military pronouncement"). That the coup was merely a "military pronouncement" was the sense the military attempted to give to its intervention in 1973, as if its actions were a sort of positioning with respect to the country's situation in the early

⁸ Augusto Pinochet for the Army; José Toribio Merino for the Navy; Gustavo Leigh for the Air Force; and César Mendoza for Carabineros de Chile.

1970s, a “pronouncement” against the Allende government rather than an action to overthrow it. The term “military pronouncement” may sound bizarre, except in Chile where it specifically refers to the military intervention of 1973.

As many other Chileans did not not agree with such a view on the military intervention, they preferred a variety of other terms for it; *golpe/coup*, *golpe militar/military coup*, *golpe de estado/coup d'état*, *derrocamiento de Allende/overthrow of Allende*, *caida de la UP/the fall of the UP*. This terminological disagreement is reproduced over and over again in various ways “regarding a multiplicity of motives: ‘celebration’ v/s ‘commemoration’, ‘military government’ v/s ‘dictatorship’, ‘excess’ v/s ‘human rights violations’, etc” (Joignant, 2007: 34, my translation). Yet Chileans understand that all of these terms refer to the 11th of September 1973 and the post-coup period, and among Chileans, the term a speaker uses is sufficient material for others to infer whether the speaker is in favour of or against the coup, or conversely, for or against Allende.

The 1973 coup has been frequently depicted as a turning point in Chilean history, as a day of division (liberation and celebration versus oppression and mourning) that marks the life of every Chilean⁹. The causes and effects of the military intervention have been the subject of many essays, articles and books, such that it would be impossible to convey the wide range of discussion (in fact, to examine these discussions, as empirical material for a Discursive Analysis, would be an excellent topic for research). But generally, those publications point to social polarisation, political violence and its legitimacy, and economic chaos as the causes of the coup. From the leftist perspective, the revolutionary nature of the *Unidad Popular* government threatened the right-wing’s dominance of political

⁹ The sense of determinism attributed to that day and to the subsequent years of the military regime is notable in people’s talk as well as in academic accounts. This feature of Chileans’ collective memory is underscored in two of my previous works. The first (Tocornal & Vergara, 1998) consists of a Discourse Analysis of focus groups discussions composed by “common people” and of interviews with political leaders from throughout the political spectrum. The second (Tocornal & Piper, 2002) is an analysis of how the media representations have helped Chileans remember the coup d’état as if it were an isolated, yet decisive, day in our history, through some specific devices that were found to be similar to those employed by the media in presenting the 11th of September 2001.

and economic affairs; the right-wing perspective is that the UP's economic, social and institutional reforms were irresponsible and led to political chaos and economic ruin. As for the effects of the coup, some have argued that it produced greater polarisation, political violence in the form of state terrorism, increased socio-economic inequality, while others say it created the conditions such that needed reforms to Chile's economic and political systems could be made, and ultimately resulted in the country's extraordinary economic growth over the last 20 or so years.

Having briefly introduced the context surrounding the 1973 events, we can then move to what historians have said about the origins and development of the uses of the memory category in the last decades in Chile. Among them, Steve Stern, a professor of history at the University of Wisconsin, recently published the first two books (2004, 2006) of his trilogy *The Memory Box of Pinochet's Chile* and is currently working on the final book.

Stern offers an interesting chronology of the Chilean Memory Debate by investigating the development of four main frameworks or narratives, or, in his words, "emblematic memories" of the period 1970-1990. Briefly, these four emblematic memories did not arise simultaneously, but emerged in the contest for credibility and ethical and political validation. When one emblematic memory dominated the shaping of the past, the others were silenced, and vice versa. Nevertheless, once an emblematic memory was consolidated it remained available for Chileans to make sense of the past, even though (or perhaps because) other emblematic memories were more widely accepted. According to Stern, his chronology of Chilean "memory struggles" reflects the political agenda of each period in which one emblematic memory dominated, such that through the historicisation of the fluctuations of these memory struggles, it is possible to deduce the political tenor of three periods.

For Stern, the first emblematic memory is "memory as salvation" and it emerged immediately after the 1973 coup. Its monopoly on public recognition was not questioned until at least 1975, when two other emblematic memories timidly found their way into the public domain. The period 1973-1975 corresponds to the

beginning of the “foundational” era of the military regime, the culmination of which was the 1980 Constitution (which contained the legal basis for the transition to democracy in the late 1980s). The main arguments of this first emblematic memory are: Chile experienced a “traumatic nightmare” before the coup, in which economic ruin and the legitimization of political violence by ultra-leftist groups brought Chile to the abyss of civil war. In this memory, the military takeover was “a new beginning that rescued the national community” (Stern, 2004: 108) and led to the salvation of Chile or even a “second independence” that was not political but social and economic (Joignant, 2007). This framework does not recognize the human rights violations perpetuated by the military government, which are at the core of the main argument of the two emblematic memories that follow this first one.

The second and third emblematic memories illustrate “memory as rupture” and “memory as awakening and persecution”. They are similar in their arguments, yet the latter is more inclusive of different sectors of Chilean society, while the former is almost the exclusive domain of the relatives of victims of the regime. These two narratives were shared among those on the left starting in 1973, but only obtained public recognition in the late 1970s. This period corresponds to the later part of the foundational era of the military regime, during which the government faced more open political opposition, particularly from the leftist elite both inside and outside the country. However these difficulties were easily left outside the military authorities’ concerns’ after the passage of the 1980 Constitution.

The arguments of “memory as an unresolved rupture” emblematic framework revolve around the victimization of one group: those who sympathised with Allende and thus were the target of the military repression. The arguments emphasise how the military “brought the country to a hell of death and torture (...) without historical precedent or moral justification, and that hell continues” (Stern, 2004: 109) because of military authorities’ systematic denial of the “truth of torture and disappearance, and executions for years”.

The “memory as persecution and awakening” framework includes the arguments of the “memory as rupture” but adds something else: that the “violent persecution of dissidents, the collapse of democratic rights, the staying power of the dictatorship, these tested one’s deepest value and social commitments, and thereby provoked – earlier for some than for others – a process of awakening” (Stern, 2004: 111). In other words, the arguments of this narrative are enhanced by the value of solidarity with the victims as well as one’s own moral constancy. In this way, “memory as persecution and awakening” is more explicitly organised around moral values than the others; its normative character is more demanding and difficult to avoid than the two preceding narratives. One may disagree with the arguments that structure “memory as salvation” and “memory as rupture”, based on one’s view of the events of the pre- and post- coup periods. But it is not so easy, from a moral perspective, to disagree with the values of solidarity and human rights.

Two episodes significantly contributed to the visibility of the political violence perpetrated by the state after the coup. In September 1976, Allende’s former foreign secretary, Orlando Letelier, and his American assistant were assassinated in a car-bombing in Washington, D.C. This event provoked immediate outrage around the world and preliminary investigations directly pointed to the participation of Chile’s military government in the crime. Later, judges in Chile and the United States confirmed this allegation, indicting former military officers as guilty of the homicide. Then, in December 1978 human remains were discovered in Lonquén, a rural area not far from Santiago. The bodies of local peasants “constituted the first ‘hard’ proof of the truth of permanent disappearances that broke into the public domain – and a devastating confrontation with the reality that at least some of the disappeared had indeed been killed” (Stern, 2004: 58).

Interestingly, the visibility of political violence contributed to the making of the fourth of Stern’s memory frameworks, “memory as a closed box”. This emblematic memory, arose between 1978 and 1982, and can be seen as a counter-offensive to “memory as rupture” and “memory as awakening and persecution”. The main argument of this last narrative is that the coup d’état was necessary, and

its unfortunate effects are “deeply troubling, divisive, and even dangerous affairs that are best put away and forgotten” (Stern, 2004: 111). But deep within the “memory box” one finds the arguments of “memory as salvation”.

According to Stern, the use of memory as a more or less effective weapon to deal with controversies about victims and about the facts themselves arose during the late 1970s and early 1980s, when “the language of memory” and “the related idea of a struggle between ‘memory’ and ‘forgetting’ congealed as a “cultural language and rallying cry” (Stern, 2004: 127). The clash between official memories (memory as salvation and as a closed box) and counter-official memories (memory as rupture and memory as persecution and awakening) is what, in Stern’s perspective, inaugurated the Chilean Memory Debate.

Drawing on Stern’s work, the uses of the memory category to explain the effects of the political conflict of the 1970s (the Allende government, the coup and the post-coup era) would have begun as the military regime was finalizing its “refoundation” of the country’s political and economic system. Yet at the time, there was no consensus among Chileans on the fundamentals of this new era. As there was no shared acknowledgement of the *same* present, there was no common narrative of the past; where there was polarisation and controversies, past and present truths were replaced by concerns about how the events would be remembered or commemorated in the future. Thus, the discussion about what had happened was postponed to a later period of time and replaced by “the language of memory”, as this is not only the language of the past (which might seem obvious), but it is also the language of the future of the past.

Stern’s chronology of Chile’s “memory struggles” is a useful way to grasp some of the disputes regarding the past in their “historical circumstances”. More than anything – for this context – it is a useful tool that facilitates the reader’s understanding of the historical context because it enables the insertion of events and political processes. But there are other perspectives on when and how the Chilean Memory Debate began.

It is worth noting that Steve Stern interviewed his subjects and conducted his ethnographic investigation in 1996 and 1997. Many scholars have suggested that these years are the prelude to, if not the start of, an open public debate about the past (for instance: Jelin, 2002, 2007; Zeran et al, 2003; Prado & Krauss, 2004; Timmermann, 2005; Hite, 2006; Reyes, 2007). Although those cited above do not necessarily analyze their concerns in terms of a debate, this notion¹⁰ that the debate would have started in the late 1990s is a frequent feature of post-2000 literature on this subject, that is to say, after Augusto Pinochet had been arrested in 1998 in London.

The almost one and a half years that Pinochet spent under arrest in London produced unexpected and decisive consequences for Chilean politics and culture, many of which have been largely documented in academic literature. For some Chileans, Pinochet's arrest signified the first time that the former dictator was being held accountable for the human rights violations committed during his government by state agents and state-sponsored agents, as had been confirmed in the 1991 *Informe de la Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación* (Report of the National Commission of Truth and Reconciliation). But for other Chileans, Pinochet's arrest was an act committed by an international conspiracy to denigrate his image and to undermine his legacy: the re-foundation of Chile. Pinochet's arrest in London is perhaps the most significant "irruption of memory", following the analysis of Alexander Wilde in his 1999 article, "Irruptions of Memory".

Wilde posits that during the 1990s, a series of "public events" (which attracted the attention of the press as well as of political authorities) triggered debate about the past, challenged the authority of the *Concertación*¹¹ governments that had held power since the transition to democracy, and reproduced the social polarisation

¹⁰ All of the scholars with whom I have talked (see footnote 1 in this chapter) agreed that an open debate began in the late 1990s, yet it was unclear if they were referring to the period before or after Pinochet's arrest in London in October 1998. Some argued that there were previous manifestations of a debate, for instance, the protests and demonstrations on the day that Pinochet stepped down from the Armed Forces and became a Senator for Life in March 1998.

¹¹ The *Concertación* refers to the centre-left political coalition opposed to the Pinochet regime, the full name of which is *the Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia/the Coalition of Parties for Democracy*. Later I describe in more detail the *Concertación* governments that have been in power since 1990.

that characterised the pre- and post-coup contexts. In Wilde's view, within this debate Chileans immediately re-positioned themselves at their poles, just as they had during the 1970s and 1980s. For Chileans, the conflict has not ended, and older generations passed on the dynamic of polarisation to younger generations. Wilde's main point is that the past, in a sense, repeatedly "returned" in the form of "irruptions of memory"¹² of the "sinister past", calling into question the legitimacy of the *Concertación's* political authority, and in particular its ethical authority, given that the *Concertación* had not fully confronted the issue of accountability for the human rights violations of the Pinochet regime.

Wilde also notes that the number of publications (personal narratives and testimonies, essays, journalistic accounts and memory studies) addressing Chile's recent past significantly increased from 1996 to 1997/8. For Wilde, this "torrent" of publications evokes "the country's divided historical memory" (Wilde, 1999:473) as it approached the 25th anniversary of the coup.

Following Wilde's analysis, there is another point of departure for the Chilean Memory Debate, a couple of years before Pinochet's arrest in London. But after his arrest, the debate could not be avoided by either the Chilean government or Chilean society as a whole. As Drake & Jaksic (1999) put it, "the country became polarised in two irreconcilable camps. The Right and the *Concertación* maintained their perspectives and interpretations of the past, their heroes and villains, their dreams and nightmares" (Drake & Jaksic, 1999: 31).

At the time Pinochet found himself arrested in the London Clinic, and representing the second government of the *Concertación*, Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle (son of the founder of the Christian Democratic Party) was nearing the end of his term as president. Frei had been elected in 1993 by a large majority (58%); his predecessor, Patricio Aylwin (also a Christian Democrat), had easily won the first democratic election in 1989 with 55% of the votes. Thus, the Christian

¹² In his article, Wilde provides a footnote to explain the use of the term "irruption of memory". He begins with a definition of the verb "irrupt": to break or to burst in (from the *American Heritage Dictionary*), and then he states: "Although relatively rare in English usage, the term closely matches the Spanish '*irrumpir*', conveying a sense of sudden intrusion" (Wilde, 1999: 475).

Democrat party governed from 1990 until 2000, as part of the coalition *Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia*. In the presidential election of December 1999 (held while Pinochet was still under arrest in London), none of the candidates earned an absolute majority in the first round, leading to a second round. In January 2000, Ricardo Lagos won the right-wing candidate, Joaquín Lavín of the *Alianza por Chile* coalition by a slim margin of 2.6%. Lagos, a Socialist and former collaborator of the Allende government (who had been exiled by Pinochet), represented the left wing of the *Concertación*, which also includes the *Partido Por la Democracia*, the Christian Democrats, and the Radical Party. In the 2005 election, there was no absolute majority and Michel Bachelet was elected in the second round with 53.5% of the vote. Bachelet's election was significant in that her father, a brigadier general in the Air Force, was arrested and tortured by the military because of his opposition to the coup. He died while in prison in 1974. President Bachelet and her mother were subsequently exiled, returning to Chile in 1989.

The *Concertación* was born in the late 1980s as the *Concertación de Partidos por el No*, a group of opposition political parties that unified behind the goal of winning the 1988 plebiscite, a referendum on whether Pinochet should continue in power. Established in the 1980 Constitution, the plebiscite was the military junta's first major step towards the transition to democracy. Rather than hold elections with multiple candidates, the junta designated Pinochet as the sole candidate in the plebiscite, convinced that he would obtain more than 50% of the votes needed to ensure he would stay in power. Thus, the *Sí* (yes) option meant keeping Pinochet in power for at least another eight years; the *No* option, if successful, would lead to competitive presidential elections. The *No* option won with 56% of the votes. Since 1990, then, the *Concertación* has governed the country, maintaining the economic system inherited from the Pinochet regime and facing the task of coming to terms with the legacy of the authoritarian past.

During the first two years or so of Aylwin's government, the coalition undertook several attempts to acknowledge what happened to the victims and help the relatives, as Aylwin stated, "as much as possible", considering that Pinochet remained as the Commander in Chief of the Army until 1998 and that neither the

Concertación nor Alianza por Chile (as well as a small number of “Senators for life” designated by Pinochet with the backing of the 1980 Constitution) dominated Congress. At the time, neither the military nor the opposition were willing to open the “memory box”, to use Stern’s term. Meanwhile, the victims, gathered around the emblematic “memories as rupture and as persecution and awakening”, saw in President Aylwin’s government an opportunity for their memories to be heard and acknowledged after so many years of official denial.

In May 1990, Aylwin created the National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation¹³, the report of which (also known as the Rettig Report as the commission was presided over by Raul Rettig) was made public in March 1991. As the basis of the report, the commission had asked Chileans to come forward with information about the most serious human rights violations that occurred on or after the 11th of September 1973. Thus, the report addresses only those cases that resulted in disappearance or death and also includes a few cases of police and military agents who were killed “in combat” (or due to the political violence). The numbers stated in the report are the following: 1,068 persons killed by the state agents or those under their command (59 of them by war tribunal; 93 during public protest; 101 were executed after being accused of trying to escape; and 815 were killed while being tortured), in addition to 957 persons arrested by state agents and then made to disappear – the *detained-disappeared* – and 90 persons killed by civilians with political motives. Thus, the total number of deaths was reported as 2,115 .

Victims who had survived – those who were imprisoned, tortured, exiled, fired from jobs without cause, and other forms of suffering – were not included in the scope of the Rettig Report. Those who had been tortured had to wait until 2004 to be included in the list of the official victims of the Pinochet regime, when President Lagos, as the 30th anniversary of the coup approached in August 2003,

¹³ The Commission had four main objectives: 1) To prepare a full picture of the extent of human rights violations, including details and circumstances; 2) To collect information concerning individual victims, their fates and locations; 3) To make recommendations regarding reparations and necessary punishment; and 4) To recommend legal and administrative measures in order to prevent serious violations of human rights in Chile in the future (The Commission Report, Chapter 1, The Commission’s Objectives)

created a new National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture to explore "the truth" about the scope and extent of torture, to identify the victims of torture, and to examine the effects of torture on the lives of victims. The resulting Valech Report (known thus because the commission's president was Monseñor Sergio Valech, a Catholic leader) revealed that torture had been a systemic practice throughout the military regime, a point largely disputed at that time. According to the Commission's criteria, 27,255 persons suffered one or more of the human rights violations previously listed; the majority of them are men who today are in their 50s and 60s.

Rather than focus on the political ups and downs of the *Concertación* governments since 1990, for this context it makes sense to focus on the process of how memories or representations of the authoritarian period and its causes and consequences have generated controversy over the years. However, there are two episodes in the past that are worth a brief examination within the overview of historicisation of past conflict.

The first is the *Mesa de Diálogo* (Round Table), an initiative launched by President Frei in August 1999 after Pinochet has been under arrest in England for almost a year, and the Chilean government's attempts to have him freed had thus far not been successful. As I mentioned earlier, once Pinochet was arrested, Chile reverted to a climate of polarisation, with those who felt that their memories ("as salvation" in Stern's terms) had been completely disregarded holding daily protests outside the British and Spanish embassies, while others felt that their memories ("as rupture") were finally being acknowledged and validated.

Those invited to participate in the *Mesa de Diálogo* included human rights lawyers, religious leaders, representatives of the Armed Forces and prominent historians and psychologists. By bringing representatives of the Armed Forces to dialogue with representatives of the human rights movement for the first time, "the government hoped that the military could provide centralised information about the disappeared, therefore ending the confusion created by the many different public bodies that had looked for information previously. The military, for their part, hoped that the *Mesa de Diálogo* would end the transition period"

(Aguilar, 2002: 418); in other words, the military sought an end to the constant questioning of its actions during the Pinochet regime, which often resulted in officials going to court.

By the time Pinochet was freed and returned to Chile at the beginning of March 2000, the *Mesa de Diálogo* had met on eight occasions and Ricardo Lagos was about to assume the presidency, on the 11th of March. Lagos supported a recommendation from the *Mesa* (which was firmly rejected by human rights organisations) to provide legal protection to those who provided information about the location of bodies of the detained-disappeared; that is to say, such information could be provided anonymously. As a result, in January 2001 the military offered a list with information about the location of the bodies, although the list turned out to be not completely accurate.

It is worth noting the impact of the *Mesa de Diálogo*, given the extensive coverage the press gave to the discussions and the errors in the information the military provided. For many Chileans, the information was simply more evidence to support their view of the past, but for others, it was completely new evidence which, given that the information came from the military and was therefore undeniable, challenged their views about the past. These Chileans had to determine how to integrate this new information into their memories, in other words, their certainty about past events, to a certain extent, had to change in the face of this evidence.

Moreover, in 2004 a new “irruption of memory” took place, when the *Washington Post* published an article (14th of July 2004) revealing that a commission in the U.S. Senate had discovered in 2002 that Pinochet and his family members controlled several secret bank accounts in Riggs Bank (this information was not revealed until 2004, by which time Riggs Bank had changed the names on the accounts to protect its clients). As a result of the release of this information, a week later the Chilean *Consejo de Defensa del Estado* (the State Defence Council) filed a lawsuit against Pinochet in the Chilean justice system. Within Chile, they were strong reactions to this move; Pinochet supporters decried it as

part of an international plot against the former leader, while his opponents viewed it as yet more evidence that Pinochet was, indeed, a criminal. But this case implied something that none of the other cases against Pinochet (and there were hundreds filed regarding his responsibility for human rights violations) did: for the first time, a judge ruled that Pinochet's immunity from prosecution, which he enjoyed as a self-appointed senator for life (as established by the 1980 Constitution), was invalid. In October 2005, Pinochet was in fact stripped of his immunity (without the possibility for appeal) in a ruling by Chile's Supreme Court. He could for the first time, be held directly accountable for tax evasion and falsification of public documents including passports (he had used a false passport to manage his accounts at Riggs Bank, which were under false names). By the end of 2005, Pinochet's closest relatives (his wife, Lucía, and one of his sons) were charged as accomplices and ordered to testify. When Pinochet died in December 2006, the case was still under investigation; a ruling had not yet been made.

2.3 What is the Chilean Memory Debate about?

So, what is so controversial about Chile's past? What are the central disputes? These questions are important for defining with more precision what I refer to as the Chilean Memory Debate.

The first dispute, I argue, has centred on "what happened". Over the last decades, the debate about the past has shown how the nature of an event can be transformed retrospectively by memories or knowledge about it. Furthermore, the debate has also illustrated the power of public acknowledgment in constructing knowledge of the past. Many events of the past have appeared or disappeared from the public domain, such that their existence and the negation of them have been rhetorically justified within the controversies themselves.

When there were competing versions of the past, there seemed to be no possibility for setting a discussion about "the truth". When opposing descriptions of events are produced in a highly polarised context, it seems that neither can be taken as accurate; interestingly, however, the dynamic of polarisation reinforces discordant

accounts in a competition for credibility, because the credibility of one version undermines the others'. Two examples of this in the Chilean context are the death of Salvador Allende and the well-known *Plan Zeta* (Plan Z), a (supposed) plan of Allende's ultra-left supporters to exterminate, towards the end of 1973, the political and military leaders of the increasing opposition to the UP government.

Whether Allende was killed or committed suicide inside the presidential palace on the 11th of September 1973 is the subject of mistrust and suspicion in Chile, even today. The official version (i.e., put forth by the junta) is that he killed himself, but many on the left doubt this version. The context of Allende's death was one of confusion – it happened just after *La Moneda* was bombed – and there was little clarity regarding which members of Allende's government had remained inside the building to resist the armed attack. What is agreed upon is that the building was on fire and President Allende was accompanied only by a few of his closest collaborators when soldiers entered and demanded his surrender; what happened after that is less clear.

Haye (2006) reproduces the result of a study (Manzi, Krause, Ruiz, Meneses, Haye, & Kronmüller, 2004) where “Many participants indicated that during the attack on the Presidential Palace, Allende gave his last address to the nation, which was remembered by left-wing supporters with great emotion, and as a very significant message. Some right-wing supporters remembered that Allende sounded as if he were completely drunk while giving his rather inconsistent speech. For many participants [in the study], Allende committed suicide after his address; however, some leftwingers believe that he was most likely assassinated by the military during the attack” (Haye, 2006: 10).

Another account of the controversy about Allende's death is narrated in Piper's (2005a) doctoral thesis. “For a long time Allende's supporters asserted that he had been assassinated by the military and those who supported the coup said that he had committed suicide. While the press talked about a cowardly suicide, alternative versions narrated a heroic death, fighting until the end while *La Moneda* was on fire (...). Even though *Prensa Latina* had received a call with the information that President Allende had died fighting, as a result of the military

shooting approximately between 13:50 and 14:15, the military junta covered up his death until 24 hours later, when a military report announced that Allende had committed suicide” (Piper, 2005a: 136-7, my translation).

The other example of “disputed events” is the Plan Zeta. For many leftist Chileans, Plan Zeta was an invention of the military and its supporters to justify the systematic repression of Allende’s supporters. However, in the past, many Chileans believed in its existence of the Plan Zeta and were quite afraid of it, and some Chileans still believe in its existence.

Suzanne Labin¹⁴ (1980), in her book *Chili: Le crime de résister*, provides a vivid, detailed account of Chile under Allende, including five pages devoted to Plan Zeta. She states, “The military uprising enabled the discovery of various secret documents (...) which provided irrefutable proof concerning the real behaviour, plans and motives of the Marxist leaders” (Labin, 1980: 193, my translation). She describes the care with which Pinochet’s operatives recorded “the hours and places of discoveries” of documents belonging to Allende and his closest collaborators, which had been published in early 1974 by the military junta as the *Libro Blanco del Cambio de Gobierno en Chile* (the White Book On the Change of Government in Chile).

In the *Libro Blanco*, the military junta argued that Allende and his supporters were preparing their own coup d’état to take place on the 19th of September 1973. According to the junta, this “auto-golpe” by the ultra-left was aimed at “the simultaneous extermination, throughout the entire country, of the highest officers of the Armed Forces and *Carabineros*, as well as of political and *gremialista*¹⁵ leaders (p. 47, my translation). The book continues: “Such an extermination was

¹⁴ Suzanne Labin was a French writer and political scientist, known particularly in the 1950s and 1960s for her anti-communism, anti-totalitarianism and pro-democracy writings. She wrote extensively about the Soviet Union and Vietnam. Her book about Chile was translated into English by Richmond and published in 1982 by Foreign Affairs Publishing Co. Surrey, U.K. But to my knowledge the book has never been published in Spanish or known in Chile.

¹⁵ *Gremialistas* are those who ascribe to *Gremialismo*, a political movement founded by Jaime Guzmán (a prominent right-wing leader who played a key role in the writing of the 1980 Constitution) in 1967 and which was mainly composed of students at the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile.

the so-called Plan Zeta which, because it is still under investigation, and in order not to compromise the security of the persons who would have been its victims or the search for the assassin-commanders (who are identified with nicknames in the plan) cannot be detailed yet” (p. 49, my translation).

Labin (1980) adds that while writing her book, she obtained a photograph of a document (with a large “Z” in its front page) which had been found on September 13th at 5 p.m. in a chest belonging to the former Undersecretary of the Interior, the communist Daniel Vergara. She states “I have in front of my eyes the photographic reproduction of that page [the front page] with its nervous Z, cockeyed and nasty, and I can’t help shuddering, seven years after the event” (Labin, 1980: 194, my translation).

Despite the *Libro Blanco*, the existence of Plan Z has never been confirmed. The *Informe de la Comision Nacional de Prision Politica* (Report of the National Commission of Political Prisoners and Torture) stated in 2004 that “The regime’s propagandistic efforts sought to create, with the support of the sympathetic mass media which amplified the official version of events, a favourable opinion toward the use of punitive actions. The supposed Plan Z is illustrative of this. This plan supposedly defined generically the victims of a seizure of absolute power through force by the Left. This provides evidence that the military as well as its civilian collaborators sought to justify repressive measures, which could then be presented as acts of legitimate defence.” (p. 171, my translation).

Thus, competitive descriptions of the *same* events produced in different times and contexts, point to a struggle about the veracities of each one, leading their proponents to articulate complex discourses to enhance the accuracy of their versions.

As Bickford (2000) suggests, “A major challenge for researchers examining democracy in the Southern Cone and the relationship between democracy and past regimes is to clarify what happened under the authoritarian rules (...) Although some degree of ‘truth’ certainly emerged from the truth commissions and related efforts in the region (such as trials in Argentina), most observers (including

members of the commissions) agree that more remains to be learned about what occurred, especially in the areas of human rights violations..." (Bickford, 2000: 162). This suggests a second more narrowed point of discussion; the regrettable effects of the coup: the human rights violations. Nevertheless, in the debate today, there tends to be agreement that "*The reality is* that those responsible for such abuses [human rights violations], starting with General Pinochet, did not allow a large number of Chileans to make their contribution in the construction of a more just society" (Aguilar, 2002: 414-5, my emphasis).

Therefore, a second type or level of dispute revolves around the oft-cited phrase "coming to terms with the legacy of the past". What is then, the legacy of the past? And more precisely, what is the specific inheritance that must be resolved? The changes to Chilean society made by 17 years of military government are numerous. But the "issue of the human rights violations" or, simply, "the issue of the regime" keeps returning, like a never-ending nightmare, one of Wilde's "irruptions of memory".

The second level of dispute is, then, about the memories of the victims versus the memories of the victimisers, which until the early 2000s was understood as the left's memories versus the right's memories, although the right was not convinced (and many on the right still aren't) that the left was in fact victimised. The discussion revolves around truth versus lies, justice versus impunity, remembering versus forgetting, reparation and reconciliation versus conflict and polarisation, and many other variations of the same binary logic.

Until at least 2003, the left in Chile monopolised the positive values of the abovementioned polarities, basing its arguments on a constant appeal to memory issues and explanatory resources available for "knowing" the past (judicial proceedings, testimonies, memories, psychological reports of victims of human rights violations, etc.) considering that official versions monopolised the public domain in the late 1970s and 1980s despite the allegations of human rights violations.

As Stern (2004) suggests, the uses of memory would have begun in the late 1970s and early 1980s: however, it seems likely that if Pinochet had not been arrested in

England, there would not have been an *open debate* about the past and memories of the past, with explicit use of memory notions (forgetting, amnesia, false remembering, inaccuracy caused by polarisation, etc.) to enhance one's own description of past events and undermine the opposite view. Also, I am not convinced, as Wilde (1999) suggests, that a sort of prelude to such a public debate had begun prior to Pinochet's arrest.

There may have been a debate, but it was confined to the left-wing intellectual elite, where frustration with the Concertación's inability or unwillingness to address the left's expectation of justice, truth and reconciliation had grown. As Candina (2002) suggests, "To talk about *memory* in Chile has become the equivalent of talking about cumulative frustrations, incomplete processes, pending impunity and fear that the abominable history may be repeated" (Candina, 2002: 46, my translation, emphasis in the original).

Yes, it is amazing the number of publications which were launched between 1997 and Pinochet's arrest, but the number increased even more after Pinochet came back and in the eve of the 30th anniversary of the coup d'état in 2003. Many seminars, conferences, especial editions, official documents, newspaper and TV reportages, cultural activities and the like were largely awaited and prepared for that 11th of September, 2003.

The distinction between what is true and what is false is implied in several written testimonies from the left published in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Testimonial literature of the left, in a sense, has done the job of accumulating evidence or facts in order to convince those who are uncertain about the past and to challenge the right-wing perspective. Numerous testimonies were published in the second half of the 1990s (and they continue to be published today). For instance, Chilean editorial house LOM Ediciones published a collection titled "11 de septiembre" containing 35 publications from 1996 to 2007, 19 of which can be categorised as testimonies, personal narratives and novels based on "true stories"¹⁶.

¹⁶ From 1996 to 1998 (before Pinochet's arrest) LOM published four books from the "11th of September" collection; from 1999 to 2001, 5 more books were published, and the highest number

On the other hand, and complementing the testimonial narratives, there has been a large collection of publications and films based on declassified documents, archives, legal analysis. This type of literature has been most often produced by the human rights movement, starting with an abridged edition of the Rettig Report (Chilean Commission of Human Rights and Ideas Foundation, 1991, 1st edition and 1999, 2nd edition) and other publications. In such publications, the authors usually attempt to document the “individual excesses” of the military (“excesses” is how the military often referred to the issue of human rights violations in the past) as evidence of systematic political repression, in order to establish the political violence perpetuated by the state as “state terrorism”.

The concern about the truth, facts and veracity is related to the concern about justice versus impunity. The topic of impunity, in legal and social terms, has been studied by Brain Loveman and Elizabeth Lira who conducted an exhaustive historical investigation of political conflicts in Chile before the 1970s (the 1891 civil war, for instance, which resulted in a considerable number of casualties) and their relationship with impunity, reconciliation and reparation¹⁷.

of books for a single year is in 2003 (the 30th anniversary), with 8 publications. Below is a list of some of these publications.

Valdes, 1996, *Tejas Verdes* (a torture and detention centre); Rivas & Merino, 1997 *¿Qué hacía yo el 11 de Septiembre?* (What was I Doing On the 11th of September?); Maldonado, Moya, Romero, Vega, 1999, *Ellos se quedaron con nosotros* (They Remained with Us); Jordá, M., 2001, *Martirologio de la Iglesia Chilena* (*The List of Martyrs of the Chilean Church*); Bronfman & Johnson, 2003 *De Enterezas y Vulnerabilidades* (*Of Strengths and Vulnerabilities*); Montealegre, 2003 *Frazadas del Estadio Nacional* (*Blankets of the National Stadium*); Villegas, 2003, *Funeral Vigilado* (*Funeral Under Watch*); Bonnefoy, 2003 *Relato en el Frente Chileno* (*Account from the Chilean Front*); Aylwin, 2003, *Simplemente lo que vi (1973 - 1990) y los imperativos que surgen del dolor* (*Simply What I Saw (1973-1990) and the Imperatives that Come from Pain*); Lawner, 2004 *Retorno a Dawson* (*Return to Dawson*); Rivas, 2007 *Chile, un largo Septiembre* (*Chile, A Long September*).

¹⁷ The extensive work of Loveman and Lira (2007 a, b; 2001; 2004; 2002b; apart from what they have published separately) includes a trilogy on Chile’s road to reconciliation, covering three historical periods: the first book (Loveman & Lira, 1999) is *Las suaves cenizas del olvido. Via chilena de reconciliación política 1814-1932* (*The Soft Ashes of Forgetting: The Chilean Pathway to Political Reconciliation 1814-1932*); the second book (Loveman & Lira, 2000) is *Las ardientes cenizas del olvido. Via chilena de reconciliación política 1932-1994* (*The Burning Ashes of Forgetting: The Chilean Pathway to Political Reconciliation 1932-1994*); and the third book (Loveman & Lira, 2002) is *El espejismo de la reconciliación política. Chile 1990-2002* (*The Mirage of Political Reconciliation: Chile 1990-2002*).

Loveman and Lira suggest that throughout Chile's history, violent political conflict among Chileans has frequently been followed by impunity for those deemed to have been the "victimisers". According to the authors, "coming to terms with the past" in Chile has often meant neglect of the victims, an appeal to "leave the past behind" and reconciliation without truth and reparation to unify the Chilean "family". Nevertheless, the authors also point out that in "coming to terms with Pinochet's legacy", the pattern has been different, largely because the international human rights movement¹⁸, for the first time, was heavily involved in the search for truth. The result is that many human rights cases are currently under investigation in Chile, and the perpetrators of certain crimes are serving or have served sentences.

In the context of this dispute over facts and memories, there has been a proliferation of studies on Chileans' social or collective memory from a variety of theoretical perspectives. By the early part of the current decade, memory studies were already "marked by imprecision, ambiguity, precisely about what may be taken as memory: what are its limits?" (Joignant, 2007: 19, my translation). For Joignant, it is important to be aware of the risk of reification of memory in Chilean memory studies. When there are no limits and specific features that define memory, memory is made equivalent to culture and any cultural manifestation. I agree with his cautionary approach and also with his assertion that there is a lack of rigorous, analytical studies on the subject, which may account for the "political as well as intellectual uses of memory, from historians and sociologists who, generally well-intentioned, fall into the traps of denouncing in the name of those who cannot remember any more, without necessarily putting

¹⁸ What Lira and Loveman mean by the international human rights movement is the continuous and regular international scrutiny of allegations of human rights violations, and calls for both the military regime and the *Concertación* governments to account for their actions and omissions in prosecuting the victimisers. This scrutiny of Chile led to Pinochet's arrest in 1998, which had been preceded by decades of efforts by organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, as well as the United Nations and the Inter-American Human Rights Commission. The complaints presented to these international organizations were followed up in other countries by legal proceedings; one of those, presented in 1996 in Valencia, Spain, led to the Pinochet's detention two years later.

forward the understanding of what happened that day [the 11th of September 1973]" (Joignant, 2007: 18, my translation).

It seems as if the study of memory in Chile is actually the study of the memory of *this or that group*; it is not memory as a process, but memories possessed by groups in opposition. To my knowledge only a few works address the process by which representations of the past are shared, contested, and argued among Chileans (Lechner & Güell, 1999; Candina, 2002; Reyes, 2003; Haye, 2004; Piper, 2005a; Stern, 2004,2006; Joignant, 2007).

Therefore, the vast majority of previous studies tend to focus on the memories of certain groups, in particular, those on the left. But since 2000, academics representing a right-wing perspective have organized seminars and conferences to address the subject. The resulting literature of this more recent approach (Arancibia, P., Arancibia, C., Bulnes, 2001; Arancibia, P., Arancibia, C., de la Masa, 2002; Arancibia, P., Aylwin, Reyes, 2003; Arancibia, P., de la Masa, 2003; Fermandois, 2003; Fontaine Aldunate, 2001; Jocelyn-Holt, 2000) has largely been overlooked by left-wing academics.

However, regardless of the approach to the debate, controversy is often seen as the result of polarisation, as if polarisation explains itself and thus there is no need to add a description of what is seen as Chileans' polarisation. In other words, although studies of polarisation are rare, polarisation is commonly offered in scholarly works as the social mechanism accounting for the maintenance of the conflict and representing an obstacle to reconciliation and reparation.

Therefore, what I call the Chilean Memory Debate can be defined as, on the one hand, controversies about the facts, about the "what happened", which reveal the difficulty Chileans encounter in coming to a common perspective on the 1970-1990 period (and perhaps even before and after as well). On the other hand, the debate also encourages other controversies, including disputes about how the past can be known or understood and what are the reliable sources of knowledge of the past. And memory has frequently been invoked to enhance the veracity or credibility of one of the two main narratives of the past while undermining the

other one. Memory is understood as both a source of knowledge about the past and as a process that may be responsible, at least partially, for the controversies.

As previously suggested, because of the impossibility of a shared version of the past, due in part to the existence of highly polarised perspectives, memories substituted for "the truth" to establish credibility; that is, memory was accessed as a source of knowledge. But memory as a process is pluralistic, fuzzy, unsettled, dynamic, and allows contradictions. People can talk about their memories and it does not matter if their statements reflect exactly what happened, until it does matter. It matters because the past itself is subject to disagreement, rendering memory as a process important.

"The language of memory", in particular, that of forgetting and trauma, permits divergent versions of the same events to coexist without the questioning of the veracity of one's own version. Describing the "other" as having forgotten certain aspects of history is then available for the psychologisation of the debate. The other's wrongness is then explained using psychological arguments. "The language of polarisation" also contributes to the psychologisation of the debate, and until this research, has not been systematically studied in terms of its rhetorical dimensions. To address this gap in the understanding of the role of memory in reconstructing the past, my research, which began in 2001 as an examination of Chileans' collective memory, has been transformed into an analysis of "the language of polarisation" from a Discursive Psychology perspective.

Part II

REFRAINING THE CHILEAN MEMORY DEBATE

Chapter 3

DISCURSIVE PSYCHOLOGY: PARADIGM AND METHOD FOR THE STUDY OF THE CHILEAN MEMORY DEBATE

3.1 On the Pertinence of Discursive Psychology for this Research

Discursive Psychology, developed by Derek Edwards and Jonathan Potter (Edwards & Potter, 1992a, 2001, 2005; Edwards, 1997, 2004; Potter, 1996, 2003a,b, 2005) is the paradigm or meta-theoretical framework that inspires, nourishes and also narrows my approach to analyzing the ways in which Chileans remember and represent themselves in relation to a highly controversial period of time in our recent history. As a paradigm, in Thomas Kuhn's (1962) terms, Discursive Psychology (DP hereafter) constrains my research but also makes it possible and gives it meaning.

DP may be considered an innovative and fruitful research programme for social scientists, and in particular for psychologists, whose work explores the profound implications of the "linguistic turn" for the study of psychological phenomena. According to the philosophy of language inaugurated by the pioneering works of Wittgenstein (1958) and Austin (1962), the pervasive and constructive nature of language in the process of making realities appear as such – by and for human beings – cannot be disregarded or disdained, which led the social sciences, philosophy and humanities to a linguistic turning point in the 1960s and 1970s. The basic – and revolutionary – claim thereafter has been that the ways in which we refer to, talk and write about the world and what we do in it, should not be seen as neutral vehicles for the inner psychological representations of what is supposed to be external, out there in the world. Rather, the uses of language, or to quote Wittgenstein, "language games", embodied in discursive practices, inherently constitute part of the reality's distinctions that we produce, such that it is impossible to separate our descriptions of objects from the objects (events, facts, situations, people) to which they refer.

Thereby, the uses of language are to be treated as the focus of analysis and investigation for a coherent and more comprehensive understanding of any phenomenon that matters to human beings. DP responds to that goal with respect to psychological concerns which are made relevant by the individuals in their interactions, whether they are naturally occurring conversations or written texts. Derek Edwards (2004: 258) defines DP as “the application of principles and methods from discourse and conversation analysis, and increasingly CA [conversation analysis], to psychological themes”. And Jonathan Potter (2003b: 73) adds that DP is more than a research method, since it “includes meta-theoretical (or epistemic), theoretical and analytic principles”. In other words, DP based on discourse analysis and conversation analysis has attempted to build a consistent framework for the study of psychological language. In doing so, and because of DP’s emphasis on the central role of language, this research programme has shifted from merely theorizing about psychological notions to addressing the epistemological as well as the methodological domains. DP is an epistemic paradigm which, among other social constructionist approaches, implies a series of challenges for conducting research, because it articulates theories and methods in such a way that the classic distinctions between theory, method, and research results make no sense.

Within DP, the topic of memory has been largely addressed as “the study of remembering as a conversational activity” (Edwards, Potter, & Middleton, 1992), for about two decades. The extensive DP-based literature on memory and remembering (e.g., Edwards & Middleton, 1986, 1987; Middleton, & Edwards, 1990; Edwards & Potter, 1992a, b; Middleton & Brown, 2005) has been extraordinarily helpful in reframing the Chilean Memory Debate (I will come back to this point later in the Methodological Implications section, to explain how the debate I am interested in is re-specified from a DP perspective).

In the previous chapter, I provided a context that supports the pertinence of focusing my research on a discursive examination of *the language of polarisation* to illuminate the making of past’s controversies in Chile, as well as its originality in relation to prior scholarship in this area. Most of the publications (studies,

essays, chronicles, testimonies, etc.) which have been presented as inquiries into the collective memory of Chileans have been mainly oriented to two goals. On the one hand, there are those that argue for the truthfulness of a specific version of the past by accumulating "evidence" in their favour through, for instance, historical and political arguments. On the other hand, there are those works that attempt to explain the diversity of versions about the past by invoking sociological as well as psychological notions of memory, as if the lack of consensus were something to be denounced and, if possible, eradicated. Both kinds of endeavours have contributed to deepening a monologue in the field of local Chilean memory studies that has been monopolized, at least until the early 2000s, by left-wing scholars. These contributions have failed to produce new insights into memory processes (although they may argue the contrary) and are instead *doing* memory, by seeking to enhance the legitimacy of one particular vision of reality.

However, the extent of the controversy refers not only to past events, but also to the ways in which the past may be knowable. In this sense, the category of memory and related notions (such as forgetting, remembering, truthfulness and falseness, accuracy and partiality, and the like) are at the core of the debate. These notions have served as discursive devices for enhancing one's own description of the past as well as for undermining the opposing perspective. Therefore, studying collective memory in Chile in the ways it has been done runs the risk of reproducing and reinforcing the polarisation between two mutually exclusive views of the past. In fact, the powerful rhetoric involved in the construction of controversies about the recent past in Chile has not yet been exhaustively investigated. By taking a DP approach, I argue in this dissertation, it is possible to overcome the risk of reproducing the dynamic of polarisation that characterizes this debate. Therefore, DP seems an appropriate, pertinent and interesting framework for the study of Chileans' collective memory.

Having introduced the relevance of DP for my research, in what follows I briefly point out the main features of conversation and discourse analysis which are fundamental to a DP analytical perspective. The array of literature on both types of analysis is far too extensive to be included here. Thus, I only seek to review general characteristics of these two very powerful methods for the study of

language as displayed in “talk-in-interaction”, underscoring some elements which are later used in the analytical section of this dissertation.

Subsequently, I discuss DP in strict relation to how memory and memory topics may be re-specified in terms of a discursive psychology of remembering, by which it becomes apparent how through *doing* memory participants, in addition to making the past appear as such, deal with issues such as accountability, human agency and attribution, among others.

3.2 Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis

The scope of the term “discourse analysis” (hereafter, DA) encompasses many different strategies for exploring discourse. The label “DA” used to describe a given research programme is not sufficient for the reader to infer what is being done there. The questions then are: What kind of DA is the author employing? What are his or her bibliographic references? There are DA approaches based on the traditions of hermeneutics, post-structuralism, linguistics, pragmatics, and literature theory, which have been increasingly prominent within the social sciences and humanities over the last four decades. The argument of language as constituent, on the hard pole, or co-constructive, on the soft one, of realities serves to enhance the appropriateness of using oral, textual or linguistic data as raw material for qualitative research. Within the diversity of DA perspectives, I am particularly interested in a specific DA tradition which has been largely, but not exclusively, developed by scholars from Loughborough University. This particular approach to language, discourse and talk, has taken advantages from a “conversation analysis mentality” (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998). Before reviewing DA, then, it is important to explain what is meant by a “conversation analysis mentality”.

In contrast to the heterogeneity of the field of “discourse analysis”, conversation analysis (hereafter CA) is a rather more specific research strategy for approaching in particular – but not exclusively – talk as it is actually produced, that is, audio records and their transcriptions, following strict procedures and conventions so as to include pauses, overlaps, intonations and other relevant details embedded in

talk in the written presentation of talk – the transcriptions. Through a detailed and systematic exploration of “talk-in-interaction”, CA attempts “the development of a naturalistic observation-based empirical science of actual verbal behaviour” (Hutchby & Drew, 1995:182). In this sense, the main objective of CA research is “the description and explication of the competences that ordinary speakers use and rely on in participating in intelligible, socially organized interaction” (Atkinson & Heritage, 1984:1). This ultimate objective is shared as well by Ethnomethodology (Garfinkel, 1967; Button, 1991), which argues for the study of practical reasoning methods with which members of a given collective produce, assemble, and render intelligible their everyday life for themselves, as well as for others. The developments of Ethnomethodology and CA are closely linked and both have fostered the kind of discourse analysis that inspires the Discursive Psychology agenda.

A major concern – or finding – within CA has been to underscore how ordinary talk is more than anything an ordered and highly methodical phenomenon (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970; Atkinson & Heritage, 1984; Heritage, 1987; Boden & Zimmerman, 1991; Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998). The term “talk-in-interaction” has been used by conversation analysts to refer to the sequential organization of linguistic interchanges such that meanings are negotiated and achieved through the sequence of one turn after the other. The understanding of any previous turn (what the speaker meant to say) depends on what happens in subsequent turns (how the listener(s)’ reaction implies a reformulation of what the speaker meant to say), as what has been said may be refuted, negated, complemented, supported, or enriched in the subsequent turns (and all over again), through minor details (such as the utterance of “mm”) as well as by the display of lengthy and complex arguments. Turn alternation has been examined and proven to be a sort of default condition for any talk to be effective, which was earlier studied by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1978) as the “turn-taking system”. The alternation of turns to which participants orient is demonstrable through instances in which this routine is reversed. In those cases, repairs are used to restore the turn-by-turn procedure.

In CA, the concept of "next-turn proof procedure" underscores the inherent sequential feature embedded in how people finally come to understand or to communicate with each other. Transforming this constraint into an analytical tool, conversation analysts have underscored its implications for research purposes. As Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998: 15) put it, next-turn proof procedure "is the most basic tool used in CA to ensure that analyses explicate the orderly properties of talk as oriented to accomplishments of participants, rather than being based merely on the assumptions of the analyst".

It is worth noting that next-turn proof procedure is not only available for carrying out CA, but is primarily handled by (and thus, in principle, accessible to) the participants engaged in talk-in-interaction. As has been argued by conversation analysts, the tools for conducting CA should not be completely novel to a researcher just starting out in this field because as a member of the culture being examined, he or she already knows how to handle the methodical procedures for carrying on a conversation on his or her research topic. However, because those procedures are shaped by routine and reproduced almost automatically, they are easily taken for granted and overlooked.

Based on the assumption of how talk-in-interaction is sequentially organized, conversational analysts have continuously checked and enriched their knowledge. They have covered a wide range of topics analysing "naturally-occurring" talk in different institutional settings (e.g., edited volumes by Boden & Zimmerman, 1991; and by Atkinson & Heritage, 1984). They have shown how agreement and disagreement may be either subtly or openly achieved (Pomerantz, 1984), revealing that in agreeing and disagreeing with a previous turn, there are "preferred" and "dispreferred" alternatives for doing so. The concept of "preferred" and "dispreferred" actions is applied to "a range of phenomena associated with the fact that choices among non-equivalent courses of action are routinely implemented in ways that reflect an institutionalized ranking of alternatives". Dispreferred activities are, in contrast to preferred activities, "usually performed with delay between turns, are commonly delayed within turns, and are variously softened and made indirectly" (Atkinson & Heritage, 1984: 53).

A significant inheritance from CA which has benefited DA is the particular concern CA has shown for the empirical grounding of analysis. The kind of analysis pursued in CA is “strongly ‘data-driven’ – developed from the phenomenon which is in various ways evidenced in the data of interaction” (Heritage, 1984: 243). As a consequence, “The pursuit of systemic analysis thus requires that recorded data be available, not only for repeated observation, analysis and reanalysis, but also for the public evaluation of observations and findings that is an essential precondition for analytic advance” (Atkinson & Heritage, 1984: 4). By providing detailed transcriptions of the data about which analytical claims are made, that is, making the data available for public scrutiny, conversation analysts argue, enables a minimization of researchers’ preconceptions. Thus, there has been extensive work done to improve transcriptions and transcription conventions within CA (mainly Jefferson 1985, 2004). Nevertheless, the role of CA transcriptions has also been addressed critically, with regard to its constructive analytical nature (Ochs, 1979; Bucholtz, 2000; Roberts & Robinson, 2004; Ashmore & Reed, 2000; Ashmore, MacMillan & Brown, 2004). These authors, while largely acknowledging CA’s appropriateness, warn that transcriptions cannot be considered a straightforward and accurate representation of “talk-in-interaction”, but rather a tool for submitting to “public scrutiny” and sharing their raw audio materials with other CA scholars.

According to the “data-driven analysis” principle, CA researchers have intensely worked from a large collection of small pieces of interaction in order to highlight recurrent patterns or orderly phenomena in conversation. To do this, each piece of interaction is treated as a “single case analysis” (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998), before attempting to account for any order. This is achieved through approaching data (transcriptions) through an “unmotivated looking” (Sacks, 1984), another policy of a “CA mentality” (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998) whose foundations may also be found in the “ethnomethodological indifference policy” (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970). Ethnomethodological indifference, as a procedural policy, should facilitate the analyst’s ability to “describe members’ accounts of formal structures wherever and by whomever they are done, while abstaining from all judgements of their adequacy, value, importance, necessity, practicality, success, or

consequentiality" (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970:345). In turn, addressing any piece of talk in an unmotivated way implies that "the question of (...) what kind of findings it will give" should not be a prior concern for the analysis itself, but rather, that "if we pick up any data, without bringing any problems to it, we will find something. And how interesting what we may come up with will be is something we cannot in the first instance say" (Sacks, 1984:27). Therefore, CA methodology may be characterized as a systematic yet "unmotivated" investigation of "small phenomena" in order to understand "the way humans do things" (Sacks, 1984:24).

On the other hand, the initial developments in DA are linked with the sociology of scientific knowledge (Gilbert & Mulkay, 1984; Potter & Mulkay, 1985) and its advance in the social psychology of attitudes and social representations (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, 1988). An examination of DA literature, it could be argued, reveals that by the early 1990s, this approach was undergoing a consolidation of its foundations, interests and subjects. Among these, memory occupied a central place.

In 1990, *Collective Remembering*¹⁹, a book edited by Middleton and Edwards, gathered a diverse range of articles on memory practices drawn on socio-cultural psychology, conversation analysis, rhetorical discourse analysis, and the examination of artefacts and monuments, among others. This was followed in 1992 by Edwards' and Potter's *Discursive Psychology*, which was focused on exploring how by making the past appear as such, memory and attribution may be seen as "two sides of the same coin" or of the process of accounting for the past. Also in 1992, Michael Billig published *Talking of the Royal Family*, in which the author examines the way in which British people construct their national identity, by using a rhetorical approach to discourse that highlighted the dilemmatic nature of language and ideology. That year, Wetherell and Potter published *Mapping the Language of Racism. Discourse and the Legitimization of Exploitation*, in which the authors provide an excellent and exhaustive overview of the fundamentals of

¹⁹ *Collective Remembering* was translated into Spanish and published in 1992 by Editorial Paidós. I came across the book in Spanish while I was working on my undergraduate dissertation 1996-98. This was the first time I got to know something about Loughborough University

DA, as well as an analysis of racism and prejudice discursive practices in New Zealand.

The abovementioned works were also products of previous investigations, such as the seminal work collectively written by Billig, Condor, Edwards, Gane, Middleton, & Radley (1988), *Ideological Dilemmas: A Social Psychology of Everyday Thinking*, or Billig's (1987) first edition of *Arguing and Thinking*, and Billig's (1991) book on *Ideology and Opinion*. The influential work of Michael Billig introduced rhetoric and ideological concepts to DA, applying them to the analysis of social psychology issues such as stereotypes, prejudices and attitudes.

Over the past 15 years or so, a "discursive (social) psychology", as a critical review based on the study of language "in its own right", its argumentative nature, and its employment in people's "talk-in-interaction", has started to make sense and gained the attention of psychologists who seek alternative approaches to the mainstream social psychology approach based on the language of cognition and social cognition. As used within this "discursive (social) psychology", perspective, DA has been considered by Billig (1988b) a form of scholarship, rather than a set of standardized methodological procedures to be followed. As DP is "a development out of DA" (Edwards, 2004: 258), in the following section devoted to DP and memory discourses, I will continue with the review of DA principles.

3.3 From Memory Discourses to a Discursive Psychology of Memory

The majority of articles and books on memory from a social perspective begin by pointing out how vast, productive, eclectic, ambiguous and unsettled the field of studies on social memory is and how quickly it has grown since the 1980s (e.g., Hacking, 1995; Sturken, 1997; Wertsch 2002; Brockmeier 2002a; Misztal 2003, 2004, 2005; Booth, 2006). For instance, Jeffrey Olick and Joyce Robbins (1998: 105) state that "social memory studies is a nonparadigmatic, transdisciplinary, centreless enterprise". Some critics argue for the convenience of writing a "history of the memory boom" (Confino, 1997) which produced a sort of "memory turn"

in the social sciences as important as the “linguistic turn” (Kitzmann, Mithander & Sundholm, 2005). Radstone (2000) attributes the “memory boom” within academia to a sort of “general cultural fascination with memory” that outweighs “memory’s modern associations” (history, the past and authenticity, among others) with “memory’s late modern association” (invention, the present, representation and fabrication, among others). However, others authors warn us about how extensively and ambiguously memory has been used, such that social memory may even be understood as equivalent to the notion of culture (Berliner, 2005).

It is worth mentioning that just a couple of months ago SAGE Publications published the first number of a journal called *Memory Studies*. In the editorial to this first issue, presented by Hoskins, Barnier, Kansteiner and Sutton, the authors state that “The field of memory studies mobilizes scholarship driven by *problem* or topic, rather than by singular method or tradition” (p.5, my emphasis). Yet this diversity, which one may argue might imply the incommensurability of memory’s approaches, does not seem to question, according to the editors, the sense of inaugurating a journal. On the contrary, they continue, “Only by encouraging the open, careful contesting of concepts can we exploit the strengths of the daunting range of disciplines – from neurobiology to narrative theory, from the developmental to the postcolonial, the computational to the cross-cultural, and on and on – which can all drive the collective and various enterprises involved” (p.6).

However, conducting research on memory from a non-individualistic perspective does not seem a straightforward task. This is due, on the one hand, to the difficulties encountered in articulating a social definition of memory and, on the other hand, to a chain of practical and methodological challenges to apprehend the ongoing process of collective remembering and forgetting, most importantly how to obtain pertinent data to be analysed as such. For example, Alon Confino (1997) in his article “Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method”, comments on the difficulties of doing memory research as a cultural historian. Following his argument, although the notion of memory has been addressed with various degrees of sophistication, the common denominator would be “the ways in which people construct a sense of the past” (p. 1386). Confino suggests “three

areas of convergence” in which a “history of *mentalités*” perspective may be useful for the study of memory: “the connection of the political with the social in the history of memory, the issue of reception and evidence, and the relationship among memories within a given society” (p. 1392). Nevertheless, as he continues, Confino repeatedly points to theoretical problems and practical challenges of conducting research in one of the three domains. For instance, memory and politics are related and relatable categories, yet Confino advises that “the result of memory being sacrificed to an analysis of politics and political use is, often, to ignore the category of the social” (p. 1393). With respect to “the issue of reception”, Confino states that this has often been ignored in memory research. In his words, “The study of reception is not an issue that simply adds to our knowledge. Rather it is a necessary one to avoid an arbitrary choice again interpretation of evidence” (p. 1395). In his final caution, Confino posits that individuals hold a multiplicity of memories according to “the *various groups of which he is simultaneously a member*” (p. 1399, emphasis in the original), suggesting that this variability may be a problem for defining the thematic memory scope of any given study on collective remembering.

The way Confino elaborates these three observations opens interesting possibilities for memory research. Yet his concerns tend to overestimate certain obstacles to carrying out a project on the specific and discrete field of social memory, as if it were plausible to clearly distinguish memory from other theoretical constructions of the social sciences in everyday practices²⁰. Is it possible to apprehend memory without politics? Does it make sense to differentiate a distinct process of creation versus reception in the construction and reconstruction of the past? Who creates and who receives and how passive or active are either pole? And, what is a cause of concern with respect to the multiplicity or heterogeneity of memory, when considering an individual's

²⁰ What I find noteworthy about Confino's argument is that if one were to follow his advice (not to neglect the social category to the benefit of the political one; not to consider the issue of reception; and to not underestimate the heterogeneity of individual memories) then it would probably become quite difficult, if not impossible, to carry out research in this field. This, rather than underscoring the sophistication of theoretical accounts of memory, one might argue, points to the arbitrariness of this sophistication.

narrative? Would it be preferable (and for what reasons) more homogeneity in individual's narratives? How this would be possible?

It is worth pointing out that Confino's warnings are presented as dilemmas, which are also commonly found in other introductory texts to social memory. As Middleton and Brown (2005) suggest, memory can simultaneously be individual and social, private and public, singular and plural, and addressing this has been a central and recurring question shaping the development of memory theories.

These apparent dichotomies share a distinction (even opposition) between the individual and society that is also shaped by the "rivalry" between the disciplines of psychology and sociology (Billig et al. 1988). However, influenced by the dilemmatic opposition between individuals and social structures, memory has been largely represented with the metaphorical image of a container. This, according to Middleton and Brown, has resulted in the "spacialisation of memory", such that it almost seems impossible to think about memory unless in spatial terms. The individual's mind, brain, head, and even heart are the reservoirs where memories are kept and later retrieved. These container metaphors need to be located somewhere, and what else could be a better place than "the inner workings of the individual, more or less rational, psychological subject" (Middleton & Brown, 2005: 6). Drawing on the contributions of three seminal authors in the field of memory theory – Frederick Bartlett, Maurice Halbwachs, and Henri Bergson – Middleton and Brown argue for "a social psychology of experience that overcomes the spatial bias at work in experimental and more sociological approaches to memory" (p.6).

The challenge is then, how to explain memory practices, and remembering in particular, through alternative metaphors. For the authors, "simply turning to the social" is a first step, but it is not sufficient. This implies that any account of memory which refers to social factors such as social identity, inter-group dynamics, or any other sort of "collective architecture" (following Durkheimian sociology), will remain caught in the unresolved polarity between social or individual memory. In this way Halbwachs' and Bartlett's views on memory contribute to Middleton and Brown's project but do not create a turning point in

memory discourses. Instead, a new understanding of memory is accomplished by turning to the inherent relation between time and experience; in Bergsonian's terms: "experience as duration".

Although a rigorous review of Middleton and Brown's work (2005), including their stake in a Bergsonian perspective on memory, goes beyond the scope of this thesis, it is worth mentioning that theirs is probably one of the best attempts to put forward a discursive psychology of memory theory in which "how human beings experience matter" is the central issue to be explained. In turning to experience, or more precisely to the past and the way we rely on the past, many theoretical distinctions lose their sense and strength within theories of memory. For example, while other "traditional approaches to memory" argue for differentiating personal from collective memories or accurate from inaccurate memories, research based on how experiences are, in fact, experienced will show that they are *simultaneously* personal and collective and/or real and fabulous. And this multiple condition of experience does not necessarily imply a contradiction or other problems of coherence for human beings, unless their experiences are subject to discussion by others.

As Barclay (1994) points out, "Traditional (or essentialist) approaches to the study of memory are rooted in positivistic and statistical explanations of why we remember and forget. A traditional approach to the study of memory claims that memory is a property to the individual only, with no reference to interpersonal (e.g., collective knowledge of a person), sociohistorical (e.g., commemoratives, statues, street names), or cultural (e.g., religious rituals) factors as potential loci of memory and remembering as a focus for social action" (Barclay, 1994: 324). In this respect, a discursive psychology of memory stands precisely in opposition to this kind of approach; furthermore, it is designed to challenge it.

Thus, Discursive Psychology also offers its own description of memory, based on a set of meta-theoretical principles which, I believe, may coherently guide an investigation into collective memory processes. Discursive Psychology has produced a re-conceptualization of the study of memory in terms of "moving from a view of people struggling to remember with the aid of their mental faculties to a

view of people struggling to remember with the aid of their talk and texts over the real nature of events” (Edwards & Potter, 1992: 57). The focus is on the rhetorical organization of remembering, the outcome of which are descriptions of the past. And according to Garfinkel (1967), these descriptions are infinite, such that in the framework of DP it does not make sense to examine the correspondence between descriptions (remembering) and the object to which they refer (past events); instead, what makes sense is to illuminate “the situated actions they [remembering] perform, on the occasion of their use” (Edwards & Potter 1992: 40).

In what follows, in order to provide a general overview of how a discursive psychology perspective may be of interest for the study of memory practices, I focus on the arguments of two texts which are critical to the foundation of the field of discursive psychology of memory: *Collective Remembering* (Middleton & Edwards, 1990) and *Discursive Psychology* (Edwards & Potter, 1990). In a brief review of these texts, I will also integrate other memory discourse from other authors, i.e., alternative theoretical views on memory, in order to enrich and define my own perspective on memory as a social activity.

3.3.1 Point of Departure: Common Themes in Memory Discourses

Despite the heterogeneity of theories on collective memory, there are common strands woven through most of what could be broadly categorized within “memory studies”. In the introduction to *Collective Remembering*, Middleton and Edwards (1990a) point out the “common themes” included in the book and acknowledge some contemporary background in memory research which is relevant for their re-conceptualization of memories practices. By bringing the “common themes” into the discussion, Middleton and Edwards are also collecting arguments in favour of their new (at the time) approach to memory practices as “inherent social activities (...) that are studiable as part of ordinary circumstances of daily life” (Middleton & Edwards, 1990a:1). The authors’ point of departure is a critique of traditional approaches to memory; they claim that “from psychoanalytical accounts of ‘repression’ to computer simulation of ‘memory

processes', the dominant focus of enquiry has been the study of memory as a property of individuals" (idem). In fact, as Barclay (1994) has suggested over the last couple of decades or so, much alternative research on memory (adding first names such as social, collective, ecological, narrative, etc.) has been based on a "dissatisfaction with a traditional approach to the study of memory [which] has resulted from a concern for authenticity in the phenomena studied, which raises questions about the broad generalizability of findings regarding the nature of memory beyond the highly controlled and decontextualized laboratory setting" (Barclay 1994: 324).

First, Middleton and Edwards (1990a) acknowledge the influence of oral historians' concept of "popular memory". Such studies deal with concepts such as reliability and verifiability of oral-witness testimony and view the variability found in different versions of the past not as a problem, but as a resource for richer understanding of regular people's appropriation of historical events. Second, from folklorists the authors emphasize that the distinction between the individual and social aspect of memory collapses in "performance". That is to say, "there is an interdependency between unique performances and tradition that cannot be inscribed as a property of an individual's memory" (p.4). Third, the authors suggest that David Lowenthal's (1985) work on the artefactual legacy of history (landscape, archives, monuments, commemorations, etc), reveals, once again, "the past as a timeless mirror to be looked at for accurate reflection of historical events" (p.4). These three perspectives emphasise the difficulties in supporting any kind of radical distinction between personal and collective memories. They also raise questions about the immutable status of the past, suggesting that it is possible to discuss any past description without having to present one as the real past.

Other important contributions referred to in the introduction to *Collective Remembering* are the works of Robert Bellak et al. (1985) and Mary Douglas (1986). The first of these suggests that a "real community" is the one that does not forget its past, maintaining a "community of memory". By a "real community", Bellak et al describe a community that does not privilege a "self-reliant individual language", articulating "aspects of tradition and commitment in everyday life that

are transcendent of an ahistorical individualism” (p.5). Such communities emphasize what is shared from the past, while other communities defend the idea of the individual. The second work, by Mary Douglas, also underscores the importance of larger groups in the maintenance (or discarding) of memory and their need to eliminate (forget) certain memories to maintain the integrity of the group. She draws on the work of Frederick Bartlett in 1932, suggesting that psychologists have forgotten or seem to be unable to remember that humans are (of course) social beings. Bartlett’s work had shown how institutions produce *organised settings* that prescribe which events will be remembered and which ones forgotten. In all of this work, group identity is of overriding importance and fosters forgetting, legitimizing it as both a threat and inconvenient for a given group identity.

Continuing with their introduction, Middleton and Edwards review the themes common to the articles included in book, addressing some methodological implications for the study of memory as a social activity. *Remembering together* is the first theme; remembering is an activity made with others. This apparently simple point implies that “what is recalled and commemorated extends beyond the sum the of the individual’s perspectives: it becomes the basis of future reminiscence” (p.7). New features of the past are “discovered” depending on the social context. In the second theme, the *social practice of commemoration*, the authors suggest that the past itself is subject to reformulation, transformation and change over time. In the authors’ words, there is a “continuing tension between immutable aspects of the past conserved in the present, in contrast with the past as transformable and manipulable – today’s champions may be tomorrow’s villains, or yesterday’s radicalism may be tomorrow’s orthodoxy” (p.8). This point of view avoids discussing whether there can be one description of the past that is “true” but enables a discussion about which past is considered the true past in a given present tense.

Social practices engaged in commemoration also provide the *social foundation and context of individual memory*. Remembering is something learned as a social enterprise, and thus remembrances are done within frameworks. We recognize when we are remembering and are able to distinguish that it from fantasy, for

instance. If we are able to do so, it is because there are certain rules being followed which are learned early in our lives, in order to develop an identity, bestowed as membership in, for instance, our families. Because we acknowledge the social condition of human beings, even when we are alone we hear the "unison of voices" provided by the collective such that "the noise can bridge any gaps of individual incompetence" (p. 8). Thus, this argument does not deny the factual existence of individuals in this world, but affirms that memory, like any other "psychological process", does not operate solely in terms of inner process, but rather as social activities which depend on and are validated by given contexts.

The *rhetorical organization of remembering and forgetting* leads us in the same direction. Remembering is constructed rhetorically and any claim about "what has happened" must be expressed with words in a given form so that others can understand it as remembering. "Such rhetorical skills can also be seen as being organized in relation to broader ideological considerations that place people in a contradictory relationship with what they would report or mark of the past in the present" (p.9). Here, we can see that "the 'truth' of the past is always, at least, potentially an issue. It is not to be found unambiguously deposited in some objective social record or archive, not yet infinitely malleable in the service of the present. "The truth" of the past is neither obtained "as 'fact' nor 'invention', but as an epistemological enterprise, created in dialectic and argument between those contrary positions" (p.9). In addition, the authors describe *social institutional remembering and forgetting*, which refers to the large-scale about what can be remembered, how collective remembering is relevant and essential to the identity and integrity of social groups. "It is not just that 'who controls the past controls the future', but *he who controls the past controls who we are*" (p.10, emphasis in the original).

The last theme in the introduction is *the forms of social practices in the continuity of our lives*. This key idea allows us to analyse any act of remembering as an objectification of such forms, "both material and communicative, such that the world we live in embodies in its very design a relation to the past" (p.10). Individual integrity and normality, from a mental health and conventional

psychological point of view, is supported by our participation in these practices. It is important to point out that the authors explain memory as a practice that constitutes human beings in societies, that is to say, it is not possible for persons, groups or societies to exist without memories. Memory is an inherent aspect of the human condition.

Through this set of themes, Middleton and Edwards outline an agenda for the DP project, which would officially be born about two years later with the publication of *Discursive Psychology* in 1992. I have chosen to put forth their introduction to memory discourses rather than develop my own because, on the one hand, it has been done before and quite well (a comprehensive view on memory discourses is provided, for example, by Barbara Mitzal, 2003). On the other hand, I do this because Middleton and Edwards not only synthesize but simultaneously rework the main features most often addressed by memory theorists in relation to commemorations (e.g., Connerton, 1989), the use of monuments (e.g., Lowenthal, 1985; Young, 1993), and social identity and communities (e.g., Halbwachs, 1925, 1950; Irwin-Zarecka, 1994; Booth, 2006). It is precisely the reworking process of the discursiveness of memory that is most interesting in terms of my own research.

3.3.2 Point of Arrival (and beyond): Reconceptualising Memory from Discursive Psychology

The term DP is introduced by Edwards and Potter in 1992 and imprinted as the title of their book, although there is prior work in which a DP perspective was meaningful (Edwards & Middleton, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1990, Middleton, 1987; Edwards, 1987; Middleton & Buchanan, 1991; Billig, 1990, 1991); in some of this work, the term DP was explicitly used (i.e., Litton & Potter, 1985). By including the term “Discursive Psychology”, Edwards and Potter attempted to “define something more specific within the broad collection of kinds of DA, and at the same time to promote DA as something more than just method” (Edwards, 2004: 258).

The object that DP aims to explain is psychology (professional or disciplinary psychology as well as lay psychology, following the ethnomethodological distinction in Garfinkel and Sacks, 1970) using the analytical tools that the DA and CA approaches provide. In turn, DP is also offering new insights for enriching DA and challenges to strengthening CA. Psychology as an object is rendered “practical, accountable, situated, embodied and displayed” in DP (Potter, 2005: 740). This is done by working in three closely related manners (Edwards 2004, Edwards & Potter 2005). First, through a re-specification and critique of how psychological concepts have been traditionally understood and investigated. Second, by examining the uses of the psychological thesaurus, that is, “the situated, occasioned, rhetorical uses of the rich common sense psychological lexicon” (Edwards & Potter 2005: 241), or in other words, how psychological “categories are designed for [and displayed in] talking” (Edwards, 1995). And third, by analyzing “how psychological business (motives and intentions, prejudices, reliability of memory and perception, etc.) is handled and managed in talk and text, without having to be overtly labelled as such” (Edwards 2004: 259).

Discursive Psychology by Edwards and Potter (1992) refines the approach to memory practices. The analytical strategy used by Middleton and Edwards (1990b) that of applying certain principles of DA and CA, is put forward through the examination of several cases in which people’s understandings of memory is at stake for different purposes. Middleton and Edwards’ (1990b) strategy is called “conversational remembering”, where remembering “is understood as the situated production of versions of past events” (Edwards & Potter 1992: 3). If so, within a DP perspective of memory the issue of correspondence between narratives and events just like between two persons’ narratives of past events, should not be a central concern from the analyst. Because of the rhetorical organization of remembering and forgetting and considering how descriptions of events are by definition infinitive (Garfinkel, 1967), to cite a context from everyday life, one person may remember an event differently but not necessarily in contradiction with another. If they do not agree, their competing versions will most probably be oriented to mutually exclusive purposes. For instance, if they were talking about someone they both know, one version may present the person as well-intentioned while the other does the opposite.

The variability found in (competing and complementary) descriptions was first examined by Gilbert and Mulkay (1984), who showed that scientists' accounts of their own practices vary considerably, for instance, in explaining a "scientific" controversy. Nevertheless, the variability found in those explanations is conceptualized by the authors as an endemic feature of discourses, since the relationships between language (the accounts) and reality (the reality of the controversial object) is not that of a vehicle for the representation of the out-there world. Instead, accounts of (past) events are designed to address a variety of functions (Potter, 1996).

The work by Gilbert and Mulkay (1984) was of great importance for the subsequent development of DA as it was applied to social psychology issues and reformulated by Potter & Wetherell (1987) and Wetherell & Potter (1992). In their work, the notion of interpretative repertoires helped Wetherell and Potter to account for the variety of ways in which people address a given topic. Gilbert and Mulkay (1984) suggested that scientists employ two repertoires: a contingent repertoire (using interests and influences to account for errors and equivocations in the sciences) and an empiricist repertoire (used to account for scientific activity in response to an "external" object data). Interpretative repertoires were then used in different studies, such as the study on marriage by Rachel Lawes (1999). She found two repertoires – a romantic one and a realistic one – used by young British and American research subjects to talk about marriage. Most commonly, interpretative repertoires include at least two dilemmatic alternatives to explain a given topic and make it intelligible.

However, no account can possibly cover the infinite ways in which a given situation may be described (all of which may conserve a logic or viability). Thus, the selection of a particular account over others is explained by its relevance for the participants themselves and not by its correspondence to the situation to which it refers. As Wooffitt (1992: 15) put it, "The point at which a description is ended is therefore a *practical* closure" (emphasis in the original).

From this view on discourse's variability, the rhetorical "organization and functionality of conversational remembering becomes an issue" (Edwards &

Potter 1992: 16). That is to say, the ongoing discursive process in which remembering is embodied is a topic of study in its on right, which leads us to focus on participants' concerns for what happened for examining the contingencies of the practical actions *done* through remembering. "Put it another way, the epistemologies of our everyday discourses are organized around adequacy and usefulness rather than validity and correctness" (Edwards & Potter 1992: 16).

Memory as a topic or as a participants' concern may arise while people are remembering. In these cases, memory topics or "meta-memory formulations" are used as discursive devices to describe the activity the participants are doing as *remembering*. The analytical task in these circumstances is to sequentially examine why in this precise context it does matter to remember (as opposed to state, imagine, or hypostatize). That is, to understand why memory is relevant for the participants themselves in this particular context and how they orient their statements to describe what they are doing as remembering. The answers, from a DP perspective, are best pursued by a fine-grained analysis of talk-in-interaction. An interesting example of this approach is Lynch and Bogen's (1996) *The Spectacle of History*. The authors analyse, from a post-ethnomethodological perspective, testimonies in which memory, forgetting, not being able to remember and the like are participants' concerns for the management of accountability or innocence.

In Lynch and Bogen's (1996) analysis, the displays of "meta-memory formulations" by a suspect, are seen as discursive devices, resources or strategies aimed at something other than merely describing an experience. For instance, in the "I don't recall" utterance, the speaker "may or may not imply the existence of an event in question" (Lynch & Bogen, 1996: 181), while the utterance "I forgot" or "I have forgotten" "implies the existence of the object complement (...) [such that] *something* had been forgotten, and one may admit to culpability for having forgotten it" (idem).

References to remembering are often stated in the present tense and are treated as experiences with their own flow or rhythm and constraints. No matter how much

one might invest in remembering a detail, sometimes it is impossible to remember it. Thus, the invocation of these constraints of memory allows a person to avoid accountability for past actions – the action might have been performed, but it is not in the memory register. On the other hand, forgetting is frequently used to describe the actions of others in the past and present tense (“you have forgotten”, “they forget”) and is less commonly to refer to one’s own behaviour, except in the past tense (“I forgot” is used, rather than “I am forgetting”). This is probably linked with Lynch and Bogen’s point that admitting forgetting *should* lead to an acknowledgement of one’s own responsibility in forgetting. Why “should”? Because, in a turn-by-turn sequence, first one is being “accused” of having forgotten. Then in the next turn, one may or may not admit having forgotten. However, depending on the precise interactional context, acknowledging forgetting can be equivalent to a display of agreement with the previous turn, while not admitting forgetting may be taken as disagreeing. As Pomerantz (1984) has suggested, disagreement generally has to be accounted for, and thus not admitting forgetting may imply more talk, more argument, more problems, while admitting it even though implies one’s own responsibility, also close the argument.

In these examples the discursiveness of memory, that is, its manoeuvrability or flexibility in helping us to undertake actions (“to do things with words” as Austin put it) is quite significant and more apparent than when “meta-memory formulations” are not explicitly used. Nevertheless, as Edwards and Potter (together in 1992; and separately in Potter, 1996 and Edwards, 1997) argue, any description is oriented to a purpose to be fulfilled, for an action to be carried out, for a norm to be actualized. Therefore, the discursiveness of memory both in terms of descriptions of the past and descriptions of participants’ concerns, is to be analyzed in my own data by focusing on the discursive devices, resources or strategies that participants display in “small pieces” of talk-in-interaction about the past. These devices help explain past and present controversies which characterize the Chilean Memory Debate.

3.4 Methodological Procedures

3.4.1 *The Data Collection Strategy: Focus Groups*

Within the framework of a DP perspective, I have investigated how Chileans remember the period of history from the late 1960s until about the early 2000s, through the analysis of how that past is shaped in talk-in-interaction. Early on, it was clear that the raw material should be discourses if I wanted to analyze remembering and people's understandings of the past. The next step was to decide which kind of material was needed and how I could obtain access to it in such a way that would allow me to pursue a detailed analysis of talk-in-interaction inspired by CA and DA principles.

Although conversation analysts have suggested strong arguments for preferring "naturally-occurring talk", the search and recording of such talk in relation to the topic of this research would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible. Proponents of CA have strongly advocated the analysis of *naturalistic* talk (e.g., phone calls or therapy sessions) rather than talk that is produced for research purposes (e.g., interviews or focus groups). Whereas the former is seen as more genuine (thus providing better access to how people's accounts are actually organized) the latter is often considered artificial, in terms of how participants or interviewees may adapt their talk to fit a research purpose (Potter & Putsch, 2004). In analyzing naturalistic talk, the analyst must not approach the material with any preconceptions, but instead "let the material talk by itself", so to speak. However, when the researcher's aim is to account for a *problem* which has already been narrowed by the researcher as a relevant concern (such as Chileans' collective remembering of the controversial recent past), then the approach to the material will not be as "unmotivated" as orthodox conversation analysts would prefer.

On the other hand, *doing* memory is an inherent part of social life. The process of remembering cannot be isolated from other actions. We constantly remember while carrying out our daily activities, as we attempt to accomplish a variety of goals as diverse as making jokes or judgements. Therefore, there is no single, delimited social context in which to collect conversational remembering –

descriptions of the past being used for interaction and in interaction – for research purposes; collective remembering is embedded almost everywhere. In addition, it is far more difficult to predict in advance those places and times where and when people are going to talk spontaneously about the recent Chilean past, except perhaps in institutional settings such as meetings within human rights organizations. But my research is not focused on institutional remembering in the Chilean context with respect to the recent past; those discourses may be found in official documents and written texts which have contributed to the standardization of people's accounts. Instead, the focus of my research is on how common themes are handled for given purposes in the talk of ordinary people.

Thus, for this research I needed to produce my own data, which I generated by designing an interactional context in which I could obtain as much discourse variability as possible with regard to my interests. As noted in the introduction to this dissertation, my early interests revolved around explaining the uses of memory (re-specified by DP as “meta-memory formulations”). On the other hand, I was also interested in the stories Chileans tell each other about the past; that is, in the content of remembering. These themes were reworked over many years, but through the analysis of my data it became clear that what was equally important as the stories themselves is *how* the stories are told (and the difficulty of separating one from the other) such that controversies about the past are maintained and the past itself is subject to reconsiderations and reformulations.

In a certain sense, I have followed the research strategies suggested by Michael Billig (1992) in *Talking of the Royal Family*, Margaret Wetherell and Jonathan Potter (1992) in *Mapping the Language of Racism* (from which I borrow the subtitle of my dissertation), and Robin Wooffitt (1992) in *Telling Tales of the Unexpected*. In all of these works, the authors attempt to explain a phenomenon that is previous to their approaches to empirical material: national identity; racism and discrimination; and paranormal phenomena, respectively. However, through the authors' analyses the phenomena are reinterpreted with an emphasis on the central role of discursive practices. In addition, in all of these works the empirical materials are talk designed for the research (interviews and groups discussions)

which is addressed through discourse analysis strategies, rhetoric, interpretative repertoires and conversation analysis principles.

The specific strategy used in my research to obtain data has been the production, conduction, recording, transcription, translation and analysis of a set of focus groups discussions. Focus groups are a research method based on open-ended group discussions that examine a particular set of socially relevant issues (Krueger & Casey, 2000; Bloor, Frankland, Thomas & Robson, 2001).

Focus groups have also been characterised as a “thinking society in miniature”, alluding to the supposition that society as a whole is “a thinking society” (Moscovici, 1984). Drawing on “rhetorical psychology” (Billig, 1987, 1991; Billig et al. 1988; Shotter, 1990) then, “if one wishes to observe thinking actually taking place, then one should listen to people actually discussing matters” (Billig, 1992: 15), and that, in observing the discussion in a focus group, one can see the formation and transformation of knowledge. In the focus group “talking society”, participants think together and talk together and are stimulated in their thinking when listening to each other’s ideas.

Focus groups are commonly composed of 6 to 12 persons who are gathered together in order to talk about a topic suggested by a moderator. In Potter and Putcha’s (2004: 6) description of the kind of talk-in-interaction produced in focus groups, mostly in market research, the moderator is the one “who sets the stage with prepared questions or an interview guide” with “the goal of eliciting participants’ feeling, attitudes and perceptions about a selected topic”. It is then up the moderator to produce an informal environment in which people can express their views. Yet, “although the interaction often feels free and fluid, it overwhelmingly centres on the moderator – only rarely do more than one or two exchanges take place between two participants” (Potter & Putcha, 2004: 37). Therefore, focus group talk has some particularities which are reflected, for example, in how turn-taking is differently organized than in “naturally occurring talk”.

Although focus groups may be a suitable strategy for obtaining the empirical material of my research, it is also important to underscore the risk implied in how

the moderator (myself, in this case) can “encourage off-stage topical talk”, oriented “to the researcher’s conceptual topic and agenda” (Edwards & Stokoe, 2004: 7). Therefore, the moderator’s talk must also be included in the data and be subject to analysis, as she or he is also a participant (but with some privilege) in the talk. Thus, in the analysis I address my own statements as part of the interactions in which they are displayed.

3.4.2 Focus Group Design and Composition: Age and Political Affiliation

Once I had decided to use focus groups for data collection, the next step was to design the groups in order to generate as much discursive diversity as possible. From a preliminary literature review on memory and related topics, on the one hand, and specific literature broadly addressing “the Chilean case” (see footnote 4 in Chapter 2), on the other hand, it became apparent that a combination of two cohorts or generations and two political affiliations would be an appropriate way of designing the groups and inviting potential participants.

The literature on memory posits that age can be accountable for different ways of remembering the same events, in particular traumatic events that have had a significant impact on public life and institutions (Schuman & Rogers, 2004; Krause, 2005; Pennebaker & Basanik, 1997). The age category refers to how old people are or were when a specific event occurred. It has been argued that adolescence and early adulthood are the two periods in life in which people are more “vulnerable” to the impact of public events that produce important changes in collective identities. This vulnerability is explained in most studies about memory and generations (or cohorts) based on a view of adolescence as the period in which individuals tend to settle on their personal identities, obtain employment and engage in stable emotional relationships. Adolescents search the social domain for unfamiliar alternatives and new projects to embrace in a trial and error process²¹. For instance, Pennebaker and Basanik (1997), based on empirical studies about how Americans remember President John F. Kennedy’s assassination, are very precise in suggesting that individuals who were between 12

²¹ According to Erick Erickson’s theory of eight stages in social-psychological development over the course of life, the adolescent’s main task is the achievement of personal identity.

to 25 years old at the time of his death recall the event with more accuracy, talk about it with more details and give it more relevance than those who were older than 25.

Although this is not the place to comment on theories of social or psychological development of the individual, I would like to make a brief remark regarding how the categories of adolescence and early adulthood are used in some memory studies. In these studies, the relation between age and collective remembering is seen as a matter of individual development, such that during the years of adolescence and early adulthood one's individual development, in a sense, makes one more receptive to social contexts, maybe because people need more feedback from others, or whatever explanation can be invoked, in terms of necessity or determinism. However, there is an alternative explanation for the link between age and the *collective* remembering of an event. By virtue of "re-membering" (becoming members again or updating a membership), people orient to past memberships as relevant for their view of the past (Middleton & Buchanan, 1991). In other words, they present themselves as belonging to a "community of memory, which acts as context for maintaining, reworking and renewing feelings of belonging and group allegiance" (Edwards, Potter & Middleton, 1992: 444).

My concern with age categories is not that implied in Pennebaker and Basanik's (1997) study, but as a way of ensuring that differing perspectives on the past arise in the focus group talk. In addition, I was interested in obtaining "meta-memory formulations" such as "I recall when..." or "I remember this and that", which could be contrasted with others' accounts in terms of both personal memories and "historical knowledge". Since collective memory has been defined not only as remembering but also as representing the past through the available resources, then accounts from people who did not live the past in personal terms are as important as personal memories. By "available resources" I mean, for instance, history as learned at school or stories conveyed from generation to generation which reproduce, in a sense, what can and cannot be said about the past.

Thus, I attempted to create focus groups with an equal proportion of men and women²² in two age groups: those over 45 or 50 years old and those from 18 to 25 years old. In a sense, these two generations also represent the relationship between parents and children, and young people and parents. Older participants would have been adolescents or young adults in 1973, while the younger ones were mostly born in the 1980s.

| | Those who were adolescents or young adults during the period 1973-1990 | Those who were children or adolescents in the 1990s |
|--|--|---|
| In 2005/2006 they were | Over 45 or 50 years old | Between 18 and 25 years old (university students) |
| In 1990, when democracy returned to Chile, they were | Between 31 and 36 years old | Between 4 and 9 years old |
| In 1973, the year of the coup d'état, they were | Between 14 and 19 years old | Not yet born |
| They were born | Between 1959 and 1964 | Between 1981 and 1986 |

On the other hand, my preliminary review of literature on “the Chilean case” (by which I mean all kinds of essays from various disciplines, including political science, psychology, history, etc., that attempt to explain issues related to “coming to terms with legacy of the past”), revealed that a dynamic of mutual exclusiveness between two political affiliations – the right and the left – was a “leitmotif”, the very reason for the “Chilean case” to exist or to be a relevant concern.

As described in Chapter 2, conflict between the right and the left in Chile intensified in the years leading up to the coup of 1973. In the political domain, this conflict has been maintained over the last 40 years or so, although at a less intense level throughout the years. With regard to ordinary people who are not personally involved in politics or the human rights movement, many studies²³ have shown how there are two consistently different narratives used to address the

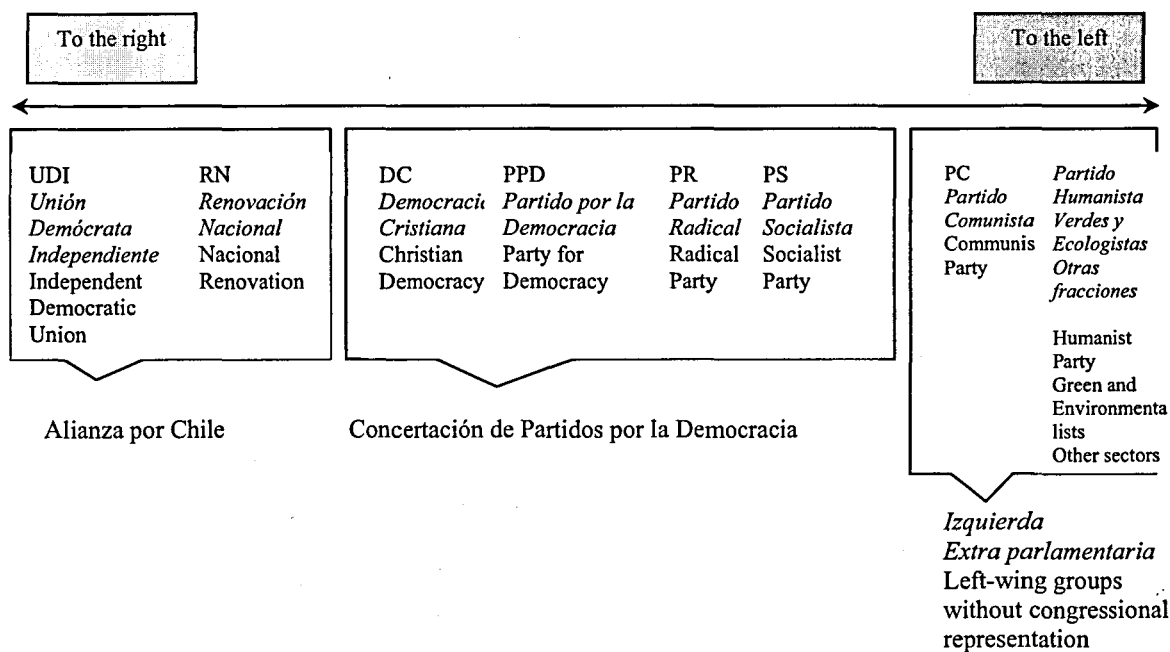
²² From my previous own experience conducting research through focus groups practices, the equivalent proportion of gender is a common way to compose groups, as it facilitates gender not to be an issue (it could be that in a group of only women the talk could be oriented by women’s concerns), and at the same it equals how society is, where there are men and women.

²³ This refers mainly to studies by researchers at the Department of Psychology at the Pontifical Catholic University, including Manzi, Krause, Ruiz, Meneses, Haye & Kronmüller, 2004; Manzi, Helsper, Ruiz, Krause, Kronmüller, 2003.

past. It could be argued that these two narratives embedded in Chileans' collective remembering are so different, but rather that they are rhetorically presented in opposition to each other. As Haye suggests, the current state of the Chilean Memory Debate is such that "Each time that *ego* produces a representation of the coup he or she is not only doing this but at the same time is taking a position with respect to the coup, in front of the position assumed by the *alter*. In other words, in cases of representing socially controversial objects such as the memory of the coup, the mere issue would imply the installation of a scenario from which judgements are produced, which in turn constitutes not only a relationship with the given object but also essentially a social side-taking and a relationship to the other subjects" (Haye, 2005: 116-7, emphasis in the original, my translation).

To explore this question of rhetorical opposition, I decided to include in the design of the focus groups a criterion of political affiliation in combinations which reflect every possible alternative in terms of real-world contexts: groups of people who share the same political affiliation (groups composed only of left-wing participants and groups composed only of right-wing participants) and groups which include participants with both left-wing perspective and right-wing perspectives (these focus groups were composed of an equal proportion of left-wing and right-wing-participants). The number of people representing generational and gender categories was expected not to vary from group to group.

Because Chilean politics are linearly organized along a right-to-left spectrum, determining which political affiliation category each participant belonged to was relatively simple. The diagram below illustrates the Chilean political spectrum.



When contacting persons who had expressed willingness to participate in a focus group, I asked them in advance where they placed themselves in the political spectrum or alternatively, which coalition they tend to vote for, *Alianza por Chile* or the *Concertación*. When the person was unable to answer or had doubts about what to answer, I directly asked them their opinion of the 1973 coup, since as Haye (2003: 12) found in his research, “in Chilean society the topic of September 11th is perhaps the most reliable and salient symbolic marker of the difference between right-wingers and left-wingers”²⁴.

It is important to point out that I did not intend to compare the focus groups according to political affiliation; rather, I sought to produce settings in which I could obtain discursive variability. If political affiliation was to be relevant for this research, then the right and left categories would arise on their own.

²⁴ Haye is aware, as he continues, that to “To say that the attitude towards the coup is a good predictor of Chileans’ political orientation may be a petition of principle, but it confirms that positions towards the coup give meaning to political orientations. Therefore, it can be assumed, as it is in this dissertation, that in the thematic context of September 11th 1973 ‘left-wing’ and ‘anti-coup’ have the same meaning, as ‘right-wing’ and ‘pro-coup’ do.”

Finally, in every group, educational background was also kept invariable. Most of the participants had attended university or are currently studying for undergraduate degrees. It could be argued that I was creating a sufficiently homogenous environment such that participants would not be concerned about class distinctions. Although diversity may encourage focus group discussion, too much heterogeneity may result in “the repression of views of certain individuals” (Bloor, Frankland, Thomas & Robson, 2001: 20)²⁵.

3.4.3 Other issues: Sample, Recruitment, Moderation, Transcriptions and Translation

With respect to the question of sample size, in this case regarding the number of focus groups to conduct, I have followed the suggestions of Potter and Wetherell (1987). Within discourse analysis, the question of sample size is addressed quite differently than in other qualitative research method strategies. “The success” of any discourse analysis study “is *not* in the least dependent on the sample size”, and thus since “one is interested in language use (...) a large number of linguistic patterns are likely to emerge from a few people, small samples or a few [groups] interviews” (Potter & Wetherell, 1987:161). These authors consider, for instance, that 10 interviews “might provide as much valid information as several hundred responses to a structured opinion poll” (*idem*). However, the specific delimitation of the sample size should be explained because of the research question.

As my research was continuously being reformulated in keeping an open approach²⁶ to what was to be relevant *in the data*, in the early stages of my research I

²⁵ For instance, I could have conducted different focus groups with participants of varying social classes, but my intention was not to compare groups’ talk according to participants’ characteristics, in order to attribute to each cluster (political, social, etc.) a particular way of talking about the past. On the contrary, such categories, if relevant, should not be viewed as producing particular ways of talking about the past, but rather as produced by and designed for talking (Edwards, 1995) about the past in the Chilean context.

²⁶ This is in keeping with “conversation analysis mentality” which proposes an “unmotivated look” at or “ethnomethodological indifference” toward the data. These concepts and their foundations

did not know how many focus groups I was going to conduct. In other words, I was not sure how many groups I needed, to obtain sufficient variety of arguments from the kind of talk I was interested in. In the end, I conducted eight focus groups (see Appendix B for the details of each group, including date, length of time and composition):

- L1: First FG composed only of left-wing participants
- L2: Second FG composed only of left-wing participants
- L3: Third FG composed only of left-wing participants
- R1: First FG composed only of right-wing participants
- R2: Second FG composed only of right-wing participants
- R3: Third FG composed only of younger right-wing participants²⁷
- M1: First FG composed of equal proportion of left- and right-wing participants
- M2: Second FG composed of equal proportion of left- and right-wing participants

During 2005, I carried out the three first focus groups, one for each of the three interactional contexts in which the data was produced: one group composed only of left-wing participants, one group composed only of right-wing participants, and one composed of an equal proportion of left- and right-wing participants.

In a certain sense, the first three focus groups comprise the primary corpus of my research. I worked through them intensively. I did a literal (word by word) transcription of each of them (in Spanish). Then I selected certain parts to be transcribed with conversation analysis conventions (see Appendix A) following the Gail Jefferson's system (2004; Atkinson & Heritage, 1984). Some of the selected excerpts were then translated into English in order to share them with English-speaking colleagues and discussing my preliminary thoughts on the research with them.

have been addressed in the "Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis" section of this chapter.

²⁷ Only young participants attended this meeting, although older participants were also invited.

In 2006, I carried out five more focus groups to check and enrich my preliminary theses based on the data from the three initial groups. These five groups were comprised of two groups composed only of left-wing participants, two groups composed only of right-wing participants and one composed of an equal proportion of left- and right-wing participants. The data from this second set of focus groups were not fully transcribed, yet I listened to them many times in order to select more extracts which might contribute to the analysis. Only these extracts were transcribed with CA convention, and from them only a selection was translated.

The recruitment procedure for inviting people to join the groups was based on a "snow ball" sampling technique. I asked friends and relatives to provide me with contacts from their networks of friends who would volunteer to be participants. I then contacted them by email or phone to invite them to talk about Chilean politics, and also asked about their political affiliation and attitude toward the 1973 coup d'état. Thus, I developed a pool of people from which I organized the focus groups.

The focus groups took place in various venues; some on university campuses (the two first left- and right-wing groups in 2005, and the third left-wing group in 2006), another in the offices of a consulting business where I rented a meeting room (the first politically mixed group in 2005), and the others were held at my house (those done in 2006).

In the first minutes of conversation in each group, participants were informed that the talk would be recorded and used only for the purpose of my PhD research. I tried to provide minimal detail at the beginning of each session, yet at the end of each one I shared with the participants some of my research concerns and preliminary findings.

I did not have a standard set of questions for participants to address in the conversations. The only "question" I had was to request that they "play a game"; the description of this game comprised my opening statements in every focus

group. I allowed the talk to flow as spontaneously as possible, following the suggestion of Sue Wilkinson (1998, 2000, 2001) on “active interviewing” in focus group practices. This moderating style allows the moderator to intervene as another member in the talk as well as to confront participants with their statements as any other participant would.

The following passage is an English translation of the game as I actually described it in Spanish, taken from the transcription of R2 (the second focus group, composed only of right-wing participants):

“okay then we are going to start the conversation by playing a game (...) the game is as follows: if here in this room we had a kind of time machine, right? which would allow us to travel through time and locate ourselves in another era, we want to invite the younger participants who are here to imagine that they travel to the seventies, and that you um are more or less the same people, we are going to see what changes are produced in this other context, but you are young, you are studying at the university, you have all the energy that young people have to do things, right? but you find yourself in another time, in the years, seventies, um, how do you feel in those years, um, for instance, would you change the subject of your studies, would you meet other people, would you have other interests, or more or less you would be the same as you are now, what kind of things would motivate you? right? And on the other hand, we want to invite the older persons who are here, who are in charge of a family, who have other responsibilities, to do the exercise of travelling to the nineties as young people, right? I mean if you had the chance to leave behind a bit your responsibilities and imagine yourself, how would it have been to live your youth in the early nineties or early two-thousands, right? Would you study the same subject, would you do the same things, would you have the same options, OK? with whom would you meet. That is the game, let’s see what comes out of it”.

A few aspects of the "nature" of the data are important to underscore. First of all, the data are in Spanish, so the transcription which really counts is the Spanish one, in which I have tried to include all details of the speech as it was said. However, given the British academic audience for this dissertation, translations are required. The objective of the translation is to make the details upon which my research is based available to the audience. However, because what is provided in English was never actually said, it is not, therefore, "the details" upon which my analysis is based. This may imply theoretical problems which cannot be resolved; nevertheless, in a practical sense I have resolved them by invoking my status as a doctoral student. Because a PhD is an opportunity for learning and because conversation analysis or discourse analysis is not pursued in the Spanish-language academic community the way it is pursued at Loughborough University, I have assumed the risk of pursuing an analysis of data in Spanish that an English reader might not follow²⁸. This is a paradox with which I have been struggling since I began this research. However, I do believe that a virtue of my work is its contribution to the development of CA and DA in a language other than English.

I have translated the extracts, trying to keep as equivalent as possible to the interactional business that participants pursue in their talk-in-interaction. Therefore, what is available in English sometimes keeps forms which may sound strange in that language. This has been done on purpose in order to maintain some of the sense one might grasp in the original Spanish transcription (and to respect whenever possible, for example, the order or overlapping of words; without this, it becomes very difficult to introduce CA conventions on translations). Thus, the language of the translations might be called *Spanish Englished*.

I include a range of conventional CA signs in the original Spanish transcription, while in the Spanish Englished version some are not included, such as intonations and prolonging sounds, because such utterances were never said in English. When in Spanish some part of a word has been emphasized, in English the whole word has been underlined. Both transcriptions have numbered lines and are equivalent.

²⁸ I want to point out that a Colombian reader or a Mexican reader might not follow it either. Such is language.

Thus, in certain places the lines are cut to make it easier for the reader to follow the analysis.

Finally, I would like to point out that in translating my data to English I have employed a significant analytical tool. Translating is the process by which a translator interprets the meaning of what has been said in one language and expresses it in another language. To do this, the translator first must understand what is being done through the original language; thus, translating implies a process of analysis not only of the literal meanings of a text, but of the language uses or games implied in the talk. Therefore, translating has provided important insights for the analysis. Some of them, I think, could have been not possible if I had not engaged in translation, because sometimes language uses are taken for granted by native speakers in their own language.

Part III

ANALYSING THE LANGUAGE OF POLARISATION

PRELUDE

Two accounts of the same events in the early 1970s

Here, I offer two accounts of the *same* period of time which provide two *different* contexts. In the first version, Gaston narrates how fervently and joyfully he lived in the early 1970s; in the second version, Jose describes the difficulties of living through the same years. The stories are mirrors of one another, such that while Jose experienced relief after the coup d'état, Gaston was too frightened to continue participating in the kinds of activities he engaged in before the coup. When the stories are compared, their sequence of facts are similar, that is to say, both share some elements organised in the same temporal direction: Allende's government, shortage of food and other supplies, the coup. Nonetheless, the stories differ in terms of where to locate negative aspects of the past, such as pain, problems and conflict, in the temporal sequence. Did they happen before or after the coup? Were they causes or consequences of the coup?

What follows from these questions is, finally, the determination of who was responsible for the coup and who is accountable for its consequences; those who supported Allende, or those who opposed him? It is important to point out that these questions are already implied in both narratives through small yet important details. Within each story, there are specific moments where it seems as if Gaston and Jose are meeting face-to-face, arguing with each other, preempting the other's argument in order to enhance their own perception of this period. In fact, Gaston and Jose do not know each other, nor have they met face-to-face. However, from their stories it is possible to appreciate how the construction of the past in Chile has been dialogically organised.

Gaston's story is taken from the first focus group conducted in 2005, which was composed only of left-wing participants. The extract is produced after just five minutes of discussion and lasts for about four minutes. Likewise, Jose's story is taken from the first focus group conducted only with right-wing participants in the same year. It begins after 22 minutes and 50 seconds of conversation and lasts for about three minutes. Since there is no rigorous analysis after the extracts, here I

only present the English translation of these extracts without the original Spanish, unlike the following sections. Some lines have been omitted from the transcript due to the many local references that might hinder its fluency.

Each participant invited to participate in any of the various focus groups of this research were first asked about their political tendency (based on which political parties represent them better and for which of them they tend to vote), but they were not informed about the political views of the other people in their focus group. Participants were only informed that they were going to talk about Chilean politics. However, they might have anticipated that their political views were relevant in terms of right and left. Nevertheless, inviting someone to talk about politics as a left- or right-winger would not be important for the analysis unless these categories were used or implied by the participants' talk. In this sense, how the invitation is framed is relevant, but more important is how the participants themselves make use of the information they receive in their "talk-in-interaction". In my research, I use the terms "focus group composed only of right or left-wing participants" as a way to identify the focus groups. Acknowledging the problems and critiques this may imply, it is important to state that the right and left categories were not developed based on the composition of the focus groups, but were analysed on the basis of how the participants themselves worked and reworked the categories. In both stories, it is possible to appreciate explicit references to political membership categories, the use of which also helps to enhance the speaker's legitimacy and credibility.

I invite the reader to pay close attention to certain details (their convergence and *simultaneous* divergence), reviewing both stories as part of a dialogue:

- Both Gaston and Jose use their age (they describe being boys of fifteen and thirteen) to emphasize the extraordinariness of the pre-coup period. Whereas for Gaston this period was positive, Jose is critical of a situation in which a young boy witnessed and was affected by shortages of food and other goods.
- In both narratives, there are references to the JAP, or *Junta de Abastecimiento y Precios* (Committee for Supply and Prices), and both references include a story about chickens. For Gaston, the chicken episode

is an example of how solidarity was a shared value, while for Jose, it is an example of the seriousness of people's suffering.

On the other hand, I suggest that the reader reflect on how Gaston and Jose imply controversial aspects in their narratives, in particular how explicitly Jose describes the presence of his opponent. i.e., those who were responsible for the chaos of the pre-coup period.

In both stories, the presence of conflict is relevant to the plot. In Gaston's, what is notable is how he explicitly negates the presence of any conflict in his neighbourhood. He does so by providing the example of being the goal keeper of the local football team, in a rather simplistic image of children playing altogether. In contrast, after the coup, Gaston felt afraid. Hence, by implication, it was after the coup that Gaston experienced serious problems, which were the direct result of the coup itself. The coup appears then as unjustified and its consequences undeserved.

As a reflection of Gaston's account, Jose describes conflicts and problems in a much more explicit way. For Jose, these conflicts were caused by the activities of the Allende government and its supporters, who brought the country to a situation that necessitated a coup d'état, which, he adds, unfortunately produced pain and problems for those same people. The coup, then, is justified, and to a certain degree, the suffering of others is as well, given their responsibility for the events. Jose's discursive flexibility to include the other's perspective is notable, as is his ability to disqualify the other's perspective by underscoring the issue of responsibility for the coup d'état and its consequences, as a matter of what is deserved.

It is my sincere hope that the analytical chapters to follow will help the reader to understand significant aspects of the Chilean memory debate and the specific discursive strategies which make possible *two very different narratives of the same period*.

Gaston's memories prior to the coup d'état

1 GASTON °I I was brought up in a middle class family (1.0)
2 middle class (0.3) um not not >middle middle<
3 middle a bit lower (1.6) in a *población*²⁹ of
4 Santiago (0.6) .hh um um (1.7) um in the
5 northern part um um ((clearing throat)) at that
6 moment um it occurs um all this (0.8) this
7 political ferment thing which (0.6) um (1.0) in
8 which um you had to take part (0.2) there was a
9 sensation (.) of taking a side (.) right? (.) you
10 weren't outside of what was happening (1.7)
11 fundamentally in the year seventy (1.5) um in the-
12 in the decade of the seventies (.) um situations
13 happen like my father being a political leader of
14 a given party (1.4) um and I being already
15 fourteen years old I wanted to participate (0.8)
16 and certainly I wanted to be part of (0.2) the
17 same political party as my dad (0.7) he was
18 Christian Democrat (1.5) um (1.7) at that moment
19 Allende came to power (1.2) and I find myself in
20 this *población*
21 [...]
22 and I participated for example in the football
23 team of the *población* (0.7) in different groups
24 right? (.) in social groups of the *población* (0.5)
25 where my relationships were with people (0.3) who
26 besides being boys of my age (0.4) who moreover
27 had another political concept (.) and who were
28 from the other party (0.4) they were they were
29 socialists they were communists
30 [some national³⁰ right? generally=

²⁹ *Población* is the local term for a neighbourhood of basic houses built by the State.

³⁰ Following how Gaston has just used other political affiliations membership categories (such as socialist and communist) here he is most probably employing the term "*nacionales/nacional*" to refer to the members or sympathizers of the *Partido Nacional* (National Party). The Chilean National Party was founded in 1966 by three former political parties the *Partido Liberal* (Liberal Party), the *Partido Conservador Unido* (The United Conservative Party) – which shared the same political roots as the *Falange* (see next foot page) – and the *Acción Nacional* (National Action). For the first time in Chile conservatives and liberals unified themselves in a unique right-wing party. However, the foundation of the *Partido Nacional* was due to the poor results right-wing

31 XIMENA L^omm hm^o
32 GASTON =those who had trucker dads or dads who drove
33 trucks were from from from of the nationals (1.4)
34 and in this effervescence isn't it? (.) I was
35 brought up (1.3) um (0.5) and with much pain being
36 a Christian Democrat um (0.6) um youth leader at
37 that time (0.6) um of the of the of the
38 youth branch of the *falange*³¹ (1.5) um
39 >came the coup< (1.6) um (.) and and and and and
40 and it's like um I remember so well say (0.5)
41 that in that that neighbourhood (.) it was a very
42 special neighbourhood (0.8) because
43 everybody um had different political ideas (.)
44 but there was never conflict within the
45 *población* (1.2) there was never conflict
46 (.) because besides I was the goalkeeper of the
47 team (0.6) the team of the *población*
48 ↗so they couldn't leave out the ↗goalkee(h)per=
49 ? L^omm^o |
50 RAMIRO L^oheh heh^o
51 GASTON because he belonged to another party right? (.) in
52 the *jap*³² (.) I participated in the *jap* (0.6) I
53 participated as an observer(0.7) ↗a mere stripling
54 ? L^omm hm^o
55 GASTON =of fifteen
56 [...]
57 and what I had to do was to let every Christian
58 Democrat know that the chicken had arrived right?
59 ↗and I participated very cordially with my=
60 XIMENA L^omm

political parties obtained in the 1965 parliamentary elections (in 1961, they have obtained a 30.4% and in 1965, only a 12.5%).

³¹ The *Falange Nacional* was a political party whose roots are found in the former Conservative Party. In 1935, the youth branch of the party refused to support the official candidate for the presidency, creating the *Movimiento Nacional de la Juventud Conservadora* (National Conservative Youth Movement). In 1936, the movement adopted the name of the *Falange Nacional* (National Phalanx) until 1957, when their members, unified with other Christian political groups, formed the *Partido Demócrata Cristiano* (Christian Democrat Party). Thus, in the early 1970s, the *Falange* no longer existed as such.

³² JAP is the acronym for *Junta de Abastecimiento y Precios* (Committee for Supply and Prices), created by the Allende government in April 1972 to face shortage.

61 GASTON =socialist and communist friends of that time
62 (0.5) who were the same age and who did the same
63 boy's stuff (0.3) in this situation
64 [...]
65 then came the coup and >we kept meeting<
66 (0.2) °as as a Christian Democrat
67 group (0.3) until we were frightened afraid and
68 we didn't continue°

Jose's memories prior the coup d'état

- 1 JOSE I was with my parents in- sorry with my mother in
2 *Viña*³³ (1.2) but one of the things that makes me hate
3 politics (.) and above all the left
4 (0.8)
- 5 MARCELA ((coughing))
- 6 JOSE I was twelve years old (0.5) I came home from school to
7 my house (1.6) °I took a bag with me° and I went
8 to queue for four hours to buy half a kilo of bread (.)
9 rancid (1.5) for five kids five brothers I am
10 one of the youngest
11 (2.6)
- 12 JOSE my mother smoked and we had to queue to buy (.)
13 to b-to buy a chicken (0.5) you had to have
14 a card from the *jap*³⁴ that I have as a souvenir
15 ? °heh°=
- 16 JOSE =I have saved it (0.7) >to have the right to buy a
17 chicken< (0.8) I mean my father used to bring us butter
18 from Santiago when he came to see us (.) he brought um
19 us detergent (.) I don't know (.) groceries (1.1) that
20 he got at the *eta*³⁵ warehouse (.) like a good comrade
21 (1.2) of a state-owned company
22 ? °hhh°
- 23 JOSE I mean the situation was at that level
24 (1.5)
- 25 XIMENA °uh rum°
- 26 JOSE Lso I think that that coup d'état (0.7)
27 um there couldn't have been (0.7) anything better
28 (1.0) honestly (.) (like it was) to me as a boy I had to
29 live it (.) as a thirteen year old boy (0.9)

³³ Viña del Mar is a coastal city which together with the port city of Valparaiso is the second largest urban concentration in Chile, after Santiago. Viña is located 150 kilometres from Santiago, in the central zone of the country.

³⁴ JAP is the acronym for *Junta de Abastecimiento y Precios* (Committee for Supply and Prices), created by the Allende government in April 1972 in the face of shortages of food and other goods.

³⁵ ETA is the acronym for *Escuela Técnica Aeronáutica* (the Technical School of Aeronautics), part of the Defence Ministry's *Dirección General de Aeronáutica Civil* (General Division of Civilian Aeronautics). The ETA trains civilian pilots and other related professionals working in the field of aeronautics.

30 thank God I didn't have any problems (1.5)
31 *allanamiento*³⁶ or any suffering on the contrary=
32 MARCELA L((coughing))
33 JOSE =it was a relief and a tremendous peace (1.5) °both
34 for my family and for me° even considering that my
35 father worked in a state (.) enterprise (2.0) °but
36 nothing happened to him because he wasn't (0.2) much
37 involved in political (.) problems° but the
38 corruption yes it was very extensive abuses
39 shamelessness (.) shortage 0.6) and I am talking
40 about a home where there was o- one woman who was my
41 mother (.) with five children
42 (3.1)
43 JOSE and we had to do these things I mean (.)
44 my mother was employed (.) she worked for the
45 municipality of- in the department of tourism of the
46 municipality of *Viña* (0.6) because she put make up on
47 (.) and dressed (.) the way she should have (0.7) she
48 took the bus (.) down *Agua Santa*³⁷ to her office (.)
49 JOSE *la momia tal por cual*³⁸ had to stand up to give up her
50 MARCELA L((coughing))
51 JOSE rseat to the working people
52 ? Lheh
53 (1.2)

³⁶ In Chile, "allanamiento" may be understood in one of in two ways; the second meaning is in strict reference to the Pinochet regime. "Allanamiento" is either used to describe legal police search actions, with authorization provided by a judge in the context of a judiciary investigation (a "search warrant"); or as illegal police actions, as many "allanamientos" were conducted during the Pinochet regime without a search warrant.

³⁷ Agua Santa is the name of a central avenue in Viña del Mar.

³⁸ In "*la momia tal por cual*" there are two items which present unique challenges in terms of translation. The first is "momia", an important membership category for the Chilean Memory Debate, as will become clear in the analytical chapters. In this context, the term "momia(o)/mummy" is used pejoratively and mostly by left-wingers to qualify their political opponents as reactionary and conservative. The parallel between mummies and right-wingers is that while the former petrify over time, the latter are treated as "petrified" because they are reactionary and conservative, in terms of defending the status quo, and resisting social change. The second challenge is the phrase "*tal por cual*" which according to the dictionary of the *Real Academia Española* is a euphemistic insult equivalent to "*hijo de puta/son of a bitch*". The expression originated in Spain centuries ago and its use endures in Latin American Spanish. "*Tal por cual*" is an indirect way of insulting someone without explicitly stating the pejorative term. A possible translation of "*tal por cual*" into English could be "*good-for-nothing*".

54 JOSE who were employed just like her (.) she was an
55 administrator (0.8) in the tourism office (.) tourist
56 guide °by the way° (0.4) so those are the things that
57 one lived my brother studied with the French priests³⁹ in
58 *Viña* (0.5) and two three four days that he didn't come
59 home because he had to protect the school because they
60 were going to seize it (1.4) at some point they called
61 us because he was in jail because he had gone to a
62 protest against the *enu*⁴⁰ (1.0) they wanted to unify the
63 schools (.) I mean it was a scandal it was a- (0.4) I
64 mean a-a sixteen year old boy with a chain and a padlock
65 to defend his school (.) stuck at school (0.6) because
66 the comrades were going to seize it (0.5) I mean it was
67 something inconceivable (1.3) and this was a political
68 system of the people

³⁹ A private school conducted by a religious congregation.

⁴⁰ ENU is the acronym for *Escuela Nacional Unificada* (National Unified School) a national educational reform project, part of the political program of the coalition of political parties which supported Allende. In December 1971 Allende summoned the First National Congress of Education during which the Project was discussed and improved. In May 1972 the ENU Project was publicly announced; however the discussions about how to implement the plan on a national level lasted until 1973 under the slogan "*por una educación nacional, democrática, pluralista y popular*" (for a national, democrat, pluralist and popular education). In 1973, certain groups (ecclesiastic, military, the press and economic sectors) were in firm opposition to the ENU project (Redondo, J.; 2007).

Chapter 4

POLARISATION AS THE PARTICIPANTS' EXPLANATION FOR THE DEBATE

4.1 Introduction

The first analytical chapter consists of an analysis of the focus group participants' understanding of the task they perform as part of engaging in a debate about the past and the present. In particular, the analysis focuses on how they explicitly employ the notion of polarisation as an explanatory category in accounting for the debate itself. In this sense, polarisation appears as a "participants' concern" (Edwards, 1997), a category that is part of participants' descriptions of their own practices with respect to how accounts of the last 40 years of Chilean history are produced.

The focus on polarisation as a participants' category responds to the theoretical and methodological approach of this research, that of Discursive Psychology (Edwards, & Potter, 2005; Edwards, 1997; Edwards, & Potter, 1992). According to this perspective, "the pursuit of participants' categories and concerns", following "the count-as principle, whereby participants' resources (mundane reason, causal explanation, etc.) becomes analysts' phenomena" (Edwards, 1997: 62).

In this case, through repeated listening and reading of the data, what stands out is the explicit, recurrent and systematic use of the notion of polarisation in participants' discourse throughout the diverse interactional settings in which the empirical material was produced (i.e., focus groups composed solely of right-wing participants, focus groups composed only of left-wing participants, and focus groups composed of an equal proportion of left- and right-wing participants). The analysis of the persistent and explicit deployment of polarisation in participants' discourse, then, turns out to be one of the most significant tasks for the analyst. Furthermore, there is a confluence between how this category has been widely invoked in Chilean academic and political circles (see Chapter 2) to account for the "social" antecedents and consequences – among them, collective and/or social remembering – of the

authoritarian period 1973-1990, and how it appears in the discourse of the focus groups of this research. In both cases, polarisation is brought to the discussion *as an explanatory resource for division among Chileans and for the debate itself*, a reason for and/or cause of the controversies Chileans have dealt with in the past and continue to address in the present with regard to events that took place in Chile over 40 years ago. If “polarisation” plays such a central role within the Chilean Memory Debate, then analysing it from the participants’ perspective should permit an understanding of the reasoning and ongoing discursive process embedded in how Chileans make sense of the past; this is a central priority for illuminating the debate that concerns this research.

Broadly speaking, participants explicitly use the notion of polarisation to describe Chilean society during two different periods of time: the past and the present. On the one hand, polarisation helps to account for how, in the years prior to 1973, Chilean society arrived at what is described as an extreme social and political situation. This period of time is roughly understood to be from 1970 until 1973, when Allende’s government was abruptly ended by the military coup. On the other hand, polarisation is used to explain the difficulties Chilean society faces even today in coming to agreement on a common version of the events prior to, during and following the military coup, including how and why those events occurred. Therefore, polarisation is utilized by participants as a cause or consequence of the 1973 crisis and as a cause or consequence of the debate. By implication, there is debate because Chileans are polarised, and because Chileans are polarised, the debate is maintained. The circular nature of the argument produces an understanding of *polarisation as an unavoidable source of conflict*.

When participants display their understanding of polarisation as a cause or consequence of the debate, they simultaneously present themselves as if they were conscious of *polarisation as an underlying social dynamic* that is responsible for the lack of consensus and understanding between the two major political positions in Chilean society today. Each side (the right and the left) holds and defends one of the two principal available narratives of the past in conflict. In fact, participants’ orientation to “the right” and “the left” as two mutually exclusive membership categories points to *polarisation as a discursive practice* in terms of how participants

draw on Membership Categorization Devices (Schegloff, 2007; Sacks, 1972a,b). “The right” and “the left” are treated as the only two categories available for political affiliation in Chile, as if every Chilean could be subject to being categorized as belonging to one or the other.

However, through particular discursive strategies the participants, while conducting their lay analysis of the debate, attribute to polarisation the status of a *quasi-natural force* operating in Chilean society. Although participants in almost every interactional setting expressed that Chilean society is less polarised today than it was in the past, a large number of Extreme Case Formulations (Pomerantz, 1986; Edwards, 2000) linked with emotional arguments and metaphorical images of polarisation as a natural and destructive phenomenon, contribute to make polarisation appear as a quasi-natural force operating externally to Chilean society, in relation to which human agency has little recourse.

Thus, this first analytical chapter provides an initial approach to how focus group participants describe the debate about Chile’s recent past in terms of a controversy. In doing so, the participants exhibit several discursive resources, such as explaining the debate as the result of *polarisation (as an explanatory resource for the debate)*, through invoking membership categories and presenting their self-understanding of *polarisation as an underlying social dynamic* governing Chileans’ approaches to the past. The result is to portray *polarisation as an unavoidable source of conflict* which, beyond how regrettable its effects may be seen, is an inescapable issue of the debate. In other words, through their conversations, the participants use the notion of polarisation as an explanatory resource and at the same time, they reinforce polarisation as a powerful and unavoidable characteristic of Chilean society. Therefore, *polarisation as a discursive practice* is also embedded in how the participants account for the debate.

This chapter includes analysis of six extracts, each of which is treated as a “single case analysis” (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998). Extracts 1 and 2 are presented together and serve as an introduction to how, on the one hand, the conversation about the past is framed *as a debate*, implying controversial and potentially dangerous topics, from the beginning of the discussion in the context of a focus group composed only of

right-wing participants. On the other hand, the second part of extract 1 and extract 2 (taken from a focus group composed only of left-wing participants), reveals a practical consequence that arises from the moment the participants frame the past as polarised: positioning to determine who holds the privileged status of “being a protagonist” of the past, which is seen as having a direct bearing on the legitimacy of their accounts.

The analysis of extract 3, taken from a focus group composed only of left-wing participants, shows how participants deal with the implications of presenting polarisation as a cause or as a consequence of the coup d'état. The implication of what is said in this extract is that polarisation was *a pervasive, underlying social dynamic* in the past. In addition, participants utilize emotional arguments articulated with the help of Extreme Case Formulations (Pomerantz, 1986; Edwards, 2000), to produce a view of *polarisation as an unavoidable source of conflict*.

In extract 4, which is taken from a focus group composed of an equal proportion of right- and left-wing participants, an older participant points to polarisation as an explanation for the highly emotional difficulties the two opposing groups faced in the past. The use of “the right” and “the left”, analyzed as Membership Categorization Devices, reinforces the sense in which polarisation is understood by participants as *an unavoidable and determinant dynamic* for the past conflict.

In extract 5, an older participant claims that concerns about polarisation are still a valid apprehension in the present. In the context of a focus group composed only of right-wing participants, expressions of concern about the negative effects of polarisation are evidence of the way in which the *underlying social dynamic* is treated as an “object”, *an unavoidable source of conflict* for Chilean society.

Finally, the analysis of extract 6 examines how a metaphor for the 1973 conflict, “the eye of the hurricane”, is used to reinforce this sense of polarisation as ever-present. The metaphor contributes to create a sense of *polarisation as a quasi-natural force* or as a *social underlying mechanism* that is responsible for the difficulties encountered by the focus group participants (in a mixed focus group) as well as by Chileans as a whole in discussions about the past.

4.2 A debate in which everybody wants to participate

Extract 1 consists of a sequence of two interactions between the moderator and two older participants, taken from a focus group composed of only right-wing participants, and it occurs after 14 minutes of conversation. Prior to extract 1, the moderator explains the game and, as a way to stimulate the discussion, asks the participants if they would have studied the same subject at the university if they had the chance to imagine themselves in another context. When extract 1 is produced, participants are in the process of sharing with the group, one by one, their reactions to the game. Interestingly, the majority of them finish their turns by formulating a brief opinion about Chilean politics, both in the 1970s and the present. Most express some level of dissatisfaction with Chilean politics and politicians in the present. Paulina, an older participant, takes the floor for several minutes. After recounting her family's influence on what she decided to study, she describes herself as someone who "does not like engaging in politics" and subsequently makes a statement about corruption in Chilean politics today. Only Marcela, another older participant, and Dario, a younger participant, are left without having the opportunity to share their opinion.

The extract is divided into two interactions. The analysis of the first interaction reveals how participants treat politics as a controversial and even dangerous topic. This is implied through the employment of an image of the participants "wearing gloves", which is reformulated later as "wearing boxing gloves". The image of gloves is brought to the conversation by Jose and Paulina, both older participants, after the latter criticizes current Chilean politics. It is important to point out that initially, the participants were unaware of the political leanings of the other focus group participants. The only information the participants were given when they were invited to join a focus group was that the content of the conversation would be used for research purposes which were vaguely framed as how Chileans address current political issues. In this sense, "the boxing setting" as a metaphorical image of how participants see what they are being asked to do during the focus group meeting – to play the game, to talk about the past and the past's salience today – suggests that, from the very beginning of the talk, participants prepare themselves for a discursive competition between rival positions.

On the other hand, the analysis of the second interaction focuses on how participants describe the events of the early 1970s as a sort of heroic saga in which Chilean society divided between those who “defended the country” and those who, implicitly, were responsible for the war-like environment that characterized the pre-coup period, according to the participants. In this way, participants recount the past through displaying their understanding of *polarisation as an underlying social dynamic*, the roots of which are found in the “extreme nature” of the socio-political events Chileans faced during that period of time.

A significant consequence of the shaping of the past as an extraordinary period of time is brought to the talk by Paulina. In the context of a polarised past, being viewed as a “protagonist” of such a past represents an important source of legitimacy for producing accounts about it. Hence, participants attempt to establish strict criteria for being considered protagonists. After the display of the “wearing boxing gloves” image, they actively negotiate who will take the floor next. It is Marcela who continues, sharing with the group her memories of the early 1970s. She connects her experience as a student with the political ambience prior to the coup d’état, in which she describes how she often participated in political activities with the aim of weakening the Allende government. Then Paulina engages in a sort of competition with Marcela in order to also be included in the narrative of the past, in which it seems as if everybody should have participated in political activities. This narrative includes descriptions of dangerous situations which serve to enhance the sense of the past as a polarised period. **Extract 2**, taken from a focus group composed only of left-wing participants, provides further evidence of the attempt to narrow the category of “protagonist of the past” in a diverse interactional settings.

Extract 1a: Original transcription in Spanish (R1/14:05 – 15:43)*

1 PAULINA o sea la verdad es que no estoy de acuerdo en muchas
2 cosas (.) actuales (0.4) y no quie- no voy a seguir
3 más heh heh heh heh heh
4 ((risas de todos))
5 XIMENA bueno después damos otra vuelta y la idea es que
6 PAULINA Lno:: por supuesto::
7 XIMENA ustedes rempiecen a conversar entre ustedes también
8 PAULINA Lque todos que todos conversemos
9 entre nosotros (.) claro
10 (0.2)
11 JOSE <que nos pongamos los guantes> heh heh heh
12 ((risas de todos))
13 PAULINA los guantes de rbox
14 MARCELA Lclaro heh heh heh
15 (0.4)
16 XIMENA >y los demás?<
17 MARCELA °quién sigue?°=
18 XIMENA =no rse
19 MARCELA Lsigo yo?
20 XIMENA dale
21 PAULINA heh heh heh heh
22 MARCELA a ver si haría lo mismo? sí (.) yo estudié una

* In every extract headline there is this code "R1/14:05 – 15:43" which indicates the focus group from which the extract is taken, in this case R1 (first Focus Group composed only of right-wing participants), and the minutes and seconds the extract corresponds in the audio file, in this case, from 14 minutes and 5 seconds to 15 minutes and 43 seconds.
For transcriptions symbols see Appendix A: Conversation Analysis Transcription Notation.

Extract 1a: English translation

- 1 PAULINA I mean the truth is that I don't agree with many
2 current (.) things (0.4) and I don't wan- I won't keep
3 going heh heh heh heh heh
4 ((general laughter))
5 XIMENA well later we'll come back around and the idea is
6 PAULINA Lno of course
7 XIMENA that you start talking among yourselves as well
8 PAULINA Lthat everybody that everybody talks J
9 among ourselves (.) right
10 (0.2)
11 JOSE <that we put on the gloves> heh heh heh
12 ((general laughter))
13 PAULINA the boxing gloves
14 MARCELA Lright heh heh heh
15 (0.4)
16 XIMENA >anyone else?<
17 MARCELA °who's next?°=
18 XIMENA =I don't know
19 MARCELA Lshould I go?
20 XIMENA go ahead
21 PAULINA heh heh heh heh
22 MARCELA let's see if I would do the same? (.) yes I studied a

For the purpose of the analysis, the relevant lines here are 11 and 13, where Jose introduces the image of wearing gloves, which is taken up by Paulina who adds, "los guantes de box/the boxing gloves". Note how this is articulated by participants in a collaborative way, amid laughter in lines 3, 4, 11, 14 and 21. The complaint about political corruption (which is not included in the transcription) Paulina made prior to this extract finishes with a general statement that she does not agree "con muchas cosas actuales/with many current things" in lines 1 and 2, and is followed by an abrupt end, "no quie- voy a seguir más/I don't wan- I won't keep going". The laughter in line 3 as well as the moderator's utterances in lines 5 and 7 may be understood as a surprised reaction to this abrupt end, which, as indicated by the subsequent statements, suggests that the participants view the conversation as a controversial one.

In line 11, Jose introduces the metaphorical image of “wearing gloves”, implying the delicacy with which political topics should be treated. Gloves may be used for a variety of purposes, including surgical, household, and gardening tasks. What is common to all of these tasks is that by wearing gloves, one is able to perform a task in better conditions than if one do not wear them, that is to say, protecting one’s own hands and, thus, improving the end result. Therefore, it would appear that addressing politics in the Chilean context requires a certain level of protection and preparation for the sake of the discussion as well as for the participants themselves.

The image of the gloves produces laughter once again in lines 11 and 12. What is significant is how this is reformulated as “wearing boxing gloves” in the next turn by Paulina. This sets up a competitive context similar to a boxing ring, indicating that the issues at stake in Chilean politics are, in addition to being delicate, highly controversial and even dangerous. The image implies that in this context, there are at least two competitors fighting to knock out the opponent and win the match. The danger of boxing lies in its objective: to inflict physical damage on the opponent. By invoking a boxing match, the conversation is framed from the beginning of the meeting as a “dangerous game” in which participants are ready to produce their best “punches” (arguments) to attack and “knock out”, if possible, their opponents.

As the interaction continues, Marcela emphasizes that the professional career she studied was a suitable choice. Here, some lines have been omitted since they do not contribute to the current analysis. In those lines, Marcela describes herself as a diligent student during the early 1970s. Prefaced by a “pero/but” in line 23, having described how studious she was, she then adds that she regularly joined “peleas/fights” and “marchas/protests”. In the following lines, Paulina’s reaction in lines 26 and 28 is an indication of her need to be seen as a protagonist similar to Marcela.

Extract 1b: Original transcription in Spanish

22 MARCELA a ver si haría lo mismo? sí (.) yo estudié una
23 carrera: [...] pero sí obviamente yo participé en la
24 época universitaria en en marchas y estaba en todas
25 las peleas y- y: >ahí estaba en todas<=
26 PAULINA =yo al final fui a las marchas=
27 MARCELA =claro=
28 PAULINA =al final fui [pero al principio;
29 MARCELA L y ahí nos arriesgábamos
30 ((golpeando la mesa)) [realmente era un-] fue una
31 PAULINA L si era terrible J
32 MARCELA época muy complicada: y: (.) cuando a muchas de mis
33 amigas las hacían quedarse en la casa no las dejaban
34 ir a la universidad mi papá me mandaba (.) mira tú
35 tienes que ir si la juventud no defiende este país no
36 la defiende nadie (0.3) y nos íbamos co:n haciendo
37 dedo p-que yo vivía fuera de Santiago además ent-
38 tenía que andar (0.2) pero: (.) <fue una época bonita
39 nos unió a muchos;> (.) bueno nos dividió a a varios
40 también en en la época: (.) yo también entré el
41 setenta y dos a la universidad entonces fue: súper
42 complicada: (.) pero estudiaría lo mismo y:: pero
43 talvez me trataría de: de:: buscar otra áreas

Extract 1b: English translation

- 22 MARCELA let's see if I would do the same? (.) yes I studied a
23 profession [...] but yes obviously I participated in my
24 time at the university in in protests and I was in
25 every fight an- and >I was there in every one<=
26 PAULINA =at the end I went to the protests=
27 MARCELA =right=
28 PAULINA =at the end I went rbut at the beginning
29 MARCELA Land there we put ourselves at risk
30 ((knocking the table)) rreally it was a- r very
31 PAULINA Lyes it was so terriblel
32 MARCELA complicated period and (.) when a lot of my friends
33 were forced to stay at home they were not allowed to
34 go to the university my dad told me (.) look you have
35 to go if the young people don't defend this country
36 nobody will (0.3) and we went with hitchhiking
37 because on top of that I lived outside of Santiago so-
38 I had to go (0.2) but <it was a beautiful time which
39 united many of us> (.) well it divided many of us
40 as well at at the time (.) I also got to the
41 university in seventy-two then it was very complicated
42 (.) but I would have studied the same and but maybe I
43 would try to to look for other areas

In line 26, Paulina's reaction to Marcela's account of having actively participated in political activities while a university student in the early 1970s indicates how important it is for Paulina that the others also view her as a protagonist of the past. She has previously stated that she is not actively engaged in politics. However, in line 26 she makes a discursive manoeuvre to include herself as an active participant of the events of the early 1970s. Without delay from line 25 to 26, Paulina states "yo al final fui a las marchas/at the end I went to the protests". The function of Paulina's claim may be seen as way to ensure that the other participants view her accounts of the past as legitimate as those coming from Marcela who, as she states, emphatically "pero si obviamente yo participé... y: >ahí estaba en todas</but yes obviously I participated... >and I was there in every one<". Being "there in every one" enhances Marcela's position as a protagonist of the past, who may then invoke her own experiences as first-hand evidence that her views of the past are credible.

Subsequently, in contrast to “being in every one”, Paulina is able to include herself – at least – as a protagonist who eventually arrived to the scene of the “marchas/protests” held by Allende’s opponents.

Marcela emphasizes the extraordinariness of the the political situation in the past, the results of which are viewed simultaneously as division and unity among Chileans. In lines 29, she states how dangerous it was to be engaged in such “peleas/fights”, which Paulina supports in line 31. It is important to note how Marcela underscores her statement in line 30 by banging her hand on the table, a non-verbal tool for attracting and maintaining the audience’s attention. In addition, in lines 32 to 37, Marcela employs a reported speech, a description of the early 1970s conflict through her father’s words, to enhance her point about the extraordinariness of the past.

Greg Myers’ (2004) work on how participants engage in talk-in-interaction in focus group conversations analyzes how reported speech is used in the particular context of producing opinions about controversial topics with a group of strangers. He suggests that participants may employ other voices to make an argument rhetorically effective. In Myers’ terms, “the participants assume the existence of opposing views and use reported speech to dramatise, shift, or reinforce a view, or to bring out the tensions between views” (p.137)⁴¹.

In this case, Marcela’s use of reported speech suggests that she detaches herself from what she is saying – these are not her words but her father’s – yet at the same time she attaches herself to her family by invoking family relationships. She introduces the reported speech to the talk as evidence of her argument, in the context of telling a story to an audience in which participants were not present when Marcela’s father would have uttered the phrase “mira tú tienes que ir si la juventud no defiende este

⁴¹ Myers (2004) underscores four main points about the rhetorical uses of reported speech, following a notion in which reported speech are seen as demonstration, as doing and not just telling: 1) The “*situation* is always shifted (...); the act of reporting separates here and now from there and then”. 2) “*Participant role* can be opened up or complicated by reported speech”. 3) “The *act* of speaking can be transformed, so that participants focus on the way it was said, as well as what was said”. 4) “Shifts of *key* are most obvious when participants suspend the assumption of factuality and offer hypothetical reports (...). But there is also a shift in key when they offer a report as evidence to support an argument”. (pp. 155-156). For a further complementary and exhausted view on the uses of reported speeches see Cliff and Holt (2006).

país no la defiende nadie/look you have to go if the young people don't defend this country nobody will". In doing so, Marcela is asking the listeners to share her and her family's concerns about the past, "drawing on the way reported speeches can give those in my [her] audience the direct experience of my [her] response of shock or delight or unease or whatever" (Myers, 2004:143). Therefore, it is possible to appreciate that the description of the early 1970s presented by Marcela may be controversial; this implies that she is anticipating opposing views. In fact, as she continues, Marcela makes a comparison between herself and her friends: while they were protected by their parents, she was urged by her father to "defender este país/defend this country" against opposing political forces. Marcela subtly presents herself and her family as willing to put the country's well-being before their convenience despite the potential dangers. In her account, Chilean society needed to be defended against a serious menace and young people in particular had an obligation to do their part, attributing to the early 1970's a war-like environment.

Finally, in lines 38, 39 and 40, Marcela reflects on how the recent political past has divided Chilean people. She has said how "muy complica:/very complicated" the period was, in line 32 as a preface to the reported speech, and reformulates this period as the year 1972 in line 41. She adds a brief anecdote about hitchhiking (lines 35 to 37), as an example of how complex the situation was; the implication is that this was a chaotic time in which public transportation was not available. Then there is a "pero:/but" in line 38 prolonging the vowel, and taking her time, she states how "beautiful" that time was for people like her with whom she felt a common sense of purpose. But at the same time, Marcela affirms that while the two opposing groups experienced internal cohesion and unity, the differences between them became more profound. It could be argued that this understanding of the pre-coup period as a beautiful time underscores how this period is seen as extraordinary.

In a certain sense, the early 1970s in Chile are shaped by Marcela as a heroic saga (the country needed to be defended, public well-being was considered more important than individual well-being, for instance). Where there are heroes, there are villains as well. Therefore, in the participants' understanding, the discussion about the past is also linked to ethical and moral issues with regard to what were the adequate or correct actions to follow in order to resolve the conflict. In the utterance

“if the young people don’t defend this country, nobody will” (lines 35 and 36), what is noticeable is the use of “nobody”, an Extreme Formulation Case⁴². By including the “nobody” in the reported speech, Marcela is subtly arguing for the value of her actions and the position she undertook in the past (“to defend the country” was the correct thing to do), and simultaneously she is attempting to prevent counter-arguments (Pomerantz, 1986).

It is important now to return to Paulina’s reaction in line 26 “yo al final fui a las marchas/at the end I went to the protests”. Individual participation in the events of the past is characterized largely as a social matter, in terms of having participated with other people in actions such as the “marchas/protests”. From Marcela’s statements, this “marchas/protests” implied risking one’s safety in the streets and confronting the “other”, which are elements that feed the sense that the past was extraordinary. The “heroicism” attributed to the past stimulates participants to articulate personal accounts so as to include themselves in those events. Individual contributions are highlighted to the extent of producing a kind of competition between the speakers as to whose participation was more direct. This competition to determine who should be considered a valid protagonist also suggests how participants attempt to maintain exclusivity for the protagonist category. This indicates that the issue of who is qualified to provide valid and/or accurate descriptions and opinions of the past is a sensitive one.

Thus, being a “protagonist” or having directly experienced the events of the past is considered by many participants, particularly the older ones, to be a source of legitimacy. **Extract 2**, taken from another focus group composed only of left-wing participants, also provides evidence of this discursive aspect of describing the past. Among the older participants, no one wants to be marginalized during this extraordinary moment in Chilean history.

⁴² According to Anita Pomerantz (1986) Extreme Case Formulations (superlative terms such as *all*, *none*, *most*, *every*, etc.) are often used: 1) to assert the stronger case in anticipation of non-sympathetic hearings, thereby reinforcing a complaint’s legitimacy and preventing counter-arguments; 2) to attribute a phenomenon to “the object”, thus making “the object” responsible for behaviours *as a reaction to* “the object” rather than a product of human agency; and 3) to argue for the rightness and/or wrongness of a given practice, “by virtue of its status as frequently occurring or commonly done” (p. 220).

The participants in this second focus group have been talking for more than an hour when this particular interaction is produced. Dora, an older participant, has already told the group that she was very actively engaged in politics during the Allende government, adding that after the coup d'état she was imprisoned and tortured. On the other hand, Gaston has shared his memories of the pre- and post-coup periods (see Gaston's version of the pre-coup period in the Prelude), through displaying a *dialogical construction of temporality*, which, as this research shows (in the second analytical chapter), is one of the devices for constructing *polarisation as a discursive practice*. As the participants recount the past, they display their political alignment with one of the two mutually exclusive positions of the Chilean Memory Debate. Dora's account of the past also follows this pattern through which participants actively recognize each other as part of the same group. The younger participants of this focus group have also (directly or indirectly) shown the same alignment as the older participants with respect to the debate.

This particular interaction takes place when Dora is recalling how her engagement in political activities in the past generated difficulties in her relationship with her father, but her brothers respected and defended her political commitments. This is when the moderator asks "y como era eso?/and how was that?" which produces Dora's response, including her query to Gaston (the only other older participant in the group) about whether he remembers a particular "marcha/protest".

Extract 2: Original Transcription in Spanish (L1/1:13:50-1:14:25)

- 1 XIMENA y cómo era eso?
2 DORA e:h yo tenía una relación terriblemente todo lo que
3 fue el setenta y uno setenta y dos (.) e:h (.) yo me
4 metí en este grupo de izquie:rda iba a pintar
5 mura:llas participaba en ma:rchas fui a a a
6 marchar por unos argentinos que trajeron
7 te acuerdas? no tu erai muy chico!
8 ʔe::h por los argentinos
9 GASTON ʔno si yo también estaba en el centro en esa época!
10 (.) heh mm
11 DORA e:h yo yo marchaba yo hacía ʔtodas esas cosas!
12 GASTON ʔya!
13 DORA entonce:s e:h yo tenía una relación muy conflictiva
14 con mi papá muy conflictiva porque yo era su hija
15 mayor!

Extract 2: English Translation

- 1 XIMENA and how was that?
2 DORA um I had a terrible relationship with all of what
3 was seventy-one and seventy-two (.) um (.) I
4 joined this leftist group I used to go to paint
5 walls I participated in protests I went to to to
6 protest for some Argentineans who they brought
7 do you remember? no you were too little
8 ʔum for the Argentineans
9 GASTON ʔno I also was in the centre at that time
10 (.) heh mm
11 DORA um I I protested I used to do ʔall these things
12 GASTON ʔokay
13 DORA then um I had a very conflictive relationship
14 with my dad very conflictive because I was his eldest
15 daughter

Dora presents herself as a member of a left-wing political organization, and therefore a protagonist of the events of the early 1970s. In lines 4 to 6, she describes how she participated in protests and painted graffiti. In line 7, she makes a direct challenge to Gaston by asking if he remembers this specific protest, which is a detail in the

context of her story. Dora does not allow Gaston to answer her challenge and rapidly dismisses him by answering herself. Dora's question could have been a rhetorical device for stressing her point, such that she is not actually seeking an answer from Gaston, nor intending to answer it herself. Or, it could have been simply a way to include Gaston in her story, since they are both older participants in this focus group. However, Dora does something quite interesting, which is to imply that even a small age difference is relevant in this debate. Moreover, when she states in line 7 "no, tu erai muy chico/no, you were too little", Dora directly disqualifies Gaston with the use of "chico/little", an adjective commonly used to describe children. Rather than describing him as "chico/little", Dora could have said that Gaston was too "young" ("joven" in Spanish). By likening him to a child, she disqualifies any contribution he could have made. In this respect, it seems that to be considered a protagonist of past events, one has to meet very specific criteria. Dora, then, presents herself as someone who has a more legitimate opinion about the past because her involvement is rhetorically articulated as more significant than Gaston's.

In both extracts 1 and 2, therefore, it is possible to appreciate how participants discursively attempt to present themselves as protagonists or active participants of the general socio-political conflict in the early 1970s. This is performed in a communicational context in which extraordinariness is attributed to the past, in extracts taken from focus groups composed solely of right-wing or left-wing participants. Similar interactions were also found in focus groups composed equally of right- and left-wing participants.

In extract 1, Marcela produces her understanding of how Chileans became sharply divided or, in the terminology offered in this research, her understanding of *polarisation as an underlying social dynamic* which began in the past. The urgency for "defending the country" from severe threats, as expressed in her father's reported speech, is offered as evidence of the seriousness of the conflict that led to the political division of Chilean society. That is to say, *polarisation as an underlying social dynamic* from participants' perspective is justified due to the extreme problems people faced in the past, which in turn accounts for the extraordinary and heroic character of the past.

Describing the pre-coup period by invoking polarisation contributes to this portrayal of the past as an extraordinary period. This generates for participants themselves a practical consequence of having to set strict criteria for who can be considered a proper protagonist of it. Marcela and Dora meet the requirements through the display of memories. The pre-coup period seems to hold a special place in their memories, which is indicated by the unusual actions they describe.

From the analysis of the second part of extract 1 (and extract 2), it becomes clearer why in the first part of extract 1, participants treat political issues in the Chilean context as controversial, delicate and even hazardous. The frame of the conversation as a “dangerous game” (the boxing ring) allows Marcela to state her view of the early 1970s as a “risky” period, which is in turn, offered as an account of *polarisation as an underlying social dynamic*. If in Chile the political past is seen as a polarised era, then it is understandable why participants interact defensively during the first minutes of conversation, particularly if they have not been able yet to determine the political leanings of each participant. This is what is made explicit by the suggestion of wearing gloves so that the conversation may carry on.

4.3 Polarisation as an unavoidable source of conflict in the past

Extract 3 is taken from a focus group composed only of left-wing participants and is produced after 30 minutes of discussion. During the first half an hour, the participants identify one another as belonging to the same side of the debate. This is evident from interactions where the participants discursively construct a common temporal frame to distinguish the pre- and post-coup d'état periods, describing the first as a period of hope and social mobilization, while the second is viewed as a time of rupture, fear and repression. Older participants describe the negative impacts of the military coup on their everyday life, while younger participants express the belief that if they had been present at the time of the coup, they would have suffered in similar ways. The construction of time periods is analyzed as one of the devices for shaping *polarisation as a discursive practice* in the second analytical chapter, in terms of how *through the dialogical construction of temporality*, participants contribute to the maintenance of polarisation. For now, what is important to point out is that participants in this particular focus group have already collaboratively

contributed, in various ways, to establishing a common perspective about the recent past.

Another important element of the discussion prior to this extract is that the participants express dissatisfaction with the current political situation in Chile. Many participants claim that the current political context lacks movements that could bring society together, as they believe politics used to do in the past. They express displeasure with a society they view as individualistic and competitive on the one hand; on the other hand, they value the increased focus on one's personal life compared to a past dominated by political and collective issues. However, statements of dissatisfaction with the present in comparison to the past ("politics are not what they used to be"; "in the past we were much more supportive of each other") are not at all exclusive to this particular focus group. Such statements are made in almost every focus group, across the various interactional settings in which the data were produced. However, the reasons cited for dissatisfaction differ significantly, as they are part of the Chilean Memory Debate itself. Those on the left tend to blame the Pinochet regime, at least partially, for what they describe as the negative state of politics in Chile today. Conversely, those on the right believe that the coalition which has governed since 1990 (*Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia* or simply, the *Concertación*) is responsible for the general negative attitude towards politics in Chile now. For them, a key problem is that the *Concertación* does not correctly value the central role of the Pinochet regime in recent Chilean history.

Extract 3, which is divided into three parts due to its length, reveals many interesting details about how participants from the political left account for polarisation as both a cause and consequence of the coup d'état. In addition, psychological notions such as rancour and anger, expressed with the help of several Extreme Cases Formulations (ECFs), are offered by those participants to provide a picture of *polarisation as an unavoidable source of conflict*. At the same time, participants present their recognition and acknowledgment of the pervasiveness of *polarisation as an underlying social dynamic* of Chilean society.

The interaction analyzed here begins immediately after Graciela, an older participant, states that she dislikes the way Chilean politicians govern today, which she believes

they do without encouraging citizen participation. She ironically states that this style of governing, although it takes place "in a democracy", is somehow due to the military having been in power for 17 years. In response, Raul, a younger participant, searches for the causes of the military's rise to power, which he considers to have been an "extreme situation". He prefaces his analysis (not included in this excerpt) by describing himself as a member of a different generation than Graciela.

Extract 3a: Original transcription in Spanish (L2/ 35:20- 36:15)

- 1 RAUL ... pero se llegó a ese extremo por algo
2 no no- no- es (0.8) tengo tengo la la- la-
3 sensación de que (0.4) que (.) ese ese punto de
4 inflexión en la sociedad chilena; (0.4) eh fue causado
5 por un montón de factores y que no que no-
6 que toda la sociedad (0.3) que vivió en esa época;
7 y que tenía cierta edad; para influir (0.4) o tenía
8 poder para influir; (0.7) con- confluyó para que
9 ocurriera eso;=
10 GRACIELA =claro por; que ahí ()
11 RAUL Ltodo el mundo (.) de izquierda; de derecha;
12 de centro; todos
13 PAMELA (no todos)
14 GRACIELA ;no claro por supuesto
15 RAUL Ltoda la sociedad chilena=
16 GRACIELA =porque nadie buscó una salida política sino que
17 querían una salida así (0.6) e::h (0.8) como
18 dice:n eficiente; al tiro al tiro entonces >unos con
19 los milicos otros contra los milicos< (0.5) y- y
20 bueno se partió la sociedad chilena (0.6) deberíamos
21 haber (0.2) podido seguir evolucionando y
22 hubo momentos de salida política y no se: y no se
23 tomaro:n (0.3) porque también nosotros si no
24 participábamos tanto (0.7) era un poquito más que
25 votar; (.) no era mucho más
26 ((risas de todos))

Extract 3a: English translation

- 1 RAUL ... but that extreme was reached because of something
2 no no- no it isn't (0.8) I have I have the the- the
3 feeling that (0.4) that (.) that that inflexion
4 point in Chilean society (0.4) um was caused
5 by a lot of factors and that it wasn't it wasn't-
6 that the whole society (0.3) who lived at that time
7 and who were of a given age to influence (0.4) or had
8 power to influence (0.7) con- converged so
9 that would happen=
10 GRACIELA =right be_rcause there ()
11 RAUL Leverybody (.) from the left from the right
12 from the centre everybody
13 PAMELA (no everybody)
14 GRACIELA _rno right of course
15 RAUL Lall the Chilean society=
16 GRACIELA =because nobody looked for a political way out instead
17 they wanted a way out like (0.6) um (0.8) as they say
18 efficient right now right now then >some with
19 the *milicos* others against the *milicos*< (0.5) and- and
20 well the Chilean society was split (0.6) we should
21 have (0.2) been able to continue evolving and there
22 were moments of political way out and they weren't and
23 they weren't taken (0.3) because we also we didn't
24 participate too much (0.7) it was a little bit more
25 than voting (.) it wasn't much more
26 ((everybody laughing))

Searching for the causes of the “extreme” situation (the military’s rise to power) does not seem to be an easy task for Raul, as he hesitates frequently in lines 2 and 5. In addition, he starts with a “pero/but”, indicating his discrepancy with what has just been suggested by Graciela. In line 2, the utterance “no no- no- es/no no- no- it isn’t” corresponds to the first part of a negative formulation: “it is not A, it is B”. Nevertheless, Raul does not complete his utterance. Instead, he continues with “tengo la sensación de que/I have the feeling that”, which according to Latour and

Wolgar (1986) corresponds to a lower level of modalization⁴³ in terms of constructing the factuality of a claim, the consequence of which is a decrease in the strength of Raul's argument. The speaker is no longer describing a situation as such, but is presenting his description as a psychological product of his subjectivity – a feeling.

But even then, Raul does not complete his utterance “y que no que no-/ and that it wasn't it wasn't-” in line 5. He has tried twice to affirm the inadequacy of some other explanation which is left unsaid, presumably one that was implied in Graciela's previous turn. In this case, “the unsaid” could be explained in terms of Raul searching for the precise words (and not finding them) when referring to a highly controversial topic, but also in terms of how he faces the dilemma of wanting to disagree but at the same time wanting to keep the talk going (Pomerantz, 1984). In the end, Raul seems to prefer an indirect way of stating his point of view, rather than confronting the other participants directly.

Thereafter, the participants' utterances display several instances of Extreme Case Formulations (ECFs), in lines 6, 11, 13, 15 and 16. ECFs, initially studied by Ana Pomerantz (1986) and complemented by research by Derek Edwards (2000), are defined as the use of superlative terms such as *all*, *none*, *most*, *every*, and similar terms, designed to rhetorically defend or justify a given description or assessment, particularly in contexts of debate. Pomerantz explores three ways in which ECFs are used: 1) to assert the stronger case in anticipation of non-sympathetic hearings, thereby reinforcing a complaint's legitimacy and preventing counter-arguments; 2) to treat a phenomenon as an “object”, thus making the “object” responsible for behaviours *as a reaction to* the “object” rather than a product of human agency; and 3) to argue for the rightness and/or wrongness of a given practice, “by virtue of its status as frequently occurring or commonly done” (Pomerantz, 1986: 220). From Edwards' perspective, Pomerantz's contribution might be enriched by the

⁴³ Latour and Wolgar (1986) have suggested a hierarchal continuum organized in progressive modalizations for understanding how people discursively deal with the construction of facts and reality (Edwards & Potter, 1992; Potter, 1996). “At one end of the continuum, statements are made highly contingent on the mental processes and desires of the speaker, while on the other they become so commonplace that they do not even need to be formulated; they are simply assumed” (Edwards & Potter, 1992: 105-106)

consideration also of how participants orient to the extremity of ECFs, that is to say, analyzing how participants deal with the interactional effects driven by ECFs. In this regard, Edwards argues that often ECFs are followed by softeners which are produced, for instance, as self-repair, since ECFs can be easily refuted by invoking a single exception. This invites ECFs to be understood by participants as nonliteral and “as an index of the speaker’s attitude (subjectivity) rather than a straightforward description of the world” (Edwards, 2000: 352). This leads to Edwards’ second point, that ECFs are also evidence of a speaker’s stake in certain ideas, given that “ECFs also occur in affiliative sequences, as upgrades and displays of affiliation *being done*” (Edwards, 2000: 360). However, the uses of softeners are not as extensive as one would expect because ECFs may be in principle hearable as “nonliteral, performative or indexical of investment – that is, offered and received as something other than accountably accurate proposals about the world” (Edwards, 2000: 369).

In extract 3a, the patterns that both Pomerantz and Edwards suggest regarding the uses of ECFs are valuable for the analysis of how participants in this particular focus group address agreement and disagreement, providing evidence that the topic under discussion is viewed as challenging and controversial by the participants themselves. In other words, the use of several ECFs indicates that what the participants are doing is engaging in a debate.

In fact, between lines 6 and 9, Raul first produces an ECF: “toda la sociedad/the whole society”, and subsequently introduces a softener, reformulating the portion of the whole society he is referring to as those who were old enough to have been there or, as he immediately thereafter states, those who had enough power to influence events. To make it appear as if society as a whole is responsible for its history could be viewed as a commonplace and abstract claim. However, the kind of softener Raul has introduced in terms of blaming a particular generational group, such as the one Graciela, Pamela and Francisco (the other middle-aged participant who does not an active role in this extract) belong to, is a complicated claim to deal with for both the person who states it and the listeners. Thus, in the following lines, Graciela (“claro.../right...” in line 10 and “no, claro, por supuesto/no, right, of course” in line 14) and Pamela (using an ECF once again, “no todos/not everybody” in line 13) complacently agree with Raul, producing second part assessments (Pomerantz,

1984), which gives the floor to Raul to insist on his point. In line 11, he first says “todo el mundo/everybody”, followed by a new specification, which covers every possibility of the political spectrum as it is commonly understood (“de izquierda↓ de derecha↓ de centro↓/ from the left from the right from the centre”) and finishes with the conclusive term “todos/everybody”. Here, it is possible to appreciate, just as Edwards (2000) has described, how ECFs tend to be repeated and rephrased, enhancing their rhetorical effects in order to build consensus among the group of participants. This search for consensus is also achieved by the display of the three-part list in lines 11 and 12, which according to Edwards and Potter (1992) “has been shown to be rhetorically important in discourse as varied as political speeches, courtroom dialogue and everyday talk” (p.111). Three-part lists (including the one taken from Edwards and Potter themselves) have the rhetorical effect of reinforcing the completeness of the unit described, since three components are commonly understood to be sufficient for a comprehensive description.

In response to Raul, in line 16 Graciela formulates an account of the coup d'état, first describing it as the result of a lack of political will in Chile, once again with the help of ECF (“nadie buscó una salida política/nobody looked for a political way out”). The implication is that what prevailed was what others preferred (not Graciela), subtly attributing the coup d'état to an opposing group. This way of introducing “the other” is done in line 17 through referring to the way out *they* wanted, and in line 18 through referring to how *they* say the solution was efficient.

At this point, polarisation is introduced by Graciela as a consequence of the coup d'état. According to her, polarisation is due solely to the role of the military, which is the axis dividing Chilean society into two mutually exclusive positions; that is, people became polarised *after* and *because of* the military intervention. In lines 18 and 19, Graciela accelerates her talk (>unos con los milicos otros contra los milicos</ >some with the *milicos* others against the *milicos*<) and after a 0.5-second pause, some hesitations and a “bueno/well”, polarisation is rhetorically articulated, through the use of the passive voice, as a comprehensible and logical consequence. It is important to note how there is no mention of other possibilities, such as people not identifying with one of the two main positions. From the rhetorical articulation of this binary logic, it is possible to argue that polarisation is presented as a powerful

underlying social dynamic whose effects were practically impossible to avoid in terms of alignment with one of the two mutually exclusive ideological groups.

Graciela continues by formulating a claim that polarisation challenged an evolving process in course at that time, when she states in lines 20 and 21 that “deberíamos haber (0.2) podido seguir evolucionando/we should have (0.2) been able to continue evolving”. What is implied by Graciela is that prior to the military intervention, Chilean society was involved in a valuable socio-political process which should have been defended, as she states this moral imperative (“deberíamos haber podido/we should have been able to”), although a political solution was not what ultimately occurred.

It is interesting to note, on the one hand, how “political solutions” are described in opposition to the military intervention, as if the latter were not understood in political terms. On the other hand, it is also remarkable that polarisation is viewed as an attempt against an evolving political process of which, by implication, Graciela was an adherent or sympathizer. In stating this, Graciela aligns herself with one of the two political groups. In this respect, Graciela’s display of the “nadie buscó una salida política/nobody looked for a political way out” ECF might be seen as evidence of her own investment in the position of rejecting the coup d’état. In other words, this ECF may be considered by the other participants as well as by the analyst as a signal of “*indexing the speaker’s stance or attitude*” (Edwards, 2000: 363). This analysis could be applied as well to Raul’s and Pamela’s stances since they also participate in the escalating affiliative assessments in lines 10 to 16.

In line 23 (and several other lines not included in the transcription), Graciela orients to account for her own responsibility as a member of the group “against the *milicos*”; that is, those who supported Allende’s government. She refers to her participation in the events as “un poquito más que votar/a little bit more than voting”, which produces everybody’s laughter. The other participants start laughing first and then, although Graciela subtly joins them, she attempts to continue talking. In this case, following the contribution of Gail Jefferson’s (1984) research, the laughing, despite its general indication of trouble-talk, can also be seen as a sign of complicity among

the participants in the sense that they all share the same understanding that Graciela is implying with respect to the political context during the Allende government.

Therefore, from several features of the details analyzed in extract 3a (the display of ECFs and the final laughter, for instance), we are given an indication of how sensitive it is for the participants themselves to engage in conversation about the search for the "causes" of the coup d'état. Graciela's suggestion in lines 23 to 25, which attributes blame and responsibility to those who were more involved than she was in the key decisions affecting the country, is picked up by Raul a few seconds later.

Extract 3b: Original transcription in Spanish (L2/ 36:30-36:45)

27 RAUL o las cúpulas de poder tenían, no se: ɾm-
 28 GRACIELA LCLARO
 29 pero si tenían muchas muchas presiones por lado y
 30 ɾlado
 31 RAUL Lo muchos rencores hubo de ɾesa clase política
 32 GRACIELA Lclaro claro
 33 (0.5)
 34 RAUL ɾque fueron imperdonables ɾ
 35 GRACIELA Lnos cegamos nos cegamos todos los chilenos-ɾ
 36 (0.6)
 37 GRACIELA bastaba con que fuera del otro ladoɾ
 38 (0.8) pa más a menos que (0.2) agarrase a puñetes
 39 (0.4)
 40 RAUL °claro°
 41 (0.3)

Extract 3b: English translation

- 27 RAUL or the power leadership they had I don't know _{pm-}
28 GRACIELA _{LOF}
29 COURSE they had many many pressure from side to
30 _{rside}
31 RAUL _Lor there was a lot of rancour in _rthat political class
32 GRACIELA _Lright right
33 (0.5)
34 RAUL _rwhich were unforgivable _r
35 GRACIELA _Lwe were blinded we were blinded all the Chileans _J
36 (0.6)
37 GRACIELA it was enough that someone was from the other side
38 (0.8) to more or less (0.2) punch each other
39 (0.4)
40 RAUL °right°
41 (0.3)

Two elements of extract 3b are relevant for the analysis of how participants account for the high degree of polarisation reached in the past. First, concerning who might be responsible for polarisation, there is an oscillation in Raul and Graciela's utterances between blaming those in powerful positions versus Chilean society as a whole, displaying an ECF "todos los chilenos/all the Chileans" in line 35. Second, concerning the nature of the process that produced polarisation, participants also display two complementary argumentative options: on the one hand, political arguments (pressures on the leadership of both sides of the debate) and on the other hand, emotional arguments (rancour which was felt by members of the political leadership as well as regular citizens).

In line 29, Graciela states that the main reason for the lack of dialogue that could have prevented the coup d'état were the many (emphasizing "many") pressures each side had to contend with; she implies that both political positions defended their own interests and internal balance without regard for the country's well-being. Therefore, in a sense, she is claiming that these two mutually exclusive groups in the past were internally less homogenous than how they are often portrayed today. Graciela's point is articulated through the use of political arguments (conflicts, interests, dialogue and

negotiation) and, according to her previous utterances, the “extreme” situation should have been prevented and resolved through political means.

In lines 31 and 34, Raul suggests an alternative to Graciela’s account. According to him, the reasons for the coup d’état were also emotional. He states that in the past, there was a high degree of rancour among politicians, which is also supported by Graciela twice in line 32 (“claro/right”). A few seconds later, Raul qualifies these rancours as unforgivable, i.e., he attributes a deeper emotional level to them. Such unforgivable rancour can thus be understood as the key obstacle or element preventing politicians from engaging in dialogue in the past.

Raul, in describing this notion of deep and persistent feelings of anger in the past (and presumably in the present as well, since they are viewed as “unforgivable”), has shifted the search for causes of the coup d’état that Graciela had suggested from political to emotional ones. It could be argued that the implications for managing accountability are different if political or emotional arguments are invoked; once the arena of discussion has moved from the political to the emotional, the arguments become much less well-defined and flexible in terms of assigning responsibility. As Edwards (1997) has shown, emotional talk is, in some cases, displayed as accounting for or causing subsequent actions and events, providing evidence of how participants treat emotions as an explanatory resource.

In line 35, overlapping with Raul and thus moving toward agreement, Graciela takes up the emotional argument on rancour and expands on its harmful effects, not only for politicians but for all Chileans. By repeating twice “nos cegamos/we were blinded”, she enhances her description of the effects of hostility as blindness, a powerful image or metaphor with multiple implications regarding how Graciela addresses her own accountability as a witness to events, as well as how she describes a society in which opposing political tendencies have coexisted with great difficulty in the past.

It is important to note how Graciela, by displaying an ECF once more (“nos cegamos todos los chilenos/we were blinded all the Chileans”), contributes to the construction of polarisation as an “object” rather than a relational and discursive phenomenon in

which human agency plays a part. When polarisation is referred to as an “object”, the phenomenon is treated as an external cause or mechanism responsible for the inability to see certain things; the function of this understanding of *polarisation as an underlying social dynamic* is to justify the contribution of those individuals who acted in a polarised fashion. “Todos los Chilenos/all the Chileans” is a Maximum Case Proportional Measure (Pomerantz, 1986) with respect to the unit “Chileans” or “society”; that is, all possible cases are included in this category. In Pomerantz’s words, “‘Everyone’ is a device for attributing the cause of the problem to the object” (p. 224) and forms part of the displayed strategies in Pomerantz’s second suggested use of ECFs.

On the other hand, the utterance “nos cegamos todos los chilenos/we were blinded all the Chileans” might also be subject to a non-literal reading. The blindness caused by extreme emotions led historically to the inability of all Chileans to see and understand clearly the events that were unfolding. Nevertheless, this literal interpretation, in terms of people being unable to see “events as they were” as if no one had access to “reality”, may appear too crudely impossible, and thus invites being understood as “doing non-literal” (Edwards, 2000). As a result, a second interpretation, in which it is *as if* each person witnessed a *unique* reality, sounds more plausible. If individuals were unable to see events in the *same* way, then they cannot be held responsible for the consequences of their actions, in particular for not having prevented the coup d’état as a final result. This perspective reinforces what has been already analyzed in lines 18 and 19 (“>unos con los milicos otros contra los milicos</>some with the *milicos* others against the *milicos*<“) in terms of how polarisation is presented as if in the past it was an unavoidable phenomenon, but line 35 adds something new. If blindness characterized all Chileans in the past, whether they sympathized with the military or not, this has two significant implications: 1) polarisation is treated as the object responsible for people’s behaviour; and 2) there is an attempt to normalize polarisation as a regular characteristic of behaviour or social practice in the past. By claiming that “todos/all” Chileans were subject to polarisation’s effects, the participants are managing accountability, distributing blame to both sides of the debate in such a way that, finally, neither group is considered more responsible for how the events unfolded.

In line 37, after a 0.6-second pause, Graciela introduces another element which also contributes to depicting Chileans in the past as acting highly inappropriately. In addition to turning a blind eye to events, people are characterized as tending toward overreaction, even to the point of physically hurting one another because of their political disagreements. By implication, the “enemy” was anyone who did not share the same position or interpretation of the events that were occurring.

After line 41, Graciela recounts a story (not included in the transcription) in which she presents herself as “someone who didn’t have any power”. In other words, in Graciela’s view, because she was not involved in events to the extent that politicians (or politically involved citizens) were, it was possible for her to have friends from the extreme left and the centre⁴⁴ of the political spectrum, prior to and even after the coup d’état. In stating this, on the one hand she portrays herself as free from the influence of polarisation; on the other hand, she discards the possibility of locating the origins of polarisation earlier than the coup d’état. By differentiating herself from politicians, Graciela attempts to increase her distance from the effects of polarisation. Actively disagreeing, Pamela, another middle-aged woman, claims that polarisation was already present during the period from 1970 to 1973, adding that today, the degree of political polarisation in Chile has decreased considerably. Pamela argues that present-day Chilean society is more open to “diversity”, treating this as important evidence that disagreement without polarisation is more possible.

⁴⁴ Graciela refers to her friends who belonged to the Christian Democratic party as representatives of the centre of the political spectrum. During Allende’s government, the Christian Democratic Party was part of the opposition and in fact initially supported the military coup. Nevertheless, by 1974 most important Christian Democrat leaders had declared their opposition to the military regime.

Extract 3c: Original transcription in Spanish (L2/ 38:05-38:40)

42 PAMELA mm hm
43 1.8
44 PAMELA pero- yo tengo la sensación de que (0.3) el setenta y
45 tres el setenta el () todo fue muy muy
46 (0.7) estaban todas las familias divididas y eso no te
47 permitía- (0.2) no te permitía reconocer
48 nada (0.4) y a mí me gustaría ser joven hoy día;
49 (0.4) también por eso porque hoy día es posible
50 reconocer la diversidad; (0.6) antes la diversidad
51 no existía o sea éramos o éramos de acá; o éramos de
52 allá; (0.7) y no te permitía ni siquiera
53 conversar uno de allá con uno de acá
54 (0.3) porque te pegaba;n porque te- (0.6) daba
55 mucha RABIA porque tú te creías poseedor
56 absoluto de la verdad; (0.2) y el otro también se
57 creía poseedor absoluto de la verdad; entonces no
58 había ninguna posibilidad de-
59 diálogo de encontrarse de nada]
60 ¿? [después ()]

Extract 3c: English translation

42 PAMELA mm hm
43 1.8
44 PAMELA but- I have the feeling that (0.3) in seventy-three
45 in seventy the () everything was very very
46 (0.7) every family was divided y this didn't allow
47 you- (0.2) didn't allow you to recognize anything
48 (0.4) and I would like to be young today (0.4) also
49 because of that because today it is possible to
50 recognize diversity (0.6) before diversity did not
51 exist I mean we were either we were from here or we
52 were from there (0.7) and it didn't even allow someone
53 from here to talk with someone from there (0.3)
54 because they punch you because (0.6) it produced much
55 ANGER because you thought you were the absolute
56 holders of the truth (0.2) and the other as well
57 thought he was the absolute holder of the truth then
58 there was no chance at all for-
59 dialogue for encounter of nothing]
60 ? [after ()]

Pamela faces the task of providing a counter-argument to Graciela's previous statement, through a dispreferred structure (Pomerantz, 1984). Assessments of the kind Graciela has just made (stories of dialogue and discussion prior to the coup d'état and of friendship and solidarity with her Christian Democratic friends) are more likely to be followed by second assessments, which preferably express agreement. On the contrary, if the next speaker wishes to disagree, their statements are likely to contain pauses, delays and terms such as "but". This occurs in Pamela's utterance, as she attempts to produce a statement that does not stop the flow of the discussion. In this respect, two unique features are important to emphasize from Pamela's turn.

First, she prefaces her argument by declaring its source to be a "feeling", just as Raul does in the beginning of the extract; that is to say, hearable as coming from a personal or subjective perspective. In this way, she invites her listeners not to take her position as a statement of fact or as an objective description of the past. In doing so, Pamela seeks to prevent potential counter-arguments, which is particularly important considering that she is actively engaged in disagreement talk. Second, she encounters some difficulties in finishing her point while displaying ECFs in line 45, leaving something unsaid with "todo fue muy muy/everything was very very". Until now, Graciela has held the attention of the group and has just implied that polarisation should be understood as a direct consequence of the military coup d'état; thus, Pamela, on the other hand, significantly alters the dynamic of the talk, but she does so carefully. Pamela introduces the opposing argument: that socio-political polarisation may have existed prior to the coup d'état and caused or was symptomatic of a high degree of conflict in Chilean society.

Subsequently, Pamela argues that Chilean society had been deeply polarised prior to 1973. She states in line 46 that "estaban todas las familias divididas/every family was divided". By displaying ECFs just as Graciela had done ("todos los chilenos nos cegamos/we were blinded all the Chileans"), Pamela depicts polarisation as an object responsible for people's behaviour, since it was not an isolated phenomenon but one that was common even within Chilean families. It is important to note that the notion of "divided families" is frequently used by participants in almost all of the focus groups for this research as a rhetorical device to argue for the pervasiveness of

polarisation in the past. In this respect, family, which is understood as an intimate nucleus where relationships are characterized by strong emotional bonds, is vulnerable to polarisation, with negative impacts including deep rifts between brothers and sisters or even parents and children. The effect of this rhetorical device is to reaffirm that polarisation characterized not only the political realm but family life as well. Hence, the notion of “divided families” is also a device used to depict the past as an extreme, intense and difficult period, even in terms of everyday life.

From Pamela’s argument, it is possible to appreciate how polarisation as an explanatory resource to describe past events becomes identifiable, in contrast to the present. According to her, polarisation characterized the past but not the present, and it is from the *present* that she can assert how polarised Chilean society was in the past. In doing so, she also produces a distinction between “then” and “now”, by virtue of the different levels of polarisation that are evident for her in Chilean society.

In the early 1970s, as suggested by Pamela, polarisation had many negative consequences, including a general unwillingness to acknowledge different perspectives and even the negation of the existence of “the other”. It is important to note that Pamela repeats three times (in lines 46, 47 and 52) that polarisation (in her words, “the division”), did not allow people to “reconocer nada/recognize anything” (lines 47 and 48) and “ni siquiera conversar uno de allá con uno de acá/it didn’t even allow someone from here to talk with someone from there” (lines 52 and 53). Pamela emphasizes the power of the division in Chilean society by characterizing it as capable of generating the kind of problems she describes. For her, it was not even possible for individuals with differing perspectives to have a conversation. Thereafter, the division that existed in the past is discursively articulated by Pamela as a latent mechanism, as if it operated on a subconscious level, since polarisation itself did not permit anyone “to recognize anything”. This perspective confirms Graciela’s contribution about blindness. In other words, polarisation had the effect of governing people’s behaviour in situations of everyday life.

With respect to how polarisation did operate, Pamela, like Graciela, relies on emotional arguments. According to Pamela, dialogue was not possible between the

two major positions in the past, because disagreement produced such extreme anger (stated at a higher volume in line 55) as to provoke physical confrontations, similar to Graciela's statement in lines 38 and 39 ("bastaba con que fuera del otro lado↑ (0.8) pa más a menos que (0.2) agarrase a puñetes"/it was enough that someone was from the other side (0.8) to more or less (0.2) punch each other"). But Pamela adds, starting in line 55, a very interesting account of how these extreme levels of anger were produced by each person's absolute conviction that their version of events was the correct one. She asserts, in lines 56 and 57, that both groups ("los de allá y los de acá/those from there and those from here") believed they were "los poseedores absolutos de la verdad"/the absolute holders of the truth". In Pamela's view, in the past Chileans tended to believe there was only one version of the events they were experiencing which could represent accurately the facts; as a result, neither side of the debate allowed space for doubts, critique, and thus, dialogue. Such dialogue or encounter between the two groups would have supposed a process of negotiation about what the truth is, which implies the abandonment of the notion of a unique and absolute truth.

In a final consideration of extract 3c, what stands out is the large number of ECFs exhibited in Pamela's turn ("todos todas and nada/every, all, nothing") in addition to the use of superlative terms such as "not even" (in lines 53, "ni siquiera conversar.../not even to talk...") and "absolute" (uttered twice in lines 56 to 57, "poseedor absoluto de la verdad/the absolute holder of the truth"). All of these ECFs and superlative terms play a central role in constructing Pamela's view on polarisation as a phenomenon that maximized the differences between the two groups. The way Pamela accounts for the relational difficulties in the past, by displaying various extreme rhetorical devices, enables her to treat polarisation as an unavoidable phenomenon such that practically no one could be free of its effects. Thus, despite how regrettable the phenomenon may be in the view of participants, polarisation is justified as a regular and comprehensible practice, while human agency is downplayed or disregarded.

It could be argued that extract 3 is part of talk in which participants are actively engaged in agreeing and disagreeing, evidence of a clear orientation that what they are doing is performing and actualizing a debate. Raul's initial contribution, in terms

of searching for the causes of the “extreme” situation, is also a second assessment with respect to Graciela’s previous turn. It is understood by other participants as an invitation to discuss the reasons why the military was able to come to power, and, therefore, produces a sequence of new agreements and disagreements. How participants deal with disagreement is evident in extract 3, including the use of several ECFs (some of which are subsequently softened), as well as terms such as “but” accompanied by references to “feelings” as sources of beliefs (Raul and Pamela preface their statements with “but... I have the feeling that...”) and several utterances left unfinished or unsaid.

It is important to emphasize that from Graciela’s perspective, it was *because of* and *after* the military coup that Chilean people faced enormous difficulties in coming to terms with an opposing perspective; the counter-argument is provided by Pamela, who suggests that Chilean society was probably *already* polarised *prior to* the coup d’état. The implication is that if polarisation pre-existed the coup d’état, it could be argued that this phenomenon contributed to “the extreme situation”. In other words, polarisation is rhetorically available for the debate as both *a cause* and *a consequence* of the coup d’état, yet the implications of “cause” versus “consequence” are quite significant in terms of assessing the role and responsibility of those who were “against the military” in events leading up to the coup d’état. If polarisation is a consequence of the coup d’état, that is, if it is the result of the military’s actions, those “against the military” are less accountable for the conditions that led to the coup d’état. But if polarisation is a cause of the coup d’état, those “against the military” are seen as having contributed to generating the extreme conditions which led to the coup d’état. However, participants manage to construct polarisation as an “object”, that is to say, the *underlying social dynamic* that accounts for the debate as a mechanism external to society, rather than as a given social practice subject to human agency. They do so by using ECFs and emotional notions such as “unforgivable rancour” or “anger” arising from the defence of political interests and/or the belief that one’s version or perspective of the past is the only true or valid one. As a result, polarisation is treated as an unavoidable phenomenon for all members of Chilean society. In this way, participants justify polarisation as a regular and comprehensible practice in the past, normalizing polarisation by virtue of its general and total presence.

4.4 Polarisation as a result of emotions anchored in the past

Extract 4 comes from a mixed focus group, composed equally of people representing left-wing and right-wing perspectives, and is produced after half an hour of talk. The younger participants start the conversation. Two of them, Claudia and Isolda, describe the 1970s as divided into two very different periods. While Isolda focuses on the post-coup d'état period as a time of fear and political repression, Claudia imagines herself during the pre-coup d'état period as enjoying what she qualifies as a moment of "cultural flourishing" in Chilean history. Both of these participants produce the type of initial description of events that is stated most frequently during the focus groups by younger people who identify themselves as left-wing. But between Isolda's and Claudia's turns, a third young participant, Javier, makes a very interesting claim. Although he identifies himself as right-wing, he states that if he had lived during the 1970s, he imagines that he would have been committed to "the left". He links revelation with his recent discovery of a "realidad más oculta devalada ahora con la vuelta a la democracia/more hidden reality disclosed now with the return to democracy", that is to say, after the country returned to civilian rule in 1990. The "more hidden reality" is later reformulated by Javier as "injustices" and as "means" utilized by the "right" which breached "grounds" that should not be transgressed.

Javier's statement may be considered highly controversial, because he challenges the membership order implied by the polarised view of Chilean society. A person who clearly identifies with one side is not expected to be able to envision him or herself as belonging to the opposing group, either in the past or the present. However, none of the participants disagree with Javier at the moment he makes this statement, which may be attributed to the conversation having just begun. But 20 minutes later, Javier returns to his initial point. After half an hour of talk, each participant has had an opportunity to express his or her first impression of the game. First the younger participants speak and then the older participants, each awaiting their opportunity, without expressing disagreement.

Once the older participants have finished their initial comments, the moderator asks the younger participants how they feel when listening to the older participants. At

this point Javier takes the floor, describing himself as “atypical”. Overlapping with his statements, Angela, an older participant, and Ximena, the moderator, both agree with Javier in that he is “atypical”, which allows him to account for his position. It is precisely while Javier is explaining his arguments that Manuel, an older participant, interrupts Javier and Ximena and produces the following account of polarisation, embedding it in highly emotional experiences he lived in the past. In this sense, polarisation is offered as *an explanatory resource* for the conflict in the early 1970s, and by adding how this conflict was managed by two opposing membership categories (“the right” and the “left”), Manuel enhances the sense in which polarisation is treated as *an unavoidable source of conflict*.

It is important to note that Manuel’s contribution is also a response to Javier’s challenge of polarisation. Manuel emphasizes the difficulty of “playing the game”, stating that it is impossible to reproduce the past in order to make it understandable to people like Javier who did not experience the events first-hand. This type of interaction between older and younger participants reveals that establishing whose accounts of the past are valid is a key issue in this debate, which is also a notion that appears in the other mixed group (this aspect is explored in detail in Chapter 3). Describing polarisation by recounting highly emotional experiences of the past seems also to affect attitudes about who can claim to possess a valid understanding of the past, sharpening the distinction between witnesses and non-witnesses.

Extract 4: Original transcription in Spanish (M2/26:32-27:45)

1 MANUEL es t- es tal la impotencia que se produce
2 intelectualmente de no poder (1.4) trasladarlos
3 todos en el tiempo (0.8) porque esta cosa se parece
4 cuando uno va manejando (1.2) si uno tiene una nieta
5 (0.5) y tiene una hija y tiene una señora y tiene un
6 amigo (0.7) pero ese energúmeno que va manejando
7 es porque se le cruzó el auto y se baja y
8 quiere pegarle al otro (1.0) yo creo que (0.6) es
9 imposible desgraciadamente transmitir eso (1.1) el
10 grado de odiosidad que existía y ahí y ese es el gran
11 tema (0.6) el que
12 (1.7)
13 JAVIER pero es que probablemente (0.4) o sea hubiese estado
14 tan comprometido con un sector que no me hubiesen
15 importado::
16 MANUEL >es que eran completamente excluyentes por
17 eso yo te digo< que es difícil- es difícil
18 poder expresar (0.9) e::h (1.0) el tipo de
19 ambiente (0.9) yo no digo visto de qué
20 punto (0.4) n- no no quiero decir los de derecha y l-
21 los de izquierda (1.2) pero: n- no había ahí: una
22 discusión valórica (1.5) y entonces era:n
23 excluyentes (1.3) y como eran excluyentes
24 no eran excluyentes con el veci:no
25 (0.2) eran excluyente con los (propios)
26 hermanos (0.3) eran excluyente los (0.2)
27 la esposa con el esposo (1.1) entonces es qu-
28 es tan terrible digo yo no poder hacer este
29 ejercicio=
30 XIMENA =heh heh

Extract 4: English translation

- 1 MANUEL it's s- it's such the impotence that is produced
2 intellectually of not being able (1.4) to transport
3 everybody in time (0.8) because this thing is like
4 when one is driving (1.2) if one has a granddaughter
5 (0.5) and one has a daughter and has a wife and has a
6 friend (0.7) but this enraged man who is driving it's
7 because the car went in front and he gets out and
8 wants to punch the other guy (1.0) I think that (0.6)
9 it's impossible unfortunately to transmit this (1.1)
10 the degree of hatred that existed and there and this
11 is the big issue (0.6) that the
12 (1.7)
- 13 JAVIER but it's just that probably (0.4) I mean I would have
14 been so committed to one side that it wouldn't have
15 mattered to me
- 16 MANUEL L>they were completely mutually exclusive this is
17 why I tell you< that it's difficult- it's difficult to
18 be able to express (0.9) erm (1.0) the kind of
19 environment (0.9) I don't say viewed from a certain
20 point (0.4) I don't want to say the right-wingers and
21 the left-wingers (1.2) but there wasn't a
22 discussion of values there (1.5) and so they were
23 mutually exclusive (1.3) and since they were mutually
24 exclusive they weren't mutually exclusive with the
25 neighbour (0.2) they were mutually exclusive with
26 their (own) siblings (0.3) they were mutually
27 exclusive the (0.2) the wife with the husband (1.1) so
28 it's just that- it's so terrible I say not to be able
29 to do this exercise=
30 XIMENA =heh heh

In Manuel's contribution, there are several features that can be underscored in order to understand the kind of actions he is performing and to highlight the discursive effects implied by his account of polarisation. As mentioned previously, it is important to consider that Manuel is providing a counter-argument to Javier, who has said that when he imagines himself living during the 1970s, he believes he would have identified politically with the left. In this sense, Javier makes a normative claim implying that being on the left was "the right thing to do". In his turn, Manuel addresses some of the implications of Javier's statement, producing an explanation of polarisation and at the same time recounting his own involvement in the conflict in the past. He does so by rhetorically constructing the conflict using a metaphor about a driver who overreacts, while in the company of potential victims he must protect: his close female relatives.

In lines 1 to 5, Manuel expresses how difficult the exercise – younger and older participants imagining that they are changing positions – is for him. He describes this difficulty as an "intellectual impotence", which neatly contrasts with his description of a past that is highly emotional. The term "intellectual impotence" then, can also be seen as an attempt by Manuel to disassociate himself from this past constricted by emotions. On the other hand, he suggests that his "intellectual impotence" is produced because the younger participants do not have their own memories of the events being discussed. His claim would sound obvious in any other communicational context, yet in this particular one, it is an indication that the speaker is doing something more than simply describing an obvious situation. As in extracts 1 and 2, Manuel is pointing to the supposed privileged status of witnesses or "protagonists of the past" as a source of legitimacy for producing accounts of a polarised past. In fact, the significant pauses during Manuel's turn reveal that he is carefully seeking the appropriate words to express his point of view.

In line 5, Manuel points to "esta cosa se parece/this thing is like", using the euphemism "thing" to refer to what he is about to explain. To explain this "thing", he uses an analogy from everyday life: a man is driving his car in the company of close relatives (granddaughter, daughter, or wife) or friends, when suddenly he becomes an "energúmeno/enraged man" who irresponsibly provokes a confrontation with "the other". Simply because another car "se le cruzó/went in front", a common situation

when driving, the man overreacts to the point of wanting to hit “the other”. Although the second driver may have been at fault by not following traffic rules, the reaction of the “energúmeno/enraged man” is described as an exaggeration, explicable only because of the “grado de odiosidad que existía/the degree of hatred that existed”. Manuel implies that the first driver should have been more aware and conciliatory, since his duty as a man is to protect his female relatives. What is relevant to highlight is the strength attributed to the “high degree of hatred that existed”, that is, to the socio-political context which was able to transform a normal family man into an alienated and irresponsible person.

Until line 10, Manuel has described a scene in which there are victims, on the one hand, and aggressors, on the other. The potential victims are mostly female. Manuel uses the analogy to help his listeners understand the seriousness of the conflict in the 1970s, in terms of the extreme irrationality that characterized people’s interactions. He reformulates this in lines 11 to 13 as a matter of deep hatred, which he considers “el gran tema/the big issue” (lines 12 and 13). The society he describes is similar to the one implied in Pamela’s and Graciela’s accounts in extract 3, in which the degree of hatred that members of each side of the political debate felt toward those on the other side is so intense that there could be no understanding of other perspectives and therefore, no possibility of ever changing sides. For Manuel, the depth of emotion felt in the past was such that it is impossible to convey it to younger generations.

At first glance, Manuel’s argument that polarisation resulted from deep and irrational hatred does not convince Javier, although this was Manuel’s intent. Javier, after a relevant 1.7-second pause in line 14, actively disagrees with Manuel, prefacing his turn with a “but”, following a dispreferred pattern (Pomerantz, 1984) in expressing his disagreement. Nevertheless, Javier’s next statement is actually not in opposition to Manuel’s account of polarisation, despite being displayed as disagreement. In fact, Javier’s utterance rhetorically enhances polarisation as a sharp division between the sides, as he states in lines 15 and 16, “hubiese estado tan comprometido con un sector que no me hubiese importado/I would have been so committed to one side that it wouldn’t have mattered to me”. Javier does not challenge Manuel’s characterization of polarisation; moreover, he discursively articulates the implications of it. However, what Javier is also doing is reinforcing his moral

critique of those who did not belong to the side he claims he would have sympathized with, and as a result, Javier's statements are heard by Manuel as a challenge to his view of the past. Subsequently, Manuel interrupts Javier in line 18 in order to provide more details about how mutually exclusive the sides were in the past, in his view.

At this point in the analysis, previous work on membership categorization⁴⁵ within the Conversation Analysis tradition (inaugurated by Sacks, H., 1972a, b) can be helpful for illuminating Manuel's statements in terms of providing a richer comprehension of how participants orient to polarisation as a central category for their analysis of the past conflict. Beginning in line 23, Manuel states five times that the two sides in the past were "excluyentes/mutually exclusive". Just as in extract 3, conflict within families is incorporated into the discussion to emphasize the gravity of the situation. Polarisation grew to such an extent that it was capable of dividing not only neighbours (line 26) but siblings (line 28), and husbands and wives (line 29), according to Manuel.

Note how here Manuel (as well as Pamela and Graciela in extract 3) is reflexively displaying his understanding of how the sides – the "right" and the "left" – turned out to be mutually excluding. The process by which Chileans became divided into two groups is accounted for by the highly emotional experiences they faced in the past, as illustrated with the image of the "energúmeno/enraged man" and his family (embedded with images of irrationality, undeserved aggressions, victims versus victimizers, etc.). Therefore, if the available membership categories through which Chileans approach the conflict in the past resulted in only two alternatives that encompassed all of society, then the two opposing political affiliations may be

⁴⁵ It would make no sense to attempt to outline the vast and complex literature on membership categorization driven from Conversation Analysis (for a coherent and helpful overview, see Silverman, 2001). This work was initiated by Harvey Sacks (1972a,b) and continued by many others. Some authors argue for an independent field of research within Conversation Analysis called Membership Categorization Analysis (for instance, Housley & Fitzgerald, 2002) and others argue against it (for instance, Schegloff, 2007). What is clear is how this framework has inspired fruitful investigations with respect to controversial topics (for instance, Leudar, Marsland & Nekvapil, 2004; Le Couteur, Rapley & Augoustinos, 2001) on how participants (explicitly or implicitly) deal with issues of their own as well as others' identities in their talk-in-interaction through invoking membership categories, and what kinds of effects the particular membership categories produce in terms of the parties' accountability.

considered the full range of categories from which participants draw on to handle a Membership Categorization Device (MCD) which appears widely throughout the material for this research.

An MCD “is set of practices referring to persons as part of *doing description* as well as *words selection domains*” (Schegloff, E., 2007: 463, emphasis in the original) which consists of a collection of categories and two rules of application: the economic rule (the “intelligibility of a single category”) and the consistency rule (i.e., if a given category is invoked, then the collection is simultaneously made relevant). In this sense, political affiliation in the Chilean context is articulated with just two comprehensive membership categories and operates as an MCD, which in turn implies category-bounded activities for each of the two mutually exclusive membership categories. This enables the participants to recognize the political affiliation of any speaker, as will be explored in the following analytical chapter.

In lines 21 to 23, Manuel warns his audience not to assume that he belongs to either of the two membership categories, making explicit his orientation to polarisation. This can also be seen as a form of what has been called “stake management” (Edwards and Potter, 1992; Potter, 1996). Edwards and Potter suggest this notion of stake or interest management for the rhetorical analysis of factuality⁴⁶. In the authors’ words, “avowals of hoping and wanting, and other psychological states, work in concert with, or in contrast to, factual descriptions of circumstances and events, particularly in environments of scepticism or dispute” (Edwards and Potter, 2005: 249).

It is important to emphasize how in constructing his claim, including his use of stake management with respect to the two membership categories, Manuel underscores the mutually exclusive dynamic that existed between them in order to prevent being heard as defending either of the categories. That is to say, instead of simply stating

⁴⁶ The authors argue that people display management of their interests in different contexts (scientific texts and counselling talk, for instance) for the functional purpose of producing accurate descriptions of the reality they are treating as such. In order to do this, interests, motives, psychological dispositions and the like, must be handled with caution to prevent them from being picked up by another participant in order to undermine previous claims, precisely because they do not represent “reality” but rather the speaker’s interest (Edwards and Potter, 1992; Potter, 1996).

that there was no discussion of values and what follows in line 23, Manuel warns his audience not to hear him as aligned with one side of the debate. Yet his statement only serves to reinforce the polarisation dynamic he describes and he ensures polarisation's role as the motor of the discussion.

To summarize extract 4, complementing the analysis of extract 3, a new account of polarisation based on a high degree of hatred in the past is introduced by Manuel, providing more details about how this social dynamic operated. In general terms, the analysis of these details is consistent with the analysis of extract 3. In both extracts, each representing a different interactional setting (left-wing in the case of extract 3, and a mixed group in extract 4), polarisation is explained by virtue of notions of deep hatred and rancour between two mutually exclusive membership categories, the behaviour of which is viewed as irrational by the participants. In doing so, Manuel is making visible his handling of Chilean local political affiliation as a Membership Categorization Device, which includes only two possible categories. The display of this specific MCD provides new insights for considering *polarisation as a discursive practice*.

Particularly in extract 4, it is important to consider that this explanation of polarisation is produced in response to a younger participant's normative claim that although he categorizes himself as a member of the right-wing today, he would have been sympathetic to the other side in the past. This challenge to polarisation through a hypothetical changing of sides is answered by Manuel's statement that polarisation was the result of extreme emotional experiences lived in the past. An important implication of this is the disqualification of contributions to the debate coming from those who were not alive at the time the events took place. On the other hand, Manuel's arguments in response to Javier's challenge of polarisation in the past also serves to reinforce the pervasive character of polarisation in Chilean society at that time, the seriousness of which, according to Manuel, cannot be questioned by younger participants. Polarisation is, from the participants' perspective, a powerful mechanism that maintains a strict division between the groups.

4.5 Polarisation as an unavoidable source of conflict in the present

Extract 5 comes from a focus group composed only of right-wing participants and is produced more than 40 minutes after the discussion has begun. In the participants' conversation, there is no evidence of any significant disagreement; conversely, they interact in a collaborative way. During the first round of turns, all participants explicitly assert their support for the coup d'état. Two of the participants narrate how they and their families celebrated on the 11th of September of 1973, in contrast with their accounts of the years 1970 to 1973, in which they recount stories of deprivation (of food and other basic supplies), as well as stories of confrontations between family members. Nevertheless, Mario, a young adult participant, within the first 15 minutes of the meeting brings to the talk an account of what can be regarded as his "conversion process" from being an absolute supporter of the Pinochet regime towards becoming a more critical defender of the Pinochet legacy (Mario's conversion is analyzed through in extract 14). To do so, Mario constructs a distinction between supporting the military takeover itself and backing the military regime that followed, a distinction that the rest of the participants agree with.

Mario's concerns are taken up later by Andres, an older participant, and reformulated as a dilemma about how to analyse at the same time "the good and bad aspects of the Pinochet regime" (this dilemma is analyzed through extract 11). In doing so, participants build a polarity of two distinct areas for analysis of the military regime. They distinguish, on the one hand, the positive macroeconomic situation in Chile that resulted from the policies implemented by the Pinochet regime, describing Chile as a model (in economic terms) in comparison to neighbouring countries. On the other hand, they criticize the social policies of the Pinochet regimen for not adequately addressing Chilean's society significant socio-economical inequalities. But at the same time, "the social area" is understood to be the human right violations, as if they were the costs that Chilean society had to pay for the reestablishment of order in the country.

After Mario and Andres discuss how to analyze the Pinochet regime, making explicit the dilemma of how to simultaneously handle the economic and the social dimensions of it, the moderator then underscores these difficulties in terms of a

dichotomy, pointing out that current analyses of the Pinochet regime tend to emphasize one or the other dimension, but rarely provide an account in which both are integrated. The moderator ends her turn by asking the group to provide reasons for this dichotomy. Patricia, an older participant, shares her view that it is a matter of “those from here and those from there”, relating, once again, to the two opposing sides of the debate, as if each of the two dimensions earlier discussed – the economic and the social – were defended exclusively by one or the other side. Patricia continues by displaying an account of how people aligned with the right suffered in the past as much as those aligned with the left, in an attempt to establish equivalence with regard to the “amount” of suffering each side endured in the past (the moderator’s orientation to polarisation as well as Patricia’s display of the notion of forgetting are analyzed through extract 8). This is immediately followed by the display of concern about how polarised Chilean society is today. In this respect, Patricia moves the argument from the past toward polarisation in the present as a negative aspect of Chilean society, since it does not allow dialogue between the two sides and produces serious difficulties for political development. To do so, Patricia compares the degree of polarisation in the pre-coup d’état period with today’s political context, stating that in the 1960s Chile was a much more “open” country.

Extract 5 is divided into two parts. The analysis of the first part points to how the speaker aligns with the “right-wing” membership category with caution and mitigation. And also, how she neatly formulates her concern on polarisation so it will be heard as genuine, especially considering that she does not use explicitly the term “polarisation”. The analysis of the second part of extract 5 focuses on how the dynamic of polarisation is described as *an unavoidable source of conflict* which accounts for the maintenance of the debate about the past, producing negative effects for Chilean society.

Extract 5a: Original transcription in Spanish (R2/43:27-44:22)

1 PATRICIA a mi lo que me preocupa fíjate de todo esto (0.3)
2 porque uno siendo (0.5) cargada para el lado de la
3 derecha (0.8) no es enferma de derecha pero
4 (0.5) a mí ()
5 XIMENA heh p̄heh
6 ANDRES ʔheh hehe heh heh
7 PATRICIA e:h (0.7) pero a mí lo que me preocupa un poco también
8 como de mirada de vieja (0.8) yo recuerdo en mi
9 juventud muy muy mi pre juventud (1.7) e:h (2.4) ser
10 radical o ser de aquí o ser de allá (0.6)
11 era tan respetable lo uno como lo otro
12 ANDRES ((tose))
13 XIMENA mm hm
14 (1.4)
15 PATRICIA yo recuerdo mi papá que era la misma (1.4) estirpe
16 mía en términos económicos (0.3) molesto porque en un
17 lugar público alguien había despreciado a un senador
18 de la república (0.7) senador de la república que era
19 Salvador Allende (2.3) y yo me crié como con esa
20 escuela
21 (0.7)
22 XIMENA mm

Extract 5a: English translation

- 1 PATRICIA what worries me about all this (0.3)
2 because one being (0.5) inclined to the side of the
3 right (0.8) one is not fanatically right-wing but
4 (0.5) to me ()
5 XIMENA heh ꞑheh
6 ANDRES ꞑheh hehe heh heh
7 PATRICIA erm (0.7) but to me what worries me a bit also from my
8 perspective of an older woman (0.8) I remember in my
9 very very youth my pre youth (1.7) erm (2.4) being
10 radical or being from here or being from there (0.6)
11 each was as respectable as the other
12 ANDRES ((coughing))
13 XIMENA mm hm
14 (1.4)
15 PATRICIA I remember my father who was of the same (1.4) lineage
16 as me in economic terms (0.3) being upset because in a
17 public place someone had disrespected a senator
18 of the republic (0.7) senator of the republic who was
19 Salvador Allende (2.3) and I grew up like in that
20 school
21 (0.7)
22 XIMENA mm

In Patricia's utterances, there are two important elements she uses to justify her concern about polarisation today. First she introduces her concern, presenting herself as a right-winger in lines 2 and 3, yet followed by a mitigation of her right-wing sympathies, and second, she does this by referring to her opinion as that of someone of mature age. Concerning the first element, in line 3, immediately after saying that she sympathizes with the right, Patricia states that she is not "enferma de derecha/fanatically right-wing". "Ser enfermo de" (literally "being sick with something") is a common idiomatic phrase in Chile for expressing fanaticism in a pejorative manner, that is to say, it implies inappropriate and/or extreme behaviour. As Drew and Holt (1989) have suggested, idiomatic expressions are displayed in complaints "where there is some conflict or lack of alignment between complainant and recipient. Thus, idioms are introduced in 'inauspicious environments', where, up until then, recipients have withheld sympathizing or affiliating with a complainant" (Drew & Holt, 1989: 398). Therefore, the very presence of the utterance "porque uno

siendo (0.5) cargada para el lado de la derecha (0.8) no es enferma de derecha/because one being (0.5) inclined to the side of the right (0.8) is not fanatically right-wing”, implies that identifying oneself with a right-wing position, according to Patricia, may not be viewed sympathetically by her listeners. This is why she subtly decreases the degree of her political commitment by using the idiomatic expression of “ser enferma de/being sick with something”. This allows her, at the same time, to imply that there is a category of people who are “enfermas de derecha/fanatically right-wing”, in which she does not include herself. In other words, in the context of this focus group, there is hesitation about aligning oneself with a right-wing perspective, even though all have previously expressed some degree of approval of the military coup of 1973.

With respect to the second aspect to be underscored, that is, Patricia’s reference to her opinion as one based on her “mirada de vieja/perspective of an older woman”, it is important to note how the invocation of age categories inserts generational distinctions into the discussion. A common view point is that because older people have experiences, they are likely to be less impetuous and more reflective in their judgements. Hence, Patricia rhetorically presents her opinion as a mature and unbiased one, as if her age category supports the legitimacy of what she is about to tell to the group. This could be seen as evidence of “stake management” (Edwards and Potter, 1992; Potter, 1996)⁴⁷, in terms of how Patricia’s age helps to prevent her listeners from ascribing bias to her statements. Afterward, she brings to the talk her personal memories about a distant past, when in lines 8 and 9 she states “yo recuerdo en mi juventud muy muy pre juventud/I remember in my very very youth my pre youth”. It is significant that Patricia states “muy/very” twice and adds “pre juventud/pre youth” in order to emphasize how early her memories are.

In that distant past, Patricia states that belonging to opposite sides of the political spectrum did not stop people from respecting one another. In other words, political sympathies did not imply the level of conflict that they did later. It is important to

⁴⁷ The notion of “stake management” refers to how participants in producing description of the “out-there world”, deal with their own interest in order to make appear their descriptions as solid, factual or authoritative. As Potter put it “People treat each other as entities with desires, motives, institutional allegiances and so on, as having a stake in their actions. Referencing stake is one principal way of discounting the significance of an action or reworking its nature” (Potter, J., 1997: 153).

highlight the use of “sides” along with a third option of “being radical” in line 10 (“ser radical o ser de aquí o ser de allá (0.6) era tan respetable lo uno como lo otro/being radical or being from here or being from there (0.6) each was as respectable as the other”). The term “radical” may be subject to two interpretations: first, it may refer to members of the liberal Radical party, which was influential during the 1950s and 1960s in Chilean politics; and second, those adopting radical ideological positions. This utterance, which includes “being radical” followed by “being from here or being from there” is one of the rare cases in the data in which the references to “sides” is not binary or polarised into two mutually exclusive groups, but also includes another option.

In lines 15 and 16, Patricia brings to the talk her father’s economic status, prior to describing his disapproval of an insult to a senator (“yo recuerdo mi papá que era la misma (1.4) estirpe mía en términos económicos/I remember my father who was of the same (1.4) lineage as me in economic terms”). Thus, the clarification of her fathers’ economic situation as similar to hers (she has previously told to the group that she is a school teacher and presumably is a member of the middle class) seems relevant for the purpose of the argument. By implication, given a middle-class economic position, one might assume a certain political position. In addition, the story concerns a senator who is not just any senator, but the then-future president Salvador Allende. Therefore, by underscoring the middle-class economic status of her father in relation to the figure of Salvador Allende, Patricia constructs her father’s attitude as an exceptional one in the context of the late 1960s, when Allende was still a senator. In other words, Patricia’s father’s attitude toward Allende is only possible in a context in which polarisation has not yet fully permeated society.

Finally, Patricia states in lines 19 and 20 that “y yo me crié como con esa escuela/and I grew up like in that school”; “school” is displayed here to make reference to the various ways of making politics, as she reformulates her statement in the following turn.

Extract 5b: Original transcription in Spanish (R2/44:22-45:14)

19 PATRICIA Salvador Allende (2.3) y yo me crié como con
20 esa escuela
21 (0.7)
22 XIMENA mm
23 (0.9)
24 PATRICIA entonces cuando tú me trasladas hoy en día (1.6) a
25 esta (0.2) escuela (0.4) sociopolítica (3.2) <yo digo
26 (0.2) qué vamos a hacer con este Chile nue:stro>
27 (0.6) cuando pongámonos en los extremos ya
28 (0.6) habla (>no es cierto<) ya Hermógenes Pérez de
29 Arce (0.7) y dice pin pin pin (0.9) ent-
30 <en vez de una mínima acogida> >Hermógenes Pérez de
31 Arce hace lo mismo ah¡< (0.9) en vez de una mínima
32 acogida a lo que él dijo (2.1) los del otro
33 bando le dicen qué! hablai! tú! cuando! tú!
34 no sé cuanto (0.5) entonces (0.4) y cuando (0.3) el
35 señor Escalona dice tal cosa viene Hermógenes y
36 °hace exactamente lo mismo°

Extract 5b: English translation

19 PATRICIA Salvador Allende (2.3) and I grew up like in that
20 school
21 (0.7)
22 XIMENA mm
23 (0.9)
24 PATRICIA so when you transport me to today (1.6) to
25 this (0.2) socio-political (0.4) school (3.2) <I say
26 (0.2) what are we going to do with this Chile of ours>
27 (0.6) when let we put ourselves in the extremes okay
28 (0.6) Hermógenes Pérez de Arce talks (>isn't that
29 right<) okay (0.7) and says *pin pin pin* (0.9) then-
30 <instead of a minimal opening> >Hermógenes Pérez de
31 Arce does the same< (0.9) instead of a minimal
32 opening to what he said (2.1) those from the other
33 side say to him what are you talking about when you I
34 don't know what (0.5) then (0.4) and when (0.3)
35 mister Escalona says such a thing Hermógenes comes and
36 °does exactly the same°

According to Patricia, in Chile there have been two different political traditions (“socio-political schools”, in her words): the one in which she grew up (in an earlier time: “esa escuela/that school”), and the one that is currently governing politics (closer in time: “esta (0.2) escuela (0.4) sociopolítica/ this (0.2) socio-political (0.4) school”). With respect to how Patricia talks about the second “socio-political school”, there are several significant features for the analysis of how polarisation is treated as a fundamental characteristic of politics today. In constructing polarisation as such, Patricia makes a comparison with the past, as if in the late 1960s people from different political perspectives were able to coexist without extreme conflict, which reinforces what she has by invoking the anecdote about Allende; that is, that polarisation is a greater problem in the present. Nevertheless, it is also possible to appreciate in the extract how polarisation is viewed as a regrettable dynamic. This is evident at the end of the extract when Patricia, “as a mother”, brings to the conversation her desire for her children to live in a non-polarised society.

It is important to note that Patricia's description of the current political context starts with a long pause of 3.2 seconds in line 25, an indication that she faces some difficulty in pursuing her comparison between the past and the present. This long pause is followed by a statement in lines 25 and 26 with a slower rhythm: "<yo digo (0.2) qué vamos a hacer con este Chile nue:stro> /<I say (0.2) what are we going to do with this Chile of ours>". Saying "qué vamos a hacer con/what are we going to do with" indicates that 1) there is a problematic situation that must be faced; 2) this problem produces paralysis, since there is no clear answer to the question "what to do with"; and 3) more than one subject or group should be involved in searching for solutions, as she uses the terms "we" and "nuestro/of ourselves". After an 0.6-second pause, Patricia continues with "cuando pongámonos en los extremos ya↑/when let we put ourselves in the extremes okay", connecting the problematic situation with "extremes" and inviting the listeners to follow her through the display of the word "ya↑/okay" with a higher intonation. Her invitation is to analyse the similarities between the behaviours of two important politicians representing the opposing sides of the debate – Hermógenes Pérez de Arce⁴⁸ on the right, and Camilo Escalona⁴⁹ on the left. Patricia emphasizes twice (in lines 30-31 and 35-35) that both politicians react in "exactly the same" way by summarily rejecting any contribution from each other. Furthermore, in her scenario, both politicians counter-attack the other not on an intellectual level, that is, on the basis of the ideas being discussed, but by disqualifying the other through referring to their actions in the past.

Patricia's voice changes in line 32-33 when she states that those representing the opposition respond to Hermógenes Pérez de Arce "qué↓ hablai↓ tú↓ cuando↓ tú↓ no sé cuanto/what are you talking about when you I don't know what". This utterance

⁴⁸ Hermógenes Pérez de Arce is a journalist and a lawyer who in 1973 was a member of the Chilean parliament. He was an active collaborator of the Pinochet regime from 1976 until 1989, as a member of the VI Legislative Commission of the Government Junta (*VI Comisión Legislativa de la Junta de Gobierno*) and the Editorial Commission of Constitutional Organic Laws (*Comisión Redactora de Leyes Orgánicas Constitucionales*). He was also the director of the only Chilean evening newspaper from 1976 until 1981. Today he teaches law in several universities and has written a weekly column published in the Chile's most important newspaper, "El Mercurio" since 1982. He has also published several books.

⁴⁹ Camilo Escalona is currently a senator and the President of the Socialist Party which he has belonged to since before the coup d'état. After the coup d'état he was exiled in Austria, Germany, Spain and Cuba. He returned in 1988. Since then, he has been very active in politics and he has written books and contributed to the newspapers.

has a special faltering rhythm and a lower intonation to express ridicule of those on the other side (the side she does not belong to). Then, Patricia applies the same treatment to what Camilo Escalona says in response to his political opponent, the effect of which is to portray polarisation as a phenomenon that extends to both extremes.

Considering the faltering rhythm of the utterance “qué↓ hablai↓ tú↓ cuando↓ tú↓ no sé cuanto/what are you talking about when you I don’t know what”, it can be suggested that what Patricia is implying when she says “no sé cuanto/I don’t know what” at the end is something like “when you have done this or that in the past” or “when you have done nothing to resolve this or that problem” or furthermore “when your actions have worsened the problems”. Therefore, according to Patricia, what is at stake between the two opposing politicians is their right to criticize the past or to criticize the other’s position, which seems to be immediately disregarded due to their engagement in the conflict itself. The parties in conflict are still unable to communicate since they continue to focus on what they did or did not do in the past.

The analysis of extract 5 reveals how an older participant asserts that polarisation actively affects Chilean politics today, in the context of a discussion in which only right-wing participants are included. To do so, for Patricia it is not necessary to state the term “polarisation”. Instead, she contrasts the late 1960s political climate with today’s political environment. With respect to the 1960s, she affirms – based on her memories – that different political perspectives coexisted, and by denouncing the current tendency of both political extremes to exhibit the same reprehensible and disrespectful behaviour toward each other today, Patricia implies that polarisation is a serious concern for politics in the present.

Patricia’s statements imply her rejection of polarisation; her concerns are explicit regarding how *polarisation as an underlying social dynamic* is seen as an unavoidable feature of how politicians from the two extremes of the political spectrum relate to each other. Controversies from the past are still producing debate, not on an intellectual or analytical basis, but on the grounds of the actors’ accountability with respect to their actions in the past. Patricia presents herself as an analyst of the political conflict through the employment of *polarisation as an*

explanatory resource for the debate. In this sense, polarisation is seen as a matter of the parties not being able to dialogue about the present because they continue to debate the other's accountability in the past, which in turn, produces considerable differences and disrespectful ways of (not) relating to each other. In fact, as Patricia points out, the extremes are unable to accept any aspect of what the other says, yet this is a particular way of producing a relationship between the parties, that of a polarised rapport which seems effective in maintaining the debate.

4.6 Polarisation as a quasi-natural force: the “eye of the hurricane” metaphor

Extract 6 is taken from a mixed focus group composed equally of people representing left-wing and right-wing perspectives. The interaction is produced after 45 minutes of discussion, during which participants openly express agreements and disagreements. In fact, this extract comes at the end of a sequence in which participants discuss whether the context surrounding the coup d'état could be categorized as a “war”; this is a key issue that divides the two sides of the Chilean Memory Debate. In general terms, those on the right defend the idea that the coup took place in a war-like environment, because individuals from the left were armed and thus the military took the necessary actions to prevent the outbreak of civil war. Those on the left refute the right's argument, based on the belief that this argument was designed to justify military repression of the left.

A few minutes before extract 6, Maria, an older participant, narrates a story about being pregnant and the difficulty she encountered in getting to the hospital in the days following the coup d'état. She finishes her turn by making a claim in which she argues for the futility of “continuing to talk about a past that is full of pain”. This is reinforced as a valid concern as Maria adds that her desire not to talk about the past is based on her own “life experiences”. Through her anecdote, Maria presents herself as a victim of the repression imposed by the military regime.

Subsequently, Jeronimo, another older participant, shares with the group his memories of the days following the coup d'état, in which he describes himself as a 19-year-old member of the Air Force who encountered armed confrontation while

patrolling certain suburban areas of Santiago. Jeronimo's anecdote is full of details, and follows Maria's argument, which explicitly presents personal experiences as the most important source of valid accounts of the past (this argument is analysed in extract 17). A significant aspect of Jeronimo's statements is that he orients to present himself as a victim also, prefacing his anecdote by saying that he enlisted in the Air Force "just because he wanted to be a pilot" and "all of a sudden" found himself in a war-like environment. He emphasizes that his experience is one of being very young and yet involved in armed confrontations, in which he directly faced armed conflict and death. It is at this moment in the talk that the participants begin to argue whether Chile was experiencing a civil war in the months prior and subsequent to the coup d'état. The issue is introduced by Alonso, a younger participant, and produces a sequence of second-assessments from older participants who agree that the environment prior to the coup was war-like.

The relevance of this extract is how Federico, an older participant, attempts to close the kind of discussion in which polarisation dominates, that is, a discussion in which arguments coming from both sides are engaged in direct confrontation, as had been occurring prior to this extract. The discussion is only beginning to arouse disagreements when Lucia, a younger participant, displays a concern that the talk is not leading anywhere, and she states that the older participants have monopolized the conversation by bringing their memories of the past as if "politics" were the only important aspect of them, which she says is an evidence of how "fixed they are in the past". In this respect, the function of Federico's contribution, which describes preceding statements using a hurricane metaphor, is to calm the discussion. He achieves this by shifting topics from the war ambience to generational issues, by sympathizing with the difficulties faced by those who lived through the events under discussion (like himself). Thus, Federico shifts generational issues (which are the subject of the last analytical chapter), affirming that the extraordinariness of the past is impossible to convey to younger generations, the final effect of which is to disqualify young people's versions of the past.

The "eye of the hurricane" metaphor contributes to create a sense of *polarisation as a quasi-natural force* or as a *social underlying mechanism* that is responsible for the

difficulties encountered by participants in a focus group composed of both right- and left-wing participants, and Chileans in general when they discuss the past.

Extract 6: Original transcription in Spanish (M1/45:36-46:19)

- 1 FEDERICO lo que pasa que este problema (.) yo lo planteé al
2 comienzo ah? (0.2) yo dije que había que hacer una
3 diferenciación; pero quiero hacer un alcance porque yo
4 he hablado poco he hablado menos (0.6) que esta
5 cuestión
6 LUCIA Lva a hacer otro alcance
7 FEDERICO ese asunto del setenta y tres yo:: eh (0.2) muy
8 respetable lo que planteas tú (0.6) tiene una fuerza
9 (.) un magnetismo por decirlo así; (0.3) tiene un
10 poder:: es: como quien dice como un- como el ojo del
11 huracán así que te agarra y y y
12 nadie queda conforme huevón (.) si si esta huevá es
13 así ((golpeando la mesa)) no más ¿ah?
14 CAMILA ¿nadie puede
15 FEDERICO L¿ah?
16 ¿? mm hm
17 FEDERICO entonces (0.4) por eso yo quería hacer un poquito un
18 énfasis en otras cosas (1.0) pensando un poquito más
19 idealista (1.0) en términos de que por ejemplo los los
20 ayuden a ustedes los ilustre (0.6) nosotros
21 vinimos de una época (0.5) en que to:do: (.) se hacía
22 (.) a pulso

Extract 6: English translation

- 1 FEDERICO what happens with this problem (.) I said so at the
2 beginning okay? (0.2) I said that we had to make a
3 distinction but I want to make a clarification because
4 I've talked little I've talked less (0.6) that this
5 rthing
6 LUCIA Lhe is going to make another clarification
7 FEDERICO this matter about the seventy three I erm (0.2) very
8 respectable what you say(0.6) it has a strength
9 (.) a magnetism so to say (0.3) it has a
10 power it's as one might say as an- like the eye of
11 the hurricane it's like it grabs you and and and
12 nobody is satisfied *huevón* (.) this this huevá is like
13 that ((knocking on the table)) no more okay?
14 CAMILA rnobody can
15 FEDERICO Lokay?
16 ¿? mm hm
17 FEDERICO so (0.4) this is why I wanted to put some
18 emphasis on other things (1.0) thinking a bit more
19 idealistically (1.0) in terms of for example the the
20 things that would help you to see (0.6) we
21 come from a time (0.5) where everything (.) was done
22 (.) the hard way

Federico has made several attempts to take the floor while Lucia and other older participants are arguing (this is not included in the transcription). He is finally able to in the first lines of the extract, but in a peculiar way: he justifies his turn since he has “hablado menos/talked less” than other participants. By invoking his right to participate in this manner, he seems to be appealing to some tacit rules for a group discussion, that is, every participant should have the opportunity to speak. However, Federico is interrupted by Lucia in line 6, who makes a sarcastic statement that he “va a hacer otro alcance/is going to make another clarification”.

In the following lines, Federico attempts to prevent counter-arguments by stating that other perspectives are “very respectable”. Then, he continues with the “eye of the hurricane” metaphor, the purpose of which may be to explain both the enormous difficulties Chilean society faces with regards to “este asunto del setenta y tres/this

matter of the seventy-three” (“este asunto/this matter” being a euphemism for what he is talking about) and the difficulties the group itself has encountered in the previous interactions (disagreements, disqualifications, mitigations, etc.). The chosen climate metaphor for describing the debate is said to hold a special power, “un magnetismo/a magnetism”, that is, a “natural” force which nobody can avoid, since, as Federico continues, “te agarra y y y nadie queda conforme huevón/it takes you and and and nobody gets satisfied *huevón*”.

It is important to note certain details in Federico’s statements that indicate the emphasis he gives to what he is saying and allows him to keep the floor for several seconds, considering that just prior to his turns, the participants overlap and interrupt each other in a way that does not continue in this extract. These details include, for instance, stressing the terms “fuerza/strength” in line 8, the “te agarra/it takes you” in line 11 and “conforme/satisfied” in line 12, in addition to some faltering words, repeating three times “y/and” in line 11, and the banging on the table in line 13. In addition, there are three “ah?” (in lines 2, 13 and 15), a careful utterance that in Chile is roughly equivalent to “isn’t it?” in English with an questioning intonation, the role of which is to reinforce what has just been said by exhorting the listener to agree.

On the other hand, Federico’s statement that “nobody is satisfied” is followed immediately by Camila, who inserts an overlapping statement that “nadie puede/nobody can”. Here, following Anita Pomerantz’ (1986) suggestions with respect to the effects of the display of ECFs, stating, “nobody” twice serves to enhance polarisation as an “object” – an external phenomenon – responsible for the dissatisfaction Chileans experience, due to its general recurrence. Then, the difficulty in arriving at a version of events that would satisfy every perspective is not produced by the actual persons debating, but is instead caused by polarisation in both the group discussion and Chilean society. In this sense, Federico’s contribution is to attribute the problems the group faces in reaching consensus to something that is out of the participants’ control. Therefore, polarisation is treated as an *unavoidable quasi-natural force* offered as an explanation for the debate itself.

Following Federico’s argument, then, the main problem with “the seventy-three” debate is that no one is pleased with the different interpretations of it. Once the

debate starts, it seems as if the debate itself produces a powerful dynamic from which it is not possible to escape (since it is a “natural force”), forcing people to engage in a circular argument with no resolution.

Metaphors like the one offered by Federico are discursive devices that, through images and analogies, rhetorically link two discourse domains together, in this case, the Memory Debate and natural climate forces. These discursive resources are both illuminating and restrictive (Edwards, 1997:31) of the object they attempt to describe. In this case, by referring to the issue of the seventy-three as the “eye of the hurricane”, Federico’s metaphor has two implications: 1) the seventy-three would be the epicenter (the eye of the hurricane is the only place where there is no circular movement), as if the gravity of the events occurred that year were the only accepted certainty from which the debate arises, and 2) around this point of gravity (the seventy-three events) there is a storm, a circular debate that never ends, and in relation to which human agency is powerless.

Towards the end of the extract, Federico manages to change the direction of the discussion from a polarised argument to the topic of how difficult it was for the protagonists of the past – the older generation – that period of time. However, before shifting topics, he inserts this interesting assessment of 1973 as the “eye of the hurricane”, which informs how the participants discursively attribute gravity to that year. Whatever perspective or understanding of that year is taken, there would be no way to prevent a storm of arguments. The storm of arguments would be triggered by the presence of the two opposing poles, leading to circular and never-ending arguments. This way of presenting the debate surrounding the coup d’état has the effect of disregarding human agency.

The “eye of the hurricane” could be considered a powerful explicative metaphor; however it is not taken up by any of the other participants of this focus group. In fact, Federico himself does not allow any one to address the metaphor, as he shifts the topic. The circular metaphor of the “eye of the hurricane” and the shift in topic could indicate that the debate is viewed by the participants as unchanging over time and thus meaningless, since no agreement will be achieved.

4.7 Summary and Discussion

The analysis of the extracts has shown how participants through the diverse interactional settings of this research employ the category of polarisation as an *explanatory resource for the debate*.

The analysis of extract 1 reveals how the participants prepare to engage in a delicate, dangerous and potentially violent debate through the use of the “boxing ring” metaphor to describe the focus group meeting. The past is seen as a heroic saga, in which Chilean society was divided, with those who “defended the country” working against those responsible for the chaotic political context of the early 1970s. The completeness of a polarizing dynamic in the past is addressed by the participants themselves through a sort of competition to determine who will be considered a “protagonist” of this polarised past, as it is argued in extract 2 as well as in extract 1. What is at stake is the legitimacy of the various accounts of this controversial past.

In extract 3, participants refer to polarisation as the explanation for past conflict, treating polarisation as a cause or a consequence of the coup d'état. In doing so, they orient to the implications of the accountability of each side of the debate (“those with the milicos and those against the milicos”). The pervasiveness of polarisation in the past is accomplished through emotional arguments articulated with the help of several Extreme Case Formulations (“everybody was polarised” or “nobody was beyond the reach of polarisation” because strong emotions were generalized). The pervasiveness of polarisation in the past contributes to the participants’ sense of the phenomenon as an “object” accountable for the highly emotional behaviour of Chileans, rather than as a given social practice. The result is to picture polarisation as an unavoidable source of conflict in the past, a quasi-natural force that determines how Chileans approach the conflict of the past.

The analysis of extract 4 provides new insights for viewing *polarisation as a discursive practice* through arguing that Chilean categories for political affiliation are treated as a Membership Categorization Device, which only contemplates the possibility of two alternatives. The process by which these two membership categories became polarised is addressed by participants as a matter of highly

emotional experiences. As a result, *polarisation as an unavoidable source of conflict* is justified precisely because of emotions anchored in the past, thus unchangeable.

As a complement to extract 4, extract 5 shows how polarisation is seen as problem for the present. The political extremes are said to contribute to maintaining the debate in "exactly the same way" as in the past. In consequence, both sides are equally accountable for the maintenance of polarisation.

Finally, in extract 6 an older participant displays his awareness of polarisation through treating it as natural, destructive and inevitable phenomenon (the hurricane). The metaphor is used after a particular sequence of interactions, in which a polarised discussion was taking place. The metaphor there, beyond simply an indication of the speaker's understanding of polarisation, is also a practical attempt to defeat or resist the tendency to debate within a context of polarisation.

In other words, the participants' discourse about polarisation reveals their orientation to it as a significant issue at the core of the Chilean Memory Debate. The pivotal role of this category is evident in how it is treated as both a cause and/or a consequence of the debate, or, as from participants' view, the *underlying social dynamic* or mechanism responsible for the maintenance of the debate, for the reproduction of differences about the past as time passes. Thus, polarisation is used to describe the past as well as to understand the present. Polarisation links past and present Chilean society, although there are certain nuances on both sides of the debate in terms of where they tend to locate in time the moments of greatest polarisation in Chilean society.

There is, or there has been, debate about the past because Chileans are, or have been, polarised. Hence, polarisation appears as an explanation for the debate itself, that is to say, its very cause; thus, the debate becomes the consequence of a polarised society. And recursively, there is polarisation because differences in perspectives on the past have not been yet resolved. Therefore, the debate continues.

From the participant's perspective, polarisation is the *inescapable source of conflict* in the past and an unavoidable feature of the current debate. Furthermore, they

explicitly present themselves as analysts of the debate, acknowledging the role of polarisation as the axis of the discussion, yet simultaneously criticizing the negative effects of what is seen as an unpreventable (external) phenomenon.

To illuminate the debate beyond polarised explanations of it, as participants do, this research attempts to demonstrate that a more fruitful analysis can be obtained by understanding *polarisation as a discursive practice*, rather than as an underlying mechanism that accounts for the debate. All of the findings in this chapter regarding polarisation from the participants' perspective as an unavoidable phenomenon that governs the behaviour of Chileans and which follows its "own agenda", generated by emotional, irrational and yet inevitable motives, are viewed from a Discursive Psychology perspective indistinguishable from the way in which Chileans make sense of the past through the language of polarisation. The ways in which participants represent the past, through the ongoing discursive process are part of the same process which reinforces polarisation.

The approach taken in this work allows the analyst to appreciate that the so-called "polarisation phenomenon" is not an immutable characteristic of Chilean society responsible for the reproduction of the debate in a circular fashion, but rather the result of the use of certain specific and recurrent discursive devices and resources. In this respect, the next chapter addresses how the construction of a binary temporality for the past reinforces polarisation as a discursive practice.

Chapter 5

ACCOMPLISHING POLARISATION THROUGH THE DIALOGICAL CONSTRUCTION OF TEMPORALITY

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the analysis has shown how participants address *polarisation as an explanatory category for the debate* by displaying an understanding of this phenomenon *as an underlying social dynamic* which accounts for the past conflict and maintains this conflict through the Chilean Memory Debate. The effects produced by this characterization of polarisation create a sense of *an underlying quasi-natural force* that governs how Chileans approach the past, contributing to a view of polarisation *as an unavoidable source of conflict* that justifies the maintenance of the debate.

This second analytical chapter takes a different point of departure to explore those discursive resources which may account for the maintenance of the debate. From a Discursive Psychology perspective, the so-called “polarisation dynamic” is analyzed as a discursive practice, that is to say, as the result of the systematic employment of a set of discursive devices.

In this context, this chapter focuses on how *polarisation as a discursive practice* is achieved *through the dialogical construction of temporality*. The articulation of a binary temporality of the past in shaping the two main available narratives of the past is achieved through a set of discursive devices for constructing and maintaining polarisation. This recurrent temporal framework divides the pre- and coup-periods into two distinct, opposing eras, underscoring the role of the coup as *the* breaking-point in Chilean history and a point of rupture in Chilean society.

In his book *Voices of Collective Remembering*, James Wertsch (2002) argues, from a socio-cultural psychology perspective, that narratives are the *mediational* or “textual

resources” that fundamentally explain how collective memory is articulated in individual representations of the past, those shared past descriptions that link individuals who define themselves as part of a larger social unit (any membership category, such as family, group, nationality etc. with a common origin, history and future to be preserved).

Various theories of social or collective memory agree that narratives play a central role in constructing the past as sharable and shared (Barry, 2000; Brockmeier, 2002b; Fivush, 2008; Young, 1993). Narratives as collective frameworks which act as vehicles for meaning provide individuals with the generic resources to make their experiences intelligible to both themselves and to others. According to Wertsch, these “textual resources” mediate understandings of events, providing individuals with a sense of certainty. The notion of “mediated action” refers to how human actions (such as thinking, talking or remembering) “involve an inherent, irreducible tension between agent and ‘cultural tools’” (Wertsch, 2002:6). The specific role of a certain “textual resource”, in the sense of a “cultural tool”, depends on the particular use an agent makes of this tool. From this perspective, individuals (agents) are seen as actively engaged in the process of remembering, such that their creativity may transform or adapt the available tools. Nevertheless, the tools – the narratives – also act to constrain what may be understood as a credible version of the past. Yet the influence of narratives in shaping the past is neither mechanical nor determinant.

On the other hand, narratives are maintained alive through their usage. For Wertsch, the viability of collective memories lies in how narratives are similarly “distributed” among members of the same “textual community”. The usability of a narrative is precisely what connects different agents, such that diverse persons producing a similar understanding of the past also recognize one another as part of the same “community of memory”. Although the mediational role of narratives is not necessarily disregarded, it is the outcome – the shared version of the past – that is ultimately stimulated and reinforced through collective activities (Connerton, 1989). As a result, members of a social group, by virtue of remembering the same past, reinforce their membership in the group, and by embedding the group’s normative values in their shared description of the past, they ensure the continuity of the group’s identity over time (Halbwachs, 1992). In this respect, the sense of certainty

about the past that narratives afford, as Werstch suggests, may be understood as akin to a mediated consequence of the individual's identification with a given social identity.

The sense of certainty about the past is, then, a social product of a collective process. Furthermore, the authenticity or truth of a version of the past, on the one hand, as well as its falseness or inaccuracy, on the other, are subject to analysis as the ongoing social discursive process is displayed in participants' discourse, not as a precondition or a "given" feature of narrating the past, but rather as a task to be achieved (Edwards & Potter, 1992; Edwards, 1997). When individuals employ the available discursive and rhetorical devices, the recognizable tools of a given narrative, they also embrace (and in some cases, defend) the criteria that within this narrative determine what is to be understood as true, accurate or acceptable. Therefore, ascribing to a given version of the "truth" about the past is simultaneously a mechanism for displaying membership in a group or "textual community", in Werstch's terms.

In relation to this research, Steve Stern's work (2004, 2006) regarding how Chileans have addressed "memory struggles" is worth noting because it establishes how the notion of narrative is used in the analysis to follow. In his work, Stern focuses on the "emblematic" aspect of narratives of recent Chilean history. In the author's words, "My story – the story I experienced or heard from relatives and friends – is the story of Chile. It is an emblem of something larger you see and hear echoed in the public domain. Likewise, the memory camp to which I am drawn puts forth a memory-*truth*, not an arbitrary invention nor a remembrance of the insignificant. Its preferred narratives and emblems (...) are authentic. They capture a meaning and reality that run deep. They evoke and stand for experiences I know to be true" (Stern, 2004:144-5, emphasis in the original). Stern's passage evokes the sense of certainty referred to by Werstch, a social product driven by the use of narratives. In the Chilean case, the mediational work of shared narratives would be therefore almost completely disregarded, since what prevails overall is one's own version faith driven by this emblematic feature of past narratives in Chile.

Narratives, Wertsch argues, have both a referential and a dialogical function. The first function “concerns their potential to refer to settings, characters, and events. The basic relationship involved in this function is between narratives and the objects they represent” (Wertsch, 2002:57). Conversely, the second function “concerns the relationship one narrative may have to another. From this perspective, narratives are viewed as responding to one another” (Wertsch, 2002:57). The author emphasizes the importance of considering that narratives “do not exist in isolation (...). Instead, they are embedded in concrete discourse characterized by dialogic and rhetorical opposition” (Wertsch, 2002:59). For this research, the second function of narrative appears to be more fruitful.

The notion of “dialogic”⁵⁰ that Wertsch employs is taken from the tradition of Bakhtinian dialogism, defined by Per Linell (1998) as an epistemological framework. The tradition of dialogism implies various assumptions about how human beings approach reality, their knowledge of reality and the role of otherness in the process of acquiring and using knowledge. In this tradition, one’s approach to reality is seen as always mediated by one’s knowledge of reality which, in turn, is inherently organized by a dialectic process between one’s previous knowledge (already transformed into one’s own knowledge or “assimilated”) and others’ knowledge (the new knowledge that has yet to be “assimilated”). In general terms, a description of an event would then be dialogically articulated (i.e., mediated by assimilated and yet-to-be assimilated knowledge), implicitly or explicitly. What is important is that within controversial contexts, the presence of the other is made more explicit. Establishing the dialogical character of the Chilean Memory Debate is one of the central concerns of the current chapter, because this perspective provides new insights for alternative views of polarisation by focusing on the rhetorical relationship between competing versions or narratives of the past.

⁵⁰ Bakhtin’s definition of “hidden dialogicality” may be of help in understanding Wertsch’s use of the term “dialogical”: “Imagine a dialogue of two persons in which the statements of the second speaker are omitted, but in such a way that the general sense is not at all violated. The second speaker is present invisibly, his words are not there, but deep traces left by these words have a determining influence on all the present and visible words of the first speaker. We sense that this is a conversation, although only one person is speaking and it is a conversation of the most intense kind, for each present, uttered word responds and reacts with its every fibre to the invisible speaker, points to something outside itself, beyond its own limits, to the unspoken words of another person” (Bakhtin, 1984:197, quoted in Wertsch, 2002: 91).

When individuals belonging to a “textual community” (in other words, those who identify themselves as belonging to the same membership category) do not necessarily interact with one another in person on a regular basis, Wertsch suggests introducing the notion of “contested distributions”. Within “contested distributions”, different narratives or perspectives on the past “exist in a system of opposition and contestation” (Wertsch, 2002:24). As a consequence, one may argue that within “contested distributions”, the way accounts of the past are organized and rhetorically articulated in relation to one another makes the dialogical function of narratives more apparent. Since, as Wertsch puts it, “the key to understanding the meaning and form of one narrative is how it provides a *dialogic response* to previous narratives or anticipates subsequent ones” (Wertsch, 2002:60, my emphasis), then the participants’ descriptions of a controversial past participants will be oriented towards producing the arguments necessary to ensure the legitimacy of their narratives.

In the Chilean Memory Debate, the construction of temporality is also a matter of *dialogical* dispute with respect to which descriptions of a given period are more accurate and establishing the connections that link one period to the other. However, there is strong agreement among the focus group participants that the 11th of September 1973 was a significant boundary date that distinguishes a before and after. Nevertheless, disagreements arise when participants share their views of the causes and/or consequences of this pivotal date.

The construction of temporality has been addressed within various traditions of theories of memory and history as a result of, if not the main functionality of, the human capacity for remembering and representing the past (some examples are Antze, 1996; Berliner, 2005; Brockmeier, 2002a; Booth, 1999; Connerton, 1989; Irwin-Zarecka, 1994; Middleton, 2002; Olick & Robbins, 1998; Stern, 2004, 2006; Halbwachs, 1992). In this sense, when Chileans talk about the past, they link events earlier in time with events later in time. In retrospect, connections between distinct elements, such as events, facts and actions, are explained in terms of causes, consequences, antecedents and precedents. The participants construct chronological segmentations in order to give coherence to their narratives.

In addition, participants' accounts of Chile's recent political past share a distinctive chronological structure, regardless of their membership category – left-wing and right-wing. In these accounts, there tends to be two clearly distinguishable periods of time: prior to 1973 and after 1973. The year 1973 divides the chronological history; it becomes a gravitational date around which personal and collective stories are structured.

Two interconnected discursive strategies that participants frequently display in their narratives to divide the past into two time periods are analyzed in detail in this chapter. These strategies are discursive resources that *through the dialogical construction of temporality* significantly contribute to reinforcing the sense of a pervasive, underlying social dynamic.

The first discursive device is that of *the rhetorical articulation of preference for one or the other period*, which simultaneously implies the rejection of the other period. This is justified through the temporal location of victimization of the speaker's membership category in one of the two periods of time. In differentiating the pre-and post-coup periods, the participants' descriptions of the binary temporality of the 1970s includes a reference to the period of time in which "past victims" should be located. Thus, their rejection of the period of time in which their group was victimized implies their preference for the other period of time, when not only were they not victims, but they experienced either the excitement of political engagement for social change (the left), or feelings of relief and safety after having faced significant threats (the right).

Hence, the second discursive device is that of *asserting the victimization of one's side*. This is accomplished through establishing categories of victims versus victimizers, or "us" versus "them", which reinforces the need to maintain the two mutually exclusive membership categories. Thus, the reference to the "other" is present implicitly or explicitly in participants' discourse, an indication of the *dialogical* character of the debate.

The display of victimization arguments is related to issues of human agency, particularly for those on the left who experienced defeat starting with the coup d'état.

Conversely, those on the right claim to have been victimized by the left prior to the coup. The difference between how human agency is treated in each case is that for left-wing participants, the discourse is oriented towards a justification of their defeat, in terms of the inevitability of the coup. In doing so, the participants treat polarisation as a quasi-natural force and unavoidable dynamic (through use of natural disaster metaphors to explain the inevitability of the coup), minimizing the human role in the conflict. On the other hand, the discourse of right-wing participants is oriented toward issues of accountability with regard to how actions taken in the past put an end to their victimization, implied – regrettably – the victimization of the other.

This chapter includes analysis of six extracts. In extract 7 an older participant displays his memories of the pre-coup period in which he describes himself as a victim of a chaotic socio-political context. This allows him to account for his explicit support for the coup d'état, and at the same time to address his side's accountability with respect to the victimization of the "other". In extract 8, taken from the same focus group as extract 7, another older participant enriches a supportive stance of the coup d'état by providing more personal memories of the pre-coup period, which is when she places her group's victimization. To strengthen her argument, the speaker invites an unidentified "other" to remember the forgotten victims of the pre-coup period.

In extract 9, a younger participant articulates a rhetorical defence of the post-coup victims, implying his preference for the pre-coup period and his disapproval of the period of time in which he locates the victims. In similar terms, through extract 10, an older participant recalls her memories of the pre- and post-coup periods. Whereas the pre-coup period is described as a time of hope and social change, the post-coup period is recalled as a time of fear and repression.

Extracts 11 and 12 are both from another focus group. In extract 11, two participants explain the difficulties they encounter in producing a supportive account of the post-coup period given what they know about the political repression of the post-coup period. In response to this dilemma, in extract 12 another participant in the same focus group brings to the talk, as in extract 8, the "forgotten" victimization of those

on the right during the pre-coup period, in an attempt to establish equivalence between the suffering on each side.

From these brief descriptions of the extracts, it is not difficult to guess which ones are produced from a “left-wing” perspective and which ones represent a “right-wing” perspective. Membership categories are not necessarily explicitly used in participants’ narratives of the past, yet each speaker expresses his or her position in the debate through the discursive devices previously described. In this sense, *polarisation as a discursive practice* is embedded in the way that participants use time frames to construct accounts of the past.

As seen in Chapter 4, the talk about the past that participants produce includes several references to how political affiliations in Chile serve as Membership Categorization Devices (Schegloff, 2007; Sacks, 1972a, b) for the construction and maintenance of polarisation. In this sense, within the ongoing discursive process there are several clear examples of how “categories are designed for talking” (Edwards, 1991). That is to say, in the material collected for this research, mutually exclusive labels such as right-wing and left-wing make full sense of the past, not as mere descriptions of one person or another or social stereotypes or prejudices, but as part of the methodology for constructing the past as one in which two opposing groups were – not so long ago – engaged in a dispute for “real” political power. But on another level – a discursive and socially symbolic one – the dispute has not yet ended and perhaps never will.

5.2 Claiming victimization as justification for the coup d'état

Extract 7 is taken from the same focus group composed only of right-wing participants group as extract 1 and is produced after 23 minutes of discussion. Prior to the extract, Dario, a younger participant, states that he would like people to remember “muchas cosas que se han olvidado/many things that have been forgotten” about the context in which the military coup of 1973 occurred (Dario’s claim is analyzed in extract 15). Dario finishes his contribution by saying “no sé si me explico/I don’t know if I make myself clear”, followed by a significant 1.6-second pause, indicating a “transition-relevance place” (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974; Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998)⁵¹ that is not taken up by any other participant. The moderator then directs the question to the other members of the group, provoking a response by Jose, an older participant, who manages to keep the floor for around four minutes. Extract 7 corresponds to the intervening sequence between Jose’s turn (which is presented as one of the versions of the pre-coup period in the Prelude of the third part of this dissertation) and extract 15.

Jose begins his statements by affirming that he understands very well what Dario is talking about; moreover, Jose says, “porque lo que tú dices es real/because what you say is real”. Then, he brings to the talk his memories of the years preceding the coup d'état. His memories, one may argue, provide details of what Dario has implied are the “forgotten” aspects of the circumstances that led to the coup d'état: stories of rationing of food and other basic items as well as family anecdotes that provide a chaotic picture of everyday life before the coup.

The analysis of extract 7 focuses on the speaker’s rejection of the pre-coup period, which implies the speaker’s preference for the post-coup period. This preference is established with the help of two discursive resources that deserve especial emphasis: Jose’s employment of membership categories such as victimizers versus victims as well as a polarity between engaging in versus keeping one’s distance from the 1973 conflict, which helps him to deal with his group’s accountability for the victimization

⁵¹ Within the context of Conversation Analysis, a “transition-relevance place” corresponds to a completion point in a speaker’s turn which may or may not be taken by another participant in a given interaction. In either case, what is stated has already reached the status of a meaningful utterance, which following the “turn-taking system”, is then available for reformulations.

of the other in the post coup-period. These are the discursive resources Jose employs for stating and justifying his support of the coup d'état, as he distinguishes between a "before" and "after" the coup. Jose describes himself as a victim during the pre-coup period, simultaneously providing arguments to justify his preference for the post-coup period. In this sense, the speaker's assertion of his group's victimization significantly contributes to establishing a binary temporality of the 1970s.

Extract 7: Original transcription in Spanish (R1/23:45-24:36)

1 JOSE o sea era a ese nivel la situación
2 (1.5)
3 XIMENA °uh rum°
4 JOSE Lentonces yo creo que: que: golpe de estado; (0.7)
5 eh no pudo habe:r (0.7) na|da mejor
6 (1.0) honestamente (.) (como había) a mí como niño me
7 tocó vivirlo (.) era un niño de trece años (0.9)
8 gracias a Dios no tuve ningú:n problema (1.5)
9 allana_fmi:entos o: o algún s:ufrimiento al contrario=
10 MARCELA L((tose))
11 JOSE =fue un alivio y un descanso tremendo (1.5)
12 °tanto para mi grupo familiar como para mí° y eso
13 que mi papá trabajaba en una empresa de (.) estado
14 (2.0) °pero no le pasó nada porque
15 no estaba metido (0.2) mayormente en problemas (.)
16 políticos° pero sí era muy grande la
17 corrupción el abuso la sinvergüenzura (.) la escasez
18 (0.6) y yo estoy hablando de un hogar donde
19 había u- una mujer que era mi madre (.) con cinco
20 niños

Extract 7: English translation

- 1 JOSE I mean the situation was at that level
2 (1.5)
3 XIMENA °uh rum°
4 Lso I think that that coup d'état (0.7)
5 um there couldn't have been (0.7) anything better
6 (1.0) honestly (.) (like it was) to me as a boy I had
7 to live it (.) as a thirteen year old boy (0.9)
8 thank God I didn't have any problems (1.5)
9 *allanamientos*⁵² o:r or any suffering on the contrary=
10 MARCELA L((coughing))
11 JOSE =it was a relief and a tremendous peace (1.5)
12 °both for my family and for me° even considering
13 that my father worked in a state (.) enterprise
14 (2.0) °but nothing happened to him because he
15 wasn't (0.2) much involved in political (.)
16 problems° but the corruption yes it was very
17 extensive abuses shamelessness (.) shortage
18 (0.6) and I am talking about a home where there
19 was o- one woman who was my mother (.) with five
20 children

⁵² "Allanamiento" is the legal term for a police search of a building. In Chile, "allanamiento" is understandable in two ways; the second meaning is in strict reference to the Pinochet regime. "Allanamiento" is either used to describe legal police actions, with an authorization provided by a judge in the context of a judiciary investigation (a "search warrant"); or illegal police actions, as many "allanamientos" were conducted during the Pinochet regime without a search warrant. However, it is important to underscore that in other Spanish-speaking countries, the uses of the term are different; for example, in Spain an "allanamiento" is always an illegal police search; in Argentina, on the other hand, an "allanamiento" is always authorized by a judge.

As a summary of the stories he has shared (which are not in the transcripts here, but are included in the Prelude) in terms of listing examples, Jose states in line 1 that the pre-coup d'état situation was at "ese nivel/that level", emphasizing "ese/that". Subsequently, there is a pause of 1.5 seconds, which is not taken up by another participant to produce, for instance, a second assessment or disagreement. His statement is followed by a soft "uh um" from the moderator, which enables Jose to continue. Then, in lines 4 and 5, he clearly affirms his support for the coup d'état, while stating that the "golpe de estado↑ (0.7) eh no pudo habe:r (0.7) na|da mejor/coup d'état (0.7) um there couldn't have been (0.7) anything better". The coup is presented as the best possible solution to the many problems people (like himself) experienced during the Allende years. Jose welcomed the coup, since it meant "un alivio y un descanso tremendo/a relief and a tremendous peace" (line 1) for his family.

Jose's view of the coup d'état as a positive event that was therefore justifiable or even necessary is presented as such with the help of several discursive resources. First, he follows his categorical sentence in line 5, with the term "honestamente/honestly" in line 6. This is a direct way of managing his own interest in the talk, revealing how controversial it can be to express categorical support for the military intervention. For a conversation to be carried on, people should talk honestly and express opinions they believe are true (Grice, 1975)⁵³; Jose, by directly invoking this condition for communication, appears to anticipate that his position may be unpopular. Jose's tone when he expresses approval of the military is defensive, even though none of the participants has disagreed with him yet.

The second resource that Jose uses is a reference to his age when the events occurred, indicating his privileged witness and victim status, as he states in lines 6 and 7, "a mí como niñ^o me tocó vivir↑lo (.) era un niño de trece años/to me as a boy I had to live

⁵³ According to Anderson and Sharrock (1984), the philosopher Paul Grice developed a "rationalizing procedure (...) in his suggestion that the logic of conversation appears to be a conformity with a maxim of co-operation. Co-operation is the normative character of conversation" (p.104). The philosopher unpacks the principle of co-operation into four maxims: a) the maxim of quantity (be as informative as necessary); b) the maxim of quality (say only what you know to be true); c) maxim of relevance (be relevant); and d) maxim of manner (be as brief, orderly and clear as possible). In Jose's statements, he is invoking the maxim of quality, that is to say, he is emphasizing something that should be taken for granted, that he is telling the truth or – at least – the truth for him.

it (.) as a thirteen year old boy”. Despite his age, Jose says, he directly experienced the problems he has described. While children may not normally be expected to be aware of or concerned about political issues, the context was such that it even affected him. By invoking the child membership category, Jose reinforces a chaotic picture of everyday life in the pre-coup years.

However, this is not the first time that Jose utilizes his age to produce sympathy in his audience, and older focus group participants often appeal to age categories to emphasize the exceptional nature of the past, as was briefly analyzed in extract 2. Jose has done this a few minutes prior to the extract, when he introduces the topic of the difficulties faced during the Allende government, using the example of queuing for several hours after school at the age of twelve⁵⁴. This description of the early 1970s enables Jose to present himself as a victim of a chaotic context. This is enhanced a few lines later (lines 16 to 20), when he implies that shortages of food and other goods (linked to other socio-political problems: corruption, abuses and shamelessness) affected his family. When Jose inserts in line 18 “y yo estoy hablando de/ and I am talking about” prior to referring to his family as composed of a single adult (his mother) and five children, he is again attempting to amplify the many difficulties he and his family faced in the pre-coup period: feeding five children (the “five brothers”) was a very difficult task for his mother in such a context.

This contrasts with the description offered by Gaston, an older member of a group composed only of left-wing participants, who also refers to his age to indicate how exciting that same time period was for him. Gaston, although just fourteen years old at that time, wanted to participate, to be engaged in the political “ferment” of the early 1970s⁵⁵.

⁵⁴ Jose states: “yo tenía doce años (0.5) llegaba del colegio a mi casa (1.6) °tomaba una bolsa° y me iba a hacer cuatro horas cola para comprar medio kilo de pan (.) negro (1.5) para cinco niños: cinco hermanos yo soy uno de los menores”. In English: “I was twelve years old (0.5) I came home from school to my house (1.6) °I took a bag with me° and I went to queue for four hours to buy half a kilo of bread (.) rancid (1.5) for five kids five brothers I am one of the youngest”.

⁵⁵ Gaston states: “eh ocurre e:h toda: esta: (0.8) esta cosa fulgurante política en la cual (0.6) e:h (1.0) en la cual eh había que tomar partido [...] e:h en lo- en la década de los setenta (.) eh ocurren situaciones como: que mi padre era dirigente político de un cierto partido (1.4) e:h y yo con ya catorce

Another resource Jose utilizes is to include in his account a comment about his father's situation during the pre-coup d'état period. In lines 12 and 13, Jose reverts to his normal speaking volume, stating that he is sympathetic to the military even though "mi papá trabajaba en una empresa de (.) estado/considering that my father worked in a state (.) enterprise". This utterance is significant as an attempt by Jose to present himself as having a comprehensive view of events. Jose presents his father's employer as evidence that although he (and by extension, Jose) would be expected to support Allende, he does not. By referring to his exceptional status, Jose enhances his argument because he implies that there should have been – and still are – good reasons for him to take the opposing position. The anticipated result is the strengthening of his perspective, as it is one not held for sake of convenience, but because of the reasons he gives in this extract.

The final discursive resource that is worth noting in Jose's statements, used to reinforce the reasonableness of his support for the coup, is linked to the previous device as well as the information in his account that other people (not his relatives) experienced "allanamientos"⁵⁶ and other violence that "thank God" he did not experience after the coup. "On the contrary", for him the coup brought an end to the situations he describes in lines 15 to 16, where he provides a list of four problems: "la corrupción, el abuso, la sinvergüenzura (.) la escasez/corruption, abuses, shamelessness (.) shortage". Jose acknowledges that whereas the coup signified relief and peace for him, for others it brought pain and suffering, as implied by his statement that his father avoided trouble by not engaging in politics as others did.

años yo quería participar". In English: "it occurs um all this (0.8) this political ferment thing which (0.6) um (1.0) in which um you had to take a side [...] um in the- in the decade of the seventies (.) um situations happen like my father being a political leader of a given party (1.4) um and I being already fourteen years old I wanted to participate".

⁵⁶ Resisting an illegal "allanamiento" in the 1970s and 1980s was practically impossible due to the extreme violence employed by secret – and not so secret – police (the DINA and the CNI; see footnote 62 in this chapter). The Pinochet regime argued that the "allanamientos", once their occurrence became widely known, were necessary to search for weapons, which the regime claimed were being kept by citizens throughout Chile. However, although the police rarely found weapons, "allanamientos" were common throughout the military regime, particularly in poor neighborhoods. The most important effect of "allanamientos" was to intimidate the population. The "allanamientos", or raids, most often conducted late at night, and consisted of breaking into houses, using extreme violence, and at times taking prisoners (some of whom were tortured and/or disappeared).

Several implications may be drawn from these lines which are significant for the construction of the pre- and post-coup time periods as well as for sharpening the distinction between the two groups. "The others" are those who encountered "problems" during the post-coup period because they had been politically active in the pre-coup period, implying that his opponents – those on the left – were responsible for the difficulties of the pre-coup period. On the other hand, for Jose "we" – the victims – are those who suffered the consequences of the irresponsibility of others before the coup; it is as if "we" or those on the right, were not involved in politics/conflict. Jose's statements suggest his view that those on the right in fact were not engaged in politics prior to, during of after the coup.

In this sense, a central polarity between engagement in the conflict versus distance from it is apparent. As expressed by Jose, it is as if one pole is applicable to one of the two groups, such that engaging in the conflict is directly linked with political problems, either as perpetrator or victim of them. What this argument suggests is that those on the left were deserving of the post-coup repression because of their responsibility in producing an extreme situation for the country before the coup. Jose does not address the right's responsibility for the left-wing's suffering; on the contrary, he implies that the left was solely responsible for the pre-coup conflict. The other pole of the dichotomy (distancing oneself from the conflict) is exclusively reserved for those on the right. Therefore, it is understandable why for Jose the responsibility of the right is not at issue, since he views this group as removed from the conflict, as merely observing.

As a result, those on the left who produced problems before the coup, that is, the victimizers of Jose's group, became after the coup those who experienced problems, that is, the victims of the post-coup period. Thus, those who were victims in the pre-coup period found relief and peace with the coup. The dual temporal frame is largely articulated by locating the victims in a period of time, either during the pre-coup period or the post-coup period. Victims and victimizers are displayed by Jose as membership categories which effectively work for the construction of a dialogical temporality, a temporality in which the other (the opponent) is always present, first as the victimizer and later as the victim. However, Jose does not ascribe victimizer

status to the right, referring to the right's suffering as significant enough to justify their support for the coup d'état.

In summary, Jose expresses explicit support for the coup d'état in lines 5 and 6. He then underscores his preference for the post-coup period by describing the pre-coup period using memories of everyday life, in which he pictures himself as a teenager victimized by the political turmoil.

Thus, the rhetorical strategy employed by the speaker to assert his preference for the post-coup period relates to how the previous period is addressed, to where he locates the victimization of his group in time. It is evident that the construction of temporality is intricately and dialogically bound to the deployment of the victim and victimizer categories in combination with the membership categories "us" (the victims of the pre-coup period) versus "them" (the victimizers of the pre-coup period and the victims of the post-coup period). Jose makes an explicit reference to blame "them" – those on the opposing side – for the socio-political conditions that necessitated the coup.

5.3 Reclaiming “forgotten” victimization in the pre-coup period

Extract 8 is produced just two minutes after extract 7, in a focus group composed solely of right-wing participants. As a result, extracts 7 and 8 may be seen as part of the same sequence of interactions, particularly considering that in extract 8 Marcela, an older participant, contributes additional details about how she views her group – explicitly stated as the “right” – as having been victims during the pre-coup period.

Between extracts 7 and 8, there is an interesting interaction between José, Eliana (a younger participant) and Marcela, in which Eliana tells the group she had understood that José was arrested by military forces and sent to the National Stadium⁵⁷, when it was actually an uncle of José’s who had this experience, as is clarified later. For Eliana, it seems incomprehensible that someone like José, who has described his support for the Pinochet regime, was taken to the National Stadium along with other political prisoners in the days after the coup. Eliana’s statement indicates her orientation to polarisation as *the* method or logic for making sense of the past. In short, what explains Eliana’s confusion is the pervasive influence of polarisation. When polarisation as an interpretative method is threatened, if the rules of the debate that are taken for granted are seemingly broken – José does this by expressing support for Pinochet and having a relative who was a victim of military repression – the participants themselves explicitly address in their talk-in-interaction what they view as a lack of consistency, indicating a need to restore the threatened order.

However, Marcela seems to have understood José’s story and overlaps with him in explaining to Eliana that it was José’s uncle, not José who was arrested. José adds that his uncle was imprisoned only for a short period due to a mistake “porque el no estaba en política/because he was not involved in politics” and released with the help of an influential relative – a military officer. He finishes the story by pointing out that despite his uncle’s experience, his grandparents are Pinochet supporters. Then, without delay, Marcela provides more details about how those on the right experienced fear and anguish during the Allende government; a suffering which according to Marcela has been forgotten.

⁵⁷ From September 1973 until late 1974, the National Stadium in Santiago was used as a centre of detention and torture by the Pinochet regime.

As in extract 7, the analysis of extract 8 highlights how a participant (Marcela) displays her preference for the post-coup period through asserting that those on the right were victims during the pre-coup period. Marcela pictures this time as one of extreme socio-political polarisation, displaying her understanding of this phenomenon as *the underlying social dynamic* that accounts for the coup d'état itself. She uses emotional arguments (fear and anguish) which allow her to make her preference for the post-coup period explicit as well as to inform the others of her political leaning. To enhance her argument, Marcela uses a given notion of memory to demand acknowledgement of the right's suffering.

Extract 8: Original transcription in Spanish (R1/26:40-28-10)

- 1 MARCELA no además el el clima que s- clima de
2 incertidumbre =
3 JOSE era horroroso
4 MARCELA =que tú no sabías que o golpe de estado o te=
5 JOSE horroroso
6 MARCELA =tocaba a ti si no::
7 JOSE si=
8 MARCELA =digamos la familia ya constituida de que se sabían
9 que eran de derecha que estaban en contra del
10 gobierno; (0.4) eh est- estaban ahí con sus
11 armas y estaban lista pa que (.) pasara un día; y: y
12 >el golpe hubiese sido al REVÉS digamos<
13 (0.6) y eso también yo creo que es un temor que
14 también se ha olvidado de las cosas que tú
15 decías como se llama que (1.5) qu- que t- te
16 gustaría eh re- re- remover era el temor
17 esa angustia (1.0) yo recuerdo mi padre y y- mi=
18 ¿? (tose)
19 MARCELA =padre terminó casi alcohólico al ter- al
20 final de la upé (.) era TAL su desesperación de no
21 poder lograr su proyecto de vida (1.0) >y las
22 amenazas y teniendo a sus trabajadores que no tenía
23 cómo pagarles que no tenía qué
24 darles< que era una angustia (0.3) que nosotros
25 como lolos no la sentíamos poh (.) nosotros íbamos a
26 las marchas íbamos al ta ah ah íbamos (0.6) un poquito
27 inconciente pero la generación mayo:r (.) sintió una
28 frustración enorme y y- la gente que perdió sus cosas
29 (0.7) la reforma agraria (0.4) las empresas que
30 perdieron mucha gente (0.7) entonces también había una
31 incertidumbre de adentro: muy dramática
32 (2.0)
33 MARCELA y miedo pu
34 JOSE miedo (.) mucho miedo mucho miedo
35 MARCELA miedo porque era era era el golpe o
36 era el golpe al revés (.) si no no como que
37 no había opción (.) si digamos el país no
38 daba (0.5) más: (.) no daba un minuto más;

Extract 8: English translation

- 1 MARCELA no besides the the atmosphere w- the atmosphere of
2 uncertainty ɾ=
3 JOSE was horrible↓
4 MARCELA =that you ɾdidn't knowɾ that or coup d'état=
5 JOSE horrible ↓
6 MARCELA =or it was your turn *si no::*
7 JOSE yes=
8 MARCELA =let's say the already established family known
9 as right-wing who were against the
10 government (0.4) um they we- were there with their
11 arms and they were ready for (.) any day and and
12 >the coup would've been THE OTHER WAY AROUND say<
13 (0.6) and this I think is as well a fear which
14 also has been forgotten of the things that you were
15 saying how do you say that (1.5) th- that y- you
16 would like um to di- to dig up it was the fear
17 that anguish (1.0) ɾI remember my father an- and my=
18 ? L((coughing))
19 MARCELA =father almost became an alcoholic at the en- at the
20 end of the *upé* (.) he was SO desperate about not
21 being able to achieve his life goals (1.0) >and the
22 threats and he having his workers and he didn't have
23 the means to pay them that he didn't have anything to
24 give them< that was an anguish (0.3) that we
25 as young people we didn't feel *poh* (.) we went to the
26 protests we went to ta ah ah we went (0.6) a bit
27 unaware but the older generation (.) felt
28 a huge frustration and an- people who lost their
29 things (0.7) the agrarian reform (0.4) the companies
30 which lost many people (0.7) so there was as well a
31 very dramatic uncertainty from inside
32 (2.0)
33 MARCELA and fear *pu*
34 JOSE fear (.) much ɾfear much fear
35 MARCELA Lfear because it it it was the coup or
36 the coup the other way around (.) *si no no* like there
37 was no option (.) let's say the country couldn't take
38 it any (0.5) more (.) couldn't take it one minute more

Marcela and Jose collaborate in asserting that the “uncertainty” of not knowing what the results of a coup would be was a “horrible” situation. The image they present is of a very delicate equilibrium between the forces in conflict, to the extent that there was no possible middle ground; it was “o golpe de estado o te tocaba a tí/or coup d’état or it was your turn”⁵⁸. Thus, the coup itself was an inevitable “event”. The pre-coup context is presented as delicate equilibrium, needing urgently a definition of which side was going to control the country.

In what follows, Marcela invokes those “familias ya constituidas⁵⁹/already established families” known to be right-wing, and thus opposed to the Allende government. Thus, it appears that labelling persons or families by their political affiliation was a relatively easy task in the past. This suggests some similarities with Graciela’s description in extract 3 of the kind of polarised behaviour that characterized Chileans, implying that people overreacted with violence with little provocation in the past. It appears that minor clues enabled people to easily categorize others. Elements such as this illustrate the participants’ strong orientation to the categories of right-wing and left-wing, not as ideological notions but as resources which participants themselves make relevant in their talk.

These “already established families”, as Marcela continues, were ready to take an active stance in the conflict, as they were armed in case the coup were “the other way around”. Then Marcela brings to the talk the anguish and fear that people like her father felt in the years prior to 1973. She claims that these experiences have been

⁵⁸ It is important to underscore the way in which the utterance in line 6 is left unfinished by Marcela adding “si no:”. The analyst/translator could not find an English translation that would suit the very subtle work of these words, such as “*si no:*” (line 6) or “*si no no*” (line 34). In Spanish the word *si* means “yes” or “if”, but since these utterances are incomplete, it is not possible to determine which meaning the speaker infers. There is also a third option for the meaning of Marcela’s “si no”: as the single word “sino”, that is, “instead of”. What is clear is that Marcela is delaying her talk by stating “si no” and not continuing the phrase (in line 6) or producing another one (line 34).

⁵⁹ It is worth pointing out that “familias ya constituidas/already established families” sounds as awkward in Spanish as it does in English. Typically, the adjective “constituidas/established” in the Chilean context refers to families made up of a father, a mother and children. However, the addition of the term “ya” (already) may imply a temporal dimension, that is to say, families that were already formed before the political upheaval of the late 1960s and early 1970s. At the risk of excessive interpretation, by opposition one could argue that other families were not “well established” because the parents were engaged in political activities.

forgotten (this is phrased in passive voice), and by pointing them out, Marcela is remembering them, as she does when recalling that her father almost became an alcoholic, in lines 17 and 19. In this sense, the reference to forgetting is used not just for the sake of description, but address Marcela's demand for acknowledgement as a right-winger to an unidentified other, in terms of retrieving the right-wing's suffering and ensuring its inclusion as an element of the debate.

In other words, emphasizing the victimization of the right during the pre-coup period or enhancing the legitimacy of the right-wing's suffering during the pre-coup period is a key element in accounting for the coup itself, since it contributes fear and anguish as the emotional ingredients for illustrating the context immediately prior to the 11th of September 1973. Thus, the urgency for change should be taken as almost self-evident. Marcela's last lines, uttered as a general claim based on her particular family story, "el país no daba (0.5) más: (.) no daba un minuto más↓/the country couldn't take it any (0.5) more (.) couldn't take it one minute more", shows how she moves easily from unpleasant individual memories to the country's political instability. This transition from individual to societal or national interests is perhaps intended to solidify her argument. She is inferring that the country had been composed mainly of individuals who, like her father, experienced emotional difficulties which would have been significant enough for them to support the military coup.

In lines 13 to 17, Marcela displays her understanding of Dario's claim (analyzed in extract 15), as if her view were a consequence of the latter. Yet, while she does so, she is also enriching and reformulating the given notion of memory in which both Dario's and Marcela's claims make sense. The novelty here is the introduction, with hesitations and pauses, of the verb "remover/to remove" in the utterance "de las cosas que tú decías como se llama que (1.5) qu- que t- te gustaría eh re- re- remover era el temor esa angus[†]tia/of the things that you were saying how do you say that (1.5) th- that y- you would like um to di- to dig up it was the fear that anguish". The "digging up fears and anguishes", despite how unpleasant it might be, provides Marcela with a significant resource for reinforcing the factuality of her claim about her own group's victimization.

Marcela's statement about forgetting implies somehow an understanding of memory as a container. The metaphor of memory as a container is a recurrent image within theoretical accounts of remembering and forgetting, as Middleton and Brown (2005) point out. These authors suggest that following a spacialized understanding of memory, images or memories of the past seen as kept in various layers (conscious and unconscious, or latent and explicit). The further back in time, the more profound or latent the layer of storage is, corresponds to part of the logic with which memory would work using the container metaphor. Yet this notion of how memory operates has its complement; the experience is not just the lapse of time between the events themselves and the recalling of them, but also a matter of the original's event's significance or salience – socially or personally – and/or or the utility of remembering it, in terms of how often the experience is recalled. Thus, very profound memories could be reproduced automatically, effortlessly, as long as the remembering is recurrent and recent. Through remembering, the content of significant memories could move from the deepest layers of memory to more superficial ones. Within this logic, the forgotten memories would be equivalent to those which have been placed in the container's lower levels. Yet it should always be possible to bring them to the present, because they are contained in memory, although the recalling of forgotten events may imply a considerable amount of will and effort.

In summary, in Marcela's statements a request for acknowledgment of the right-wing's emotional suffering during the pre-coup period is mainly articulated through the notion of recovering specific aspects of the past that have been forgotten by many. Thus, a way of stimulating memory work is to affirm the forgetting of those memories the speaker would like others to recall; appealing to forgetting actually counteracts forgetting itself. The presence of "the other" is then implicit; but who ought to remember? Following the metaphor of the container, only those who share the same memories – no matter how deeply they are archived – or those who experienced the same past could be expected to remember as Marcela suggests. Therefore, Marcela could be seen as requesting that all those who belong to the right follow her suggestion. However, it is impossible to remember what one has not felt or experienced, and those on the left did not experience fear or anguish before 1973, so Marcela's request seems implausible if it is directed in a literal sense to left-

wingers. Instead, what seems more plausible is that Marcela is *virtually* inviting left-wingers to remember, or to acknowledge the suffering of those on the right

By requesting empathy with her side's dramatic, personal experiences (lines 30 and 31), Marcela as a right-winger makes the claim that she should be heard as a victim as well. In the end, both parties to the conflict – victims and perpetrators – are invited to acknowledge the other's version. It is not a matter of remembering the past, but of reconstructing it to enable coexistence. This notion of reconstruction of the past through acknowledging the other's perspective may be seen as "virtual" remembering or a use of remembering in metaphorical terms.

It is important to point out that Marcela's preference for the post-coup d'état period is established at the same time she recounts her anecdotes of the pre-coup period as a time of danger and risk. This way of describing the 1970s is, in some respects, the reverse of how the 1970s are pictured in left-wing participants' discourse (examples of this are extracts 9 and 10, in particular). In extract 10, rejection of the post-coup period is firmly implied in the way left-wing participants present themselves as subject to danger and persecution, while their support of the pre-coup period is evident in how they employ images of themselves as protagonists of the era's social and political changes. It seems that there is no need to explicitly state one's stance toward the conflict in the past; that information is supplied by the implications of the descriptions of the 1970s which indicate a preference for either the pre-coup or the post-coup period.

5.4 Condemning the post-coup period through support for the victims

Extract 9 is taken from the same mixed focus group as extract 6, with a roughly equal number of right-wing and left-wing participants, and is produced 10 minutes after extract 6 and more than 50 minutes after the discussion has begun. In extract 6, Federico, an older participant, uses the “eye of the hurricane” metaphor to illustrate the “matter of the seventy-three” and explain the difficulties the group, and Chilean society as a whole, encounter in arriving at consensus regarding the events of 1973. Then Federico shifts the topic of conversation in order to describe to the younger participants how hard life was in the past. To do so, Federico continues for several minutes to share anecdotes of the 1970s about the lack of resources (food and other items, public transportation, etc.) that negatively affected quality of life. He contrasts this with the quality of life in Chile today, which is characterized by a variety of consumer choices and a culture that positively values individual freedom. Federico ends his turn by concluding that “with no doubt” he prefers the present to the past.

Once Federico has finished his turn, the moderator gives the floor to the younger participants and one of them, Alberto, immediately produces an interesting account that includes several polarities which serve to divide the 1970s into two periods of time articulated by the year 1973. He ascribes freedom and happiness to the pre-coup period and fear and repression to the post-coup period. For Alberto, there were only two alternatives available to Chileans in the post-coup era: to completely exclude themselves from politics or to actively engage in political activities, which implied certain risks. This suggests a parallel with respect to how Jose in extract 7 introduces a similar polarity. Jose views those on the left as involved in the conflict during both periods (before and after 1973) and those on the right as *removed* from the conflict during that time.

In describing 1973 and the subsequent years, Alberto uses the expression “carne de cañón/cannon fodder”, which has been displayed previously in the conversation by Maria and Federico, both older participants. Maria employs the phrase “carne de cañón/cannon fodder” in minute 38 of the discussion to address a direct recrimination by Lucia, a younger participant, in terms of why Maria (and older participants in general) did not get involved in the conflict of 1973 “in a more

profound way". According to Lucia, "getting involved in the conflict" implies having superior moral values. In response, Maria produces a long account of her father, a refugee of the Spanish Civil War who emigrated to Chile, leaving a wife and daughter in Spain. The suffering of Maria's father's was transmitted to her. Given her experiences, Maria considers that "being more involved in the conflict" than she actually was would have meant becoming "carne de cañón/cannon fodder"; that is to say, it was not worthwhile to expose oneself to dangers associated with defending a particular ideology without taking into account the consequences one's family would face.

As already mentioned, Alberto's turn is preceded by statements from Federico, who argues that life was difficult and painful in the past, offering as an example the experience of his uncle, who was imprisoned and tortured in 1973 and then exiled in 1974. Subsequently, Federico adds a comment in which he explicitly refers to Maria's first use of the expression "carne de cañón/cannon fodder" 15 minutes before. He leaves unfinished the utterance "porque si uno se iba a meter justo ahí al tiro del cañón.../because if one was going there put oneself right in the line of fire...", implying that anyone should have seriously considered the risks in the context surrounding the year 1973 (the evidence being the story of his relative), before engaging in potentially dangerous activities. Even though Federico does not state the second part of the utterance, he makes the point that some people were irresponsible in exposing themselves to risk.

The discursive effects of the expression "carne de cañón/cannon fodder" in Maria's and Federico's contributions are significant, particularly since Alberto takes up the expression again and repeats it three times in the following extract. "Cannon fodder" is a compound term generally used in a military context to describe soldiers who are obliged by a superior to fight in an effort to achieve a strategic goal, but with little or no hope of defeating the enemy and with the knowledge that they will suffer extremely high casualties. In English, the second word in this compound term, "fodder", derives from a term for food for livestock. However, in this case the soldiers are the metaphorical food for cannons, just as in the literal translation of the Spanish "carne de cañón": meat for the cannons.

To Maria and Federico, active engagement in the conflict during the post-coup d'état period is equivalent to being "cannon fodder", that is to say, older participants are implying that the risks faced by those who were involved in the conflict were, to a certain level, known to them and their "sacrifice" was completely futile. However, by producing this description of those who later became "the victims", it is important to note that older participants are also accounting for why they did not become actively engaged in the conflict, in response to Lucia's statements several turns before. The "cannon fodder" description used to refer to those who actively fought against the Pinochet regime should be understood in the context in which it is produced. That is, a context in which the result of the past conflict – the total defeat of those opposed to the Pinochet regime – is known to the speakers, and the older participants are being asked by younger participants to account for their actions or the position they took in the past.

Treating the victims as "cannon fodder" also links the discussion with issues of human agency, in the sense of taking away from the victims the possibility of making an independent decision regarding whether to get involved in the conflict. In other words, by describing the victims as "cannon fodder", Maria and Federico disregard the victims' agency, simultaneously ruling out alternative and perhaps more positively valued categories such as martyr or hero.

Having introduced the interactional context in which extract 9 is produced, the analysis then focuses on how Alberto's statements serve to reinforce the binary character of the 1970s. Considering the previous uses of the expression "cannon fodder" in the conversation, the analysis centres on how Alberto defends those previously treated as such, as he constructs a polarity for describing how opponents of the coup acted during the post-coup period. People could remain silent and passive, or they could become "cannon fodder", the only option available to those who chose to be involved in the conflict. The former category is viewed as less morally valuable than the latter and consequently, Alberto imagines himself during the late 1970s as a member of the "cannon fodder" category. In doing so, he also reveals his rejection of the post-coup period through where he locates his group's victimization in time.

Extract 9: Original transcription in Spanish (M1/51:57-53:26)

- 1 ALBERTO ... como yo viví el juego; (.) lo primero que me
2 imaginé (0.5) yo en el setenta veinticuatro años
3 (0.5) lo pasé la raja (1.2) yo c- (.) viví todo; en
4 los sesenta; (0.2) en mi juventud así
5 de lo:s (0.6) quince a los veinticuatro; ahí
6 XIMENA L_heh heh heh
7 ALBERTO yo pero feliz feliz en mi mundo; esto es lo mejor que
8 existe; (0.9) no me veo estudiando me veo pasándolo
9 súper bie:n
10 (...)
11 ALBERTO pero; (0.3) ya como ya pasando como para el setenta y
12 tres y todo dije ya (0.4) yo en el setenta y tres qué
13 hubiera hecho? (1.2) ¿o sea: ʔ
14 XIMENA L_hbuena pregunta
15 ALBERTO yo; (0.2) CLARO es que esa era la pregunta pa todos yo
16 encuentro así (.) heh pa nosotros °obviamente° (0.9)
17 yo no me hubiera visto; (0.6) debajo de la mesa
18 (0.3) viendo que las cosas pasaran (1.2) o sea pa mi
19 la opinió:n (0.6) reclamarla aunque no
20 salg- no sirva mucho (0.8) porque nunca
21 sirve pero: (0.5) guardarse
22 CAMILA L_hno
23 ALBERTO =lo que uno siente (0.7) eh (.) mientras todo lo va
24 pasando por encima (0.4) mi derecho a reclamar por
25 algo; (0.7) yo lo: (0.2) lo tomo (.) lo pido
26 (0.6) carne de cañón? sí; hubiera sido carne de
27 cañón (0.4) °hubiera estado ahí° (0.6) hubiera estado
28 detenido? sí; yo creo que hubiera estado
29 detenido si no me hubiera ido? (0.5) que era mi
30 opción también ((riéndose))
31 CAMILA L_heh p_heh heh
32 XIMENA L_heh heh heh
33 ALBERTO >antes claro porque yo creo< que si hubiera sabido que
34 como terminaba esto (.) me voy (.) altiro (0.9) pero
35 sabí; yo hubiera sido carne de cañón en ese
36 momento (.) no hubiera dejado que las cosas pasaran:
37 (0.2) sin reclamar (0.5) no hubiera podido
38 (.) estar ahí: (1.0) <agachado esperando: que pasen
39 las olas>

Extract 9: English translation

- 1 ALBERTO ... as I lived the game (.) the first thing I
2 imagined (0.5) me in the seventy twenty-four years old
3 (0.5) I had a great time (1.2) I w- (.) I lived
4 everything in the sixties (0.2) in my youth just as
5 from (0.6) fifteen to twenty-four ¶there
6 XIMENA ¶heh heh heh
7 ALBERTO I but happy happy in my world this is the best that
8 there is (0.9) I don't see myself studying I see
9 myself having a ¶good time
10 (...)
11 ALBERTO but (0.3) then moving on like to the seventy-three
12 and all I said okay (0.4) me in the seventy-three what
13 I would have done? (1.2) ¶I mean ¶
14 XIMENA ¶good question¶
15 ALBERTO I (0.2) RIGHT this was the question for all of us I
16 think just as (.) heh for us °obviously° (0.9)
17 I wouldn't have seen myself (0.6) under the table
18 (0.3) watching things happen (1.2) I mean to me the
19 opinion (0.6) claiming it even if nothing come- if it
20 isn't very useful (0.8) because it's never useful ¶but
21 (0.5) to keep inside
22 CAMILA ¶no
23 ALBERTO =what you feel (0.7) um (.) while everything is
24 passing over you (0.4) my right to claim
25 something (0.7) I (0.2) I take it (.) I demand it
26 (0.6) cannon fodder? yes I would had been cannon
27 fodder (0.4) °I would had been there° (0.6) would I
28 had been detained? yes I think I would have been
29 detained if I hadn't gone? (0.5) which was my
30 option ¶too ((laughing))
31 CAMILA ¶heh ¶heh heh
32 XIMENA ¶heh heh heh
33 ALBERTO >before of course because I think< that if I would
34 have known how this ended (.) I leave (.) right away
35 (0.9) but you know I would have been cannon fodder at
36 that moment (.) I wouldn't have let things happen
37 (0.2) without claiming (0.5) I wouldn't have been able
38 to (.) be there (1.0) <crouching down waiting for
39 the waves to pass>

In lines 1 to 9, Alberto produces a positive depiction of the pre-coup d'état period that is enhanced by the phrase "lo pasé la raja", in line 3, an informal expression used by Chileans to express that "everything was just perfect or couldn't have been better". In addition, in lines 7 and 8, Alberto insists with "yo pero feliz feliz en mi mundo↑ esto es lo mejor que existe↑/I but happy happy in my world this is the best that there is". A few lines have been omitted from the transcription since they do not significantly contribute to the analysis; in these lines, older and younger participants collaborate in portraying the pre-coup period as a time when young "hippies" were able to travel freely inside and outside Chile.

In contrast with how straightforward it seems to him to imagine himself in the early 1970s, Alberto hesitates in his introduction to his description of what he would have done in the year 1973, with the utterance "ya como ya pasando como para el setenta y tres y todo dije ya (0.4) yo en el setenta y tres qué hubiera hecho?/but (0.3) then moving on like to the seventy-three and all I said okay (0.4) me in the seventy-three what I would have done?" followed by a significant 1.2-second pause. This introduction implies that for Alberto there may be more than one answer to the question "What I would have done?" This is reinforced by the moderator's comment in line 14 that his question is a good one.

The moderator's comment seems to indicate that what Alberto is producing in his discourse is of interest to her, and thus, operates as an incentive for him to continue. In fact, in Alberto's next statement, the importance of the question is emphasized by his affirmation that this is "obviously" the inquiry "us" (the younger people) must face with regard to the debate. It is important to underscore how through this interaction Alberto and Ximena emphasize the importance of, or the obligation of, "having done something" in relation to the events surrounding the 1973 coup. The question "What would I have done" can then be heard in a context of polarisation in the sense of "With whom would I have identified?" In other words, the issue is how participants orient to polarisation by implying the importance of aligning oneself with one of the two sides of the debate. Subsequently, Alberto continues by displaying an account of what he would *not* have done, that is, hide and/or protect himself "debajo de la mesa/under the table" passively watching events unfold.

Several aspects of Alberto's contribution indicate how he normatively articulates inaction or defensive behaviour in the face of military repression as a less valuable response compared to the reaction of those who have been described as "cannon fodder". Despite the danger, the active stance is considered the morally correct one. To produce his normative claim, Alberto utilizes three significant rhetorical strategies: a general ethical claim regarding the correctness of dissidence; a pattern of asking and answering his own questions; and the use of a metaphor.

First, in lines 19 to 25, Alberto presents an abstract and general claim about the importance of the individual right to express dissidence, as the moral argument to support what the victims – the cannon fodder – did in the past. Thus, the actions of the victims which could have resulted in suffering or even death are articulated as simply "asking" and "taking" their "right to claim something", as opposed to simply "watching things happen".

Alberto continues by employing a second significant rhetorical strategy: asking questions which he answers himself, taking up again the "carne de cañón/cannon fodder" expression. In line 26, he states "carne de cañón? sí↓ hubiera sido carne de cañón (0.4) °hubiera estado ahí° (0.6) hubiera estado detenido? sí↓ yo creo que hubiera estado detenido/cannon fodder? yes I would have been cannon fodder (0.4) °I would have been there° (0.6) would I have been detained? yes I think I would have been detained". These statements, expressed as if he were thinking out loud, allow Alberto to present the stand he imagines he would have taken during the conflict as one in which problems or ambivalences have been resolved with a great degree of certainty. Alberto himself produces the questions others could ask him and without delay produces the answers, a powerful device for anticipating non-sympathetic hearing.

The last significant resource Alberto displays in his turn is the use of metaphors to pejoratively refer to one side of the polarity: those who were not cannon fodder. Although Alberto acknowledges that it is controversial to support the victims, he would rather be one of them; this is apparent from how he pictures those who protected themselves in order not to become victims. For him, there are only two categories of people among those who lived in the past: those who actively defended

their rights and those who passively observed how the former group was victimized. Alberto's description of the second category is articulated with pejorative images such as being "under the table" (line 17) or as, in lines 36 to 39, he explicitly says that he "no hubiera podido (.) estar ahí:/I wouldn't have been able to (.) be there" as a passive observer allowing "things" to happen "sin reclamar... <agachado esperando: que pasen las olas>/without claiming... <crouching down waiting for the waves to pass>". The effects of ascribing to the observer category a moral claim of this kind explain why Alberto prefers to present himself as a victim rather than an observer.

Many implications can be derived from this image, all of which tell us how Alberto manages to construct the category of observer as an undesirable one. However, the use of the waves metaphor to portray the dangers people faced in the past is important. Natural or climate forces are invoked to characterize the conflict as being as inevitable and powerful as natural disasters (as in extract 6, the "eye of the hurricane" metaphor). By using these metaphors, participants attribute to the past conflict the features of natural phenomena, the intrinsic force of which is capable of destroying anything in its path, leaving individuals helpless. Thus, it is as if the past conflict followed its own development (or "agenda") beyond human control. While humans may be able to mitigate the unfortunate effects of waves or other natural phenomena, we are powerless to stop them.

There was another option available, according to Alberto: to leave the country. Nevertheless, he dismisses this as an option for victims and observers in the past, when he states, in lines 33 to 35, that leaving the country only made sense later, once it is known "como terminaba esto... pero sabí↑ yo hubiera sido carne de cañón en ese momento/how this ended... but you know I would have been cannon fodder at that moment". The implication is that leaving the country is as morally reprehensible as being a passive observer, since both alternatives are forms of excluding oneself from the conflict and, according to Alberto, engagement in the conflict is positively valued.

Despite the strength of Alberto's arguments regarding the moral superiority of the victims, there are some small but significant elements in his statements that deserve more attention, since they also imply a certain degree of ambivalence and futility

with regard to the victims that Alberto subtly tries to manage. First, in lines 19 to 22, when defending the right to express dissent, he inserts a comment regarding how senseless it is to give one's opinion, since "it isn't very useful" or, as he reformulates immediately thereafter, "porque nunca sirve pero:/because it's never useful but". This utterance may be heard as criticism of simply stating one's right to dissent versus "doing things, taking actions". Subsequently, Alberto makes another argument to strengthen the active stance. This is complemented by lines 24 and 25, where he states that he would have done more than simply claim his right to dissent; he would have taken it, he would have demanded it.

Second, although Alberto skilfully takes up again the expression "carne de cañón/cannon fodder" (previously introduced in a pejorative way by older participants) through a fluent game of questions and answers, the term cannon fodder is an unfortunate one, since it implies the waste of human life. He manages to attribute to those described as such the value of "having done something" in order "not to let things happen" without resistance. But, when Alberto introduces, then immediately dismisses, the third option of leaving the country, he simultaneously underscores his dilemma. In Alberto's terms, "having known the result" operates as the only possible justification for excluding oneself from the past conflict; yet the result was only knowable afterwards. Finally, he produces a repair in which he states that "at that moment", without knowing the final result, he would have put himself in the position which today is seen as being cannon fodder.

In summary, in extract 9, in the context of a mixed focus group, a young left-wing participant articulates a binary temporality of the 1970s, in which the pre-coup d'état period is described as a time of happiness and freedom, while the post-coup d'état period is articulated through images of extreme fear and danger. This way of articulating the temporal division of the 1970s is precisely the opposite of what we have seen in extracts 7 and 8. There, Jose and Marcela significantly show the same argument of victimization and emotional experiences for asserting their rejection of the pre-coup period. In each of these extracts the participants by displaying disapproval of one period, imply which of the two opposing membership categories they belong to. Thus, the two sides construct past narratives which are dissimilar in content, yet mirror each other in structure.

In extract 9, it is important to underscore how Alberto first suggests that Chileans had two alternatives for action in the past conflict and subsequently rules out one of these alternatives. He rejects the passive stance with respect to the post-coup conflict on the basis that such a position was cowardly. Nevertheless, this perspective on the victims' sacrifice is only possible once the post-coup d'état period is past – once it is knowable. While the events were occurring, taking an active position in the conflict, according to Alberto, was the morally correct stance. The possibility of removing oneself from the post-coup political fight is only conceded in retrospect, once the final result of the story is known, that is, the victory of the right over the left.

On the whole, Alberto's account pictures the past as a period in which every Chilean was or should have been actively involved in the conflict, at least those on the left. This suggests the default condition of those on the left – as a membership category – was to be subject to the dynamic of polarisation, to be in opposition to others, who were also subject to the same dynamic. In this respect, Alberto's assertion is precisely a normative claim to those who, having been alive at that time, were not as involved in the conflict as he believes they should have been. Alberto argues against the viewpoint of older participants and praises those who took an active stance against the military government regardless of whether they may be qualified today as "cannon fodder".

The defence of the victims Alberto pursues is understandable, since his statements are oriented to defend the mechanism of polarisation, preserving the sense of pervasiveness with which polarisation operates. In some respects this is equivalent to what Marcela does in extract 8, when she enhances the victim status of her membership category. But while Marcela invokes the notion of forgetting, Alberto does not need to appeal to other resources since, it may be argued, the victimization of those on Alberto's side is widely acknowledged in the debate, whereas victimization of those on the right is not.

5.5 Disapproving the post-coup period through asserting victimization

Extract 10 is taken from the same focus group as extract 3 (composed of only left-wing participants) and precedes it by 10 minutes. Prior to extract 10, participants have already talked for 26 minutes, during which they each produce, in an orderly fashion, an initial comment about the game. The older participants of this group – as in almost every one of the focus groups of this research – point out general differences between life in the past and the present. They complain that society today is individualistic and competitive, yet they value that there is more space for one's personal life than in the past. Conversely, the younger participants complain that it is more difficult today to be involved in collective projects than in the past. The younger participants, when imagining themselves in the 1970s, tend to agree about how involved they would have been in political projects, just as Alberto does in extract 9. Emma, a younger participant, explicitly expresses nostalgia about a past in which, she says, there was a "sense of community" that is absent today. This is reinforced by other participants' statements, for instance, about how economic and social differences were not as pronounced as they are in Chile today.

After a long pause of 6 seconds, Emma takes the floor once again, introducing the idea that today Chilean society is "full of fear", providing as evidence of this that parents are overwhelmingly concerned with paedophilia. When Emma states this, Graciela, an older participant, says fear "ese fue el gran tema/was the big issue", which is followed by second assessments (Pomerantz, 1984) about how scared people were of the military in the past. According to Fernando, an older participant, younger generations do not experience fear the way older generations have. To make his point, he provides the example that his son is afraid of giving junk food to his grandson, a seemingly trivial concern compared to fear of military repression.

Then there is a very significant pause of 5 seconds between Graciela and the next turn taken by Vicente, a younger participant. Vicente states that until that point in the talk, as the group "hemos referido la pregunta a los setenta antes de/we have referred to the question to the seventies prior to", leaving it unfinished. He continues, with contributions from other members, with an interesting account that is similar to Alberto's (extract 9), to describe the central place of the year 1973 in dividing the

1970s into two periods of time. For Vicente, because of “la fuerza de los acontecimientos/the force of events” after 1973, he “hubiera olvidado (1.2) toda esta otra perspectiva/would have forgotten (1.2) all this other perspective” (here the “other perspective” refers to the many things he could have done prior to the year 1973). Fernando subsequently states that despite the difficulties faced in the post-coup period, “yo hacía cosas (1.0) tal vez no muy relevantes pero uno se sentía haciendo cosas/I did things (1.0) maybe not very important but one felt like one was doing things”.

In contrast with Fernando, who feels he “did many things” after the coup d’état, Pamela, another older participant, presents an image of herself as completely overwhelmed and paralyzed in the years following the coup. It is important to point out how Vicente’s preceding contribution, which frames a timeline segmented by the year 1973, is followed by the display of Fernando’s and Pamela’s memories. Vicente pictures the post-coup d’état period as a time in which he would have not been able to continue with his usual activities, a time in which he would have “olvidado/forgotten” to do so. This suggests some similarities with how Gaston, an older participant from another left-wing focus group, depicts the same period of time as one of “oscurantismo/darkness”. Vicente’s description of the past has the effect of stimulating the older participants to remember and produce more details that reinforce the image of darkness suggested by Gaston and Vicente himself.

The analysis of extract 10, divided into two parts, focuses on how a binary temporality of the 1970s is accomplished through the speaker’s assertion of her group’s victimization during the post-coup period. The temporal distinction between the pre- and post-coup periods is enhanced by emotional and psychological dichotomies such as euphoria and extroversion, to describe the general ambience of the earlier period, versus dread and introversion, which characterize the post-coup period for her. Pamela’s discourse is oriented to explaining her actions during the second period, accounting for why she would have had to maintain a distance from the conflict to protect herself and her family.

It is important to point out that, in general, older left-wing participants invited to join the focus groups of this research were extremely cautious in referring to their

personal experiences during the post-coup period, both in left-wing and even more so in mixed focus groups. Sometimes they expressed their reluctance to talk about the past. In this sense, extract 10 is an interesting piece of talk in which an older participant defends the protective stance that Alberto in the previous extract has criticized as a cowardly position during the post-coup period. Alberto also suggests that by taking such a protective stance, people in the post-coup period would have marginalized themselves from the conflict; this is a normatively reprehensible stance, in contrast with the active stance of those who became the victims – the “cannon fodder”. But in extract 10, Pamela displays another argument: people like her could not have taken the stance Alberto praises, precisely because they could not remove themselves from the conflict. In other words, they did not attempt to marginalize themselves from the conflict; rather they were subject to its consequences, to the dynamic of polarisation.

Extract 10a: Original transcription in Spanish (L2/26:40-27:52)

- 1 FERNANDO pero funo se sentía haciendo ꞑcosasꝑ
2 VICENTE ꞑheh heh heh
3 (2.5)
4 PAMELA no yo en ese momento después del golpe yo no me sentí
5 haciendo muchas cosas yo si- me sentí súper eh (1.5)
6 eh (2.2) súper pasada a llevar o (.) súper los sueños
7 se fueron a la mierda la verdadꝑ
8 VICENTE heh heh=
9 PAMELA =e::h ꞑsúper pasada a llevar
10 XIMENA ꞑo frustrada
11 PAMELA ah?
12 XIMENA frustrada
13 PAMELA FRUSTRADA ENORMEMENTE y además: (0.6) eh tuve
14 hijos (0.2) eh poquito después yo tuve eh la mi
15 hija mayor nació el el setenta y nueve: (1.5) y
16 también y pensando QUE LLEGABA LA DINA en cualquier
17 momento a mi casa y yo estaba con mi hija ahí o
18 sea unos miedos ancestrales pero:: así:: (1.0) eh
19 (1.3) A A(H) >ancestrales mis(h)mos< o sea que eh e::h
20 MUY PRIMARIOS MUY BASICOS MUY:: (0.3) NO ERA UN
21 MIEDO IDEOLOGIZADOꝑ NO ERA UN MIEDO: NOꝑ ERA UN MIEDO:
22 MUY PRIMARIO yo lo ꞑsiento y lo per- y como que-
23 XIMENA ꞑmm=
24 PAMELA =y también una contención a esos hijos y esas
25 cosas como muy: >fuerte< como muy m yo MADRE no
26 poder expresar casi nada de MIEDO a
27 esos hijos para que (.) o expresarles no se
28 tengo ahí una cosa:=
29 GRACIELA =y que no se pusieran ellos en peligro=
30 PAMELA =PARA que no se pusieran ellos en ꞑpeligro=
31 GRACIELA ꞑclaro porque
32 PAMELA =y pa que ellos no:: y pa proteger a ellos tambiénꝑ=
33 GRACIELA =claro ꞑclaro
34 PAMELA ꞑpor que::(1.0) entonc- eh (0.8) complejo

Extract 10a: English translation

- 1 FERNANDO but fone felt like one was doing ꞑthingsf
2 VICENTE ꞑheh heh heh
3 (2.5)
4 PAMELA I did not at that moment after the coup I did not feel
5 like I was doing many things I did- I felt very um
6 (1.5) mm (2.2) very much pushed aside (.) very the
7 truth is that our dreams went to shit
8 VICENTE heh heh=
9 PAMELA =um ꞑvery much pushed aside
10 XIMENA ꞑor frustrated
11 PAMELA what?
12 XIMENA frustrated
13 PAMELA ENORMOUSLY FRUSTRATED and besides (0.6) um I had
14 children (0.2) um a little after I had um the my
15 oldest daughter was born in seventy-nine (1.5) and
16 also and thinking that the DINA COULD ARRIVE at any
17 moment to my house and I was with my daughter there I
18 mean some ancestral fears but such as (1.0) um
19 (1.3) O O(H) >ancestral themselves< I mean that um um
20 VERY PRIMAL VERY BASIC VERY (0.3) IT WASN'T AN
21 IDEOLOGIZED FEAR IT WAS NOT A FEAR NO IT WAS A VERY
22 PRIMAL FEAR I ꞑfeel and I perc- it and like
23 XIMENA ꞑmm=
24 PAMELA =and also a holding back from those children and those
25 things like very >heavy< like very m- I A MOTHER not
26 to be able to express almost no fear to
27 those children so (.) or express to them I don't know
28 there is something there=
29 GRACILEA =and that they shouldn't put themselves at risk=
30 PAMELA =SO THAT they were not put at ꞑrisk =
31 GRACIELA ꞑright because
32 PAMELA =and for them not to and to protect them too=
33 GRACIELA =right ꞑright
34 PAMELA ꞑbecause (1.0) so- um (0.8) complex

Prior to Pamela's turn, in line 3 there is a significant pause of 2.5 seconds, which in addition to the other important pauses within Pamela's statements (in line 5, a 1.5-second pause and in line 6, a 2.2-second pause), indicate the dispreferred structure (Pomerantz, 1984) in her discrepancy with Fernando. The argument is, then, explained in terms of not being able to "do things" for two reasons. One of the reasons is expressed as a certainty when Pamela states that the "truth is" that "los sueños se fueron a la mierda/the dreams went to shit"⁶⁰.

The other reason Pamela gives for being unable to "do things" is introduced in line 6: she was "super pasada a llevar/very much pushed aside", and she repairs it in line 11. To be "pasada a llevar" is a Chilean expression that refers to a situation in which one's rights are not respected or when a hierarchical order is infringed. The rough equivalent in English is to "bypass others" or "ignore or infringe on the rights of others". Nevertheless, the more literal meaning of "pasar a llevar algo" is associated with knocking an object over or bumping into an object, that is to say, the expression implies that someone is being physically pushed aside.

Pamela's statements produce a second assessment (Pomerantz, 1984) from the moderator, who adds "or frustrated", which is taken up by Pamela in line 13 as a new second assessment upgrading the "level of frustration" that she experienced after the coup d'état. Being "enormously frustrated" is stated loudly and exemplified by Pamela's concerns as a mother with respect to her newborn daughter⁶¹. Similar to

⁶⁰ As pointed out in section 3.4.3 Other methodological issues, translation provides significant insights for the analysis. The search for an English translation of the phrase "los sueños se fueron a la mierda la verdad" is a clear example. The last part of the phrase in Spanish "la verdad" might be easily overlooked, but through the translation process, the analyst has an opportunity to appreciate what these two words are doing: they are pointing to how true is for Pamela what she is claiming for. Because the word-for-word English equivalent "the dreams went to shit the truth" is not adequate, the translator/analyst is forced to search for alternatives that respect the sense in which the utterance was produced in Spanish. Alternatives, then, are "the dreams went to shit really" or "the truth is that the dreams went to shit".

⁶¹ Invoking the "mother" category may sound familiar to a reader of Conversation Analysis literature. The well-known article by Harvey Sacks (1972b) "On the analyzability of stories by children", which starts with the phrase "The baby cried. The mommy picked it up", inaugurates the field of membership categorization analysis. In this article, the author explores how is it possible that the most common understanding of both phrases together is that the mother is the baby's mother and not just any mother. He concludes that membership categories such as "mother" are attached to others such as "baby", "son", "daughter", "father", and the like, pointing to "family" as a membership category

Patricia in extract 5 (from a right-wing focus group), Pamela brings the category of “mother” to manage her investment in the talk, since by presenting herself as a mother, her concerns and memories may be heard in a particular way. Her use of this membership category seems to be a device to ensure that her memories are perceived as genuine and plausible.

In line 14, Pamela makes a significant comment about temporality when she describes becoming a mother “poquito después... mi hija mayor nació el setenta y nueve/a little after... my oldest daughter was born in seventy-nine”. Note how the year 1979 is described as close in time to the year 1973, as if six chronological years later were just “poquito después/a little after”. During that period of time (compressed around the year 1973) Pamela’s memories are those of being the mother of a newborn and needing to protect her daughter from the DINA⁶², which represented a permanent threat (“en cualquier momento/at any moment”), as well as to protect her from Pamela’s own heightened sense of fear.

To underscore the level of her fear, and thus her victim status, Pamela uses resources that stand out in the detailed transcription in lines 20 and 21: her voice grows louder and she repeats the same terms. She describes the fears as “no era un miedo ideologizado↓ no era un miedo: no↑ era un miedo: muy primario/it wasn’t an ideologized fear, it was not a fear, no, it was a very primal fear”. Her description of the emotions she felt in the post-coup d’état period as “ancestral”, adding emphasis with “ancestrales mis(h)mos/ancestral themselves”⁶³ as she reformulates in line 19,

device. And for each family category, there are category-bound activities; mothers are supposed to take care of their babies and babies are supposed to cry for help.

⁶² DINA, the *Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional* (National Intelligence Office), was a secret police force that engaged in severe political repression, including illegal arrests, torture and, in several cases, death and/or disappearance (detained-disappeared). The DINA was officially created by Pinochet in 1974 (although it had been operating since September 1973) and in 1977, it was replaced by the CNI, *Central Nacional de Inteligencia* (National Intelligence Centre). Courts in the United States and Chile have found former DINA members guilty of the assassination of Allende’s former foreign secretary, Orlando Letelier and his American secretary in September 1976 in Washington D.C., as well as other criminal acts and human rights abuses.

⁶³ Here, qualifying fears as “ancestrales mismos” makes no strict sense in Spanish, since “ancestrales” is an adjective, not a noun to which “themselves” can be attached. Thus, the translation “ancestral themselves” also sounds awkward. Nevertheless, in the Spanish, “ancestrales mismos” reinforces the primordial nature of the fear Pamela describes.

has a significant rhetorical effect in terms of implying that her experience holds a sort of unquestionable quality. "Primary emotions" are not easily forgotten with the passage of time; moreover, the implication is that they *should* be remembered because they play a central role in survival.

In addition, Pamela's statements situate primary and ancestral fears, as genuine emotions that cannot be controlled by one's own will, in opposition to ideologized fears which are produced for a given purpose, oriented by political motives, or faceless genuine emotions. In this sense, "miedos ancestrales/ancestral fears" and "ancestrales mis(h)mos/ancestral themselves" are not negligible, as she gives her memories a privileged status. Her memories are drawn from a very special experience, one that is genuine and uncontrollable, and which she cannot forget. The invocation of "primary and ancestral fears" is meant to have an effect on sympathetic listeners, as is evident in the following lines, where Graciela produces a second assessment without delay. In other words, the argument of having lived with ancestral fears should produce sympathy as a preferable response.

As has been presented in Chapter 4 through several extracts, the talk that focus group participants produce is filled with references to emotional states, particularly in extract 4, where polarisation is addressed as a result of emotional experiences anchored in the past. The general discursive effect of this is to justify the maintenance of polarisation in the debate, since polarisation is described as a direct consequence of extreme emotional experiences. The power of these emotions causes the participants to experience them again when they remember as many as 30 years later. As Edwards (1997) suggests, "Emotional states may figure as... evidence of what *kind of events or actions precede or follow them*" (p. 170, emphasis in the original). In this case, Pamela uses her emotional state as evidence of how horrific the actions of the DINA (and, thus, the military) were. In other words, the display of Pamela's fear and other emotions serve as a key piece in asserting the victimization of her group.

In the continuation of extract 10, Pamela takes several lines to explain her view of the military coup as an abrupt breaking-point with respect to the "many activities" of which she, and others with whom she identifies, were the protagonists during the

early part of the 1970s. In doing so, Pamela displays the emotional polarity of “dread versus euphoria” and the “introvert versus extrovert” psychological dichotomy. In addition, Pamela refers to how the “others” have wrongly understood the group to which she belonged during the polarised past. She asserts this on the basis on her own experience, as if this was an enough source of legitimacy to state so.

Extract 10b: Original transcription in Spanish (L2/27:51-28:51)

33 GRACIELA =claro ꞑclaro
34 PAMELA Lpor que:: (1.0) entonc- eh (0.8) complejo
35 (1.3) compleja situa- COMPLEJO PASO (.) de todos tus
36 sueñosꞑ(0.4) logrado:s >eso fascinante que íbamos a
37 cambiar el mundo que íbamos a hacer todas
38 esas cosas y que hicimos mu- miles de cosasꞑ<
39 después de un día para otro <eso s-
40 se paraꞑ> (1.0) la gente habla- empezó a hablar de que
41 a ti te manipula:ron y que nos manipular:on a todo:s
42 y que no se qué (.) se habló: mucho de eso- de eso
43 tambiéꞑ (1.1) yo no me sentí manipulada pero
44 se habló mucho de que éramos mani- de que podíamos
45 ser manipuladosꞑ (0.9) y:: mm (0.7) y
46 después te pasai al otro al otro (0.2)
47 <con un susto pavorosoꞑ> (1.7) y de un- fde una
48 EUFORIA A UN ꞑPAVO:RÉ
49 VICENTE LHEH heh
50 (0.8)
51 PAMELA una cosa super (.) fuerte de vivi- de: (.) de sentirla
52 en el cuerpo de vivirla de- de soportarla
53 (0.9)
54 PAMELA Y A MI ESO a ti te dio energías >a lo mejor tu erai
55 mayor que mi en ese momento< (.) yo era más joven y m-
56 y me metí pa ade:ntro como: (1.8) porque eran: eh
57 (0.3) no >no había otra manera de poder hacerlo en
58 ese minuto<

Extract 10b: English translation

- 33 GRACIELA =right ɾright
34 PAMELA ʌbecause (1.0) so- um (0.8) complex
35 (1.3) complex situa- COMPLEX STEP (.) of all your
36 dreams (0.4) achieved >that fascinating that we were
37 going to change the world that we were going to do all
38 those things and we did ma- thousands of things<
39 afterwards from one day to the next <that is- is
40 stopped> (1.0) people say- started to say that
41 you were manipulated and that they manipulated all of
42 us and I don't know what (.) it was very often said
43 that- also that (1.1) I did not feel manipulated but
44 it was often said that we were mani- that we could
45 have been manipulated (0.11) and mm (0.7) and
46 afterwards you pass to the other to the other (0.2)
47 <with a dreadful fear> (1.7) and from a- ffrom a
48 EUPHORIA TO a ɾDREAÐ
49 VICENTE ʌHEH heh
50 (0.8)
51 PAMELA a very (.) heavy thing to be liv- to (.) to feel it in
52 the body to live it to- to bear it
53 (0.11)
54 PAMELA TO ME THIS to you it gave you energies >maybe you were
55 older than me at that moment< (.) I was younger and I
56 and I went inside myself like (1.8) because there were
57 um (0.3) no >there was no other way to do it at
58 that moment<

The way in which Pamela describes what she (“we”) did during the pre-coup d’état period is not unique to her. Diana, Dora and Gaston, all older participants in the other two left-wing focus groups, and Angela, an older participant in a mixed focus group, produce similar accounts of themselves during the early 1970s in terms of the idealism of their actions, motivated by values such as social justice and equality. All claim to have completely suspended any activities as a result of the political repression strategies implemented after the coup.

In Pamela's view, one day was enough to produce a clear temporal boundary between the two periods (the pre- and post- coup d'état); in her words "de un día para otro <eso s- se para↓>/afterwards from one day to the next <that is- is stopped>", the "eso/that" referring to the "many or thousand things" she, and others on the left, did in the early 1970s. Pamela indicates that the coup d'état brought an unexpected end to a time in which the group she belonged to was the protagonist of worthwhile actions.

Two significant polarities are displayed in Pamela's statements which serve to enhance the division between the two periods. The first is the emotional polarity of moving from "euphoria to dread" and the second is the psychological polarity between introverted and extroverted states. Pamela attributes an euphoric feeling and an extroverted state to the pre-coup d'état period, while she ascribes dread and introversion to the post-coup d'état period. Each pole, then, of both polarities characterizes one of the periods of time. This has significant rhetorical effects in terms of providing a polarised emotional framework for remembering the past that is at stake.

To strengthen the distinction between the poles, in lines 51 to 52 Pamela points to how her experience holds a special "bodily" quality, stating that this was "una cosa super (.) fuerte de vivi- de: (.) de sentirla en el cuerpo de vivirla de- de soportarla/ a very (.) heavy thing to be liv- to (.) to feel it in the body to live it to- to bear it". Once again, the experiences of those who actually lived the past are presented as an argument that is difficult to counter; these experiences are articulated as having a "bodily" or visceral quality which are to some extent impossible to articulate verbally. As Pamela expresses in lines 27 and 28, "no sé tengo ahí una cosa:/I dont know there is something there" in describing her fear, she leaves something unsaid, as if she were overwhelmed by the difficulty of expressing herself.

In line 56, Pamela affirms that "me metí pa ade:ntro/I went inside myself", the only option available to her in the post-coup period, "porque eran: eh (0.3) no >no había otra manera de poder hacerlo en ese minuto</because there were um (0.3) no >there was no other way to do it at that moment". The utterance "no había otra manera/there

was no other way” indicates how Pamela uses the polarity between extroverted and introverted states, as if each were a direct consequence of the political context.

As a final consideration of extract 10, it is interesting how Pamela introduces, in lines 40 to 45, a complaint about how others referred to the pre-coup d'état actions of her group. She claims that after the coup, her group was unfairly or inaccurately viewed as having been manipulated by the leadership of the left. She insists several times on that point, finally stating in line 43 that “yo no me sentí manipulada pero se habló mucho de que éramos mani- de que podíamos ser manipulados↑/I did not feel manipulated but it was very often said that we were mani- that we could be manipulated”. Here, Pamela explicitly brings to the talk the other side's version, implying that even as the events of the coup d'état were unfolding, the debate about events prior was already beginning. Nevertheless, she disregards the other side's version on the basis of her own experience (“yo no me sentí manipulada/I did not feel manipulated). What is important here to underscore is how Pamela's own experience provides her enough legitimacy to claim how the “others” were wrong in their appreciation of her own group.

In summary, the analysis of extract 10 shows how an older left-wing woman in the company of left-wing participants constructs a binary temporal framework for the 1970s. Taking into consideration extract 9, it becomes clear how, for left-wing participants in this research, the pre- and post-coup periods are highly distinguishable in terms of the affective qualities associated with each of them. In other words, the differences between the two periods of time are articulated through the display of several emotional and psychological dichotomies. On the left, the pre-coup period is recalled through happy and positive feelings during a time of solidarity, freedom and political and social commitments, as long as the “other” is part of the same “we”. Conversely, the post-coup period is described as a time of fear, menace and persecution. Hence, the protagonists of the early 1970s become the victims after the coup.

This dual temporal frame is found in all of the mixed and left-wing focus groups, where it is usually introduced by younger left-wing participants. The partition of the 1970s around the pivotal year 1973 is not the only common thread. Another

similarity is the use of mutually exclusive alternatives for reconstructing the past, even within a given period (as is evident in Alberto's post-coup description). Therefore, it can be argued that a binary structure or logic is used to recount the past, the result of which is to construct each period as a fully disarticulated historical unit of time. This is confirmed by the way in which the coup d'état is presented as a completely unanticipated – and, thus, unpreventable – rupture dividing the first period of time from the second one. For participants to make sense of the past, the boundary between the two time periods must be firmly established; if it is not, doubts about where to locate the boundary may render the polarities inadequate.

At first glance, the emotional states displayed in depicting the pre-coup period do not afford any recourse for introducing negative feelings such as fear, ambivalence, anger, or recounting problems or conflicts within groups on the left. On the contrary, for the left-wing participants, negative emotions or feelings are reserved for depictions of the post-coup period, and, consequently there is no incorporation of any positive value in describing the second period. The binary logic is so firmly entrenched that the only way for left-wing participants to present more than one account of a given period is to describe the alternatives only to discard one of them, as Alberto does in relation to the post-coup period. The two possibilities are apparently both valid, but because of practical or normative criteria, for the speaker they become incompatible. Thereafter, since one of the two opposing accounts is ruled out, the other account becomes the valid one by default. Selecting one account of the past as the valid one provides a closed narrative that serves to affirm that past events could not have taken a different course (in participants' terms, "there was no other option"), and, on the other, that there is no other possible interpretation of the past.

In other words, the determinism with which the binary logic or pattern operates in left-wing participants' discourse in the present reinforces mutually exclusive descriptions of the past, which in turn, confirms for the participants themselves the utility of maintaining polarised methods for making sense of the past. In this respect, the way that left-wing participants construct the temporality of the 1970s is also a resource for producing, actualizing and maintaining polarisation, not as if it were an underlying sociological phenomenon (as is put forth by participants themselves as an

explanatory category), but rather as the result of the ongoing discursive process of constructing temporality in the way that they do. From a Discursive Psychology perspective, the identified discursive strategies of setting a dualist temporal frame of the 1970s embedded in a binary pattern in which several emotional and psychological dichotomies are displayed for shaping the two opposing periods of time, account for polarisation as a discursive practice, that is, as the consequence of the systematic deployment of those discursive resources.

5.6 Managing dilemmas related to support the post-coup period

Extract 11 comes from the same focus group composed of right-wing participants as extract 5 and is produced after half an hour of discussion. Prior to extract 11, Mario, a younger participant, produces an interesting account of his recent conversion from fully supporting the military regime to holding a more critical perspective on it (analyzed in extract 14).

After Mario shares this information, the two older participants in the group, Patricia and Andres, keep the floor for several minutes, interacting collaboratively and bringing to the talk memories of the pre-coup period that illustrate the many problems the Allende government caused them. Thus, their rejection of the pre-coup period and their support for the coup become clearly established. Moreover, to enhance his approval of the coup d'état, Andres states that "a dos tercios de la población nos identificó que saliera Allende/for two-thirds of the population, we identified with Allende's departure". Thereafter, the talk revolves around "unpleasant" memories of everyday life in the early 1970s. Patricia gives an example of hearing on the radio about "un escándalo tras otro/one scandal after the other". In Patricia's words, during the Allende government "a la gente se le olvidó vivir... dejamos de vivir/people forgot how to live, we stopped living" which is complemented by a second upgrading assessment (Pomerantz, 1984) by Andres that "en ese tiempo no había vida sino sobrevivencia/at that time there was no life just survival".

Andres recalls how he tried to leave the country unsuccessfully in 1972. Abruptly ending this story, he states "personalmente me interesaría en la opción de un estudio sociológico, lo que ha pasado después/personally what would interest me within the area of sociological study, is what has happened afterwards". There are two aspects of this statement that are worth highlighting. On the one hand, Andres' orientation to the context in which the talk is actually produced, that is to say, the moderator-researcher's investigation – this PhD thesis – as "a sociological study". Andres (accurately) points out that what is being said in the focus group – as the conversation is being recorded – will be used for other analytical purposes.

After a few hesitations, Andres explicitly states that the focus group discussion should include “positive conclusions from a negative event”; in a sense, his appeal is to leave behind the “unpleasant” memories of the post-coup period, to show possible readers⁶⁴ of this thesis that Chile has benefited over the long term.

Having introduced how participants interact with each other prior to extract 11, the focus of the analysis here is on the display of dilemmatic opposing terms (Billig, 1996 and Billig et al 1988) in accounting for a supportive stance of the post-coup period. The dilemma revolves around how the participants account for their support for the coup d'état while simultaneously acknowledging the other's victimization during the post-coup period. Therefore, extract 11 may be seen as an interesting exception or “deviant case”⁶⁵ with respect to the pattern analyzed in the previous extracts. The common pattern found in extracts 7, 8, 9 and 10 is that of asserting the victimization of one's side during one of the two periods of time, as a form of rhetorically organizing the speaker's preference for the other period of time. In extract 11, the speakers do refer to the victimization of the “other” facing the dilemma of displaying support for a period in which they acknowledge that there were victims.

⁶⁴ Andre's interlocutors here are primarily the moderator/researcher, and secondly, any reader of this work. The participants in the focus groups were aware that they were providing data for a doctoral thesis to be presented to the Social Sciences Department of a British university.

⁶⁵ The notion of a “deviant case analysis” is often used in qualitative research as a criterion for asserting the validity of analytical conclusions (Silverman, 2001). As Potter & Wetherell (1987) state, “apparent exceptions to the analytical scheme are particularly relevant to the assessment of coherence” (p.170); they represent one of the four “analytical techniques” the authors suggest to validate the findings of research based on discourse analysis methodology (the other three are: participants' orientation, new problems and fruitfulness of the analysis). In the analysis of deviant cases, “If there is clearly some special feature of the exceptions which mark them off from the standard examples (...), the explanatory scope of our scheme is confirmed. If there are no special features which plausibly explain difference, the exclusive nature of our scheme must be questioned” (p. 170).

Extract 11a: Original transcription in Spanish (R2/30:39-32:04)

1 ANDRES lo que te quiero decir que: em (0.7 este: fuera de: de
2 algo; pa mi de todo est- de toda esta cosa-
3 yo lo que he procurado en mi vida es sacar
4 conclusiones positivas de hechos negativos (0.4) este
5 es un hecho negativo por lo que significó en en
6 personas muertas; en este en rupturas en toda- en
7 familias etcétera (1.8) pero en el para el país
8 (0.2) pienso yo que hay un hecho positivo (0.7) QUE
9 MIENTRAS no me demuestren lo contrario (0.7)
10 es así (0.4) de Pinochet (0.2) viene
11 (0.2) el sistema económico que ha significado esto
12 mantenerlo no como eh sé estaba en una línea de que en
13 un: una elección salió este y después salió el
14 opositor y era para allá pa acá era
15 un: y:: por lo tanto (0.6) sin continuidad y a su
16 vez con mucho riesgo (1.0) acá se ha llegado
17 (0.7) a una instancia (0.7) pare:ja de que em no hay
18 gra:ndes em diferencias entre u:n
19 gobie:rno y otro:
20 XIMENA L_{mm}
21 ANDRES para qué decir ahora vemos Lagos (0.7) em Bachelet
22 no esto pero desde antes con (0.7) Frei (0.9) e:m
23 (1.8) °y que eso° (1.5) ha permitido (1.3) >DESDE ESA
24 INSTANCIA QUE VIENEN DE LOS CHICAGO BOY Y LOS CHICAGO
25 BOY VIENEN DE PINOCHET< (0.6) eh (1.0) una solide:z
26 (0.6) del país (1.3) que yo creo que eso es una
27 herencia tremendamente positiva de un hecho NEGATIVO
28 (0.3)
29 ¿? °mm°
30 (0.9)
31 XIMENA mm hm
32 (1.9)
33 ANDRES °no estoy defendiendo a nadie pero me gustaría heh heh
34 ¿saber° en qué estoy equivocado
35 MARIO L_{no} o sea yo creo que (0.2) sin lugar a dudas...

Extract 11a: English translation

- 1 ANDRES what I want to say to you is that um (0.7) this um
2 apart from something to me from all thi- from all this
3 thing what I have tried in my life is to take
4 positive conclusions from negative facts (0.4) this
5 is a negative fact because of what it meant in in
6 dead people in umm in ruptures in all- in
7 families etcetera (1.8) but in the for the country
8 (0.2) I think there is a positive fact (0.7) THAT
9 UNTIL somebody demonstrates to me the contrary (0.7)
10 it is like that (0.4) from Pinochet (0.2) comes (0.2)
11 the economic system which has meant this
12 maintaining it not as um it was in a line that in one
13 one election this came out and afterwards the opponent
14 came out and it was over there over here it was a and
15 therefore (0.6) without continuity and at the same
16 time with a lot of risk (1.0) here we have arrived at
17 (0.7) a stable (0.7) moment in which um there aren't
18 important um differences between one
19 government and another
20 XIMENA Lmm
21 ANDRES not to mention now we see Lagos (0.7) um Bachelet
22 not this but from before with (0.7) Frei (0.9) um
23 (1.8) °and that° (1.5) has allowed (1.3) >FROM THAT
24 MOMENT THE CHICAGO BOYS COME FROM AND THE CHICAGO BOYS
25 COME FROM PINOCHET< (0.6) um (1.0) a solidity
26 (0.6) of the country (1.3) that I think that is a
27 tremendously positive heritage from a NEGATIVE fact
28 (0.3)
29 ¿? °mm°
30 (0.9)
31 XIMENA mm hm
32 (1.9)
33 ANDRES °I am not defending anybody but I would like heh heh
34 to know° where I am wrong
35 MARIO Lno I mean I think that (0.2) without a doubt...

The “positive/negative” pair plays a central role in how Andres recalls the post-coup period. He states that a “negative event” ultimately resulted in “positive conclusions” or, as he states in the last lines of the first sequence of extract 11, “a tremendously positive heritage for the country”: economic stability. This notion of attributing Chilean economic well-being to the coup and the post-coup years is taken up in a second interactional sequence by Mario, who describes the coup as “what made the difference” in Chile in comparison to neighbouring countries. In Chile, the authoritarian regime was “successful” in economic terms, providing Pinochet’s greatest source of legitimacy. But Mario expresses that Chile’s economic prosperity is intimately linked with pain; it is as if the two are inseparable. In Mario’s words, the prosperity was “producto de las situaciones que acompañaron a ese dolor/product of the situations that accompanied that pain”.

It is important to appreciate how Andres moves on from the first two lines in which his talk is somewhat inarticulate and hesitant; lines 1 and 2 make no sense in Spanish unless as a prologue to demonstrate the difficulties implied in what Andres is about to say. Andres finds a unique way to explain what he is about to say, describing himself as a person who has tried throughout his life to obtain something positive from his experiences. For Andres, it follows that the same logic should be applied to the coup d’état and its long-term effects on Chile, at least economically.

Without explicitly referring to the “event”, Andres makes it clear that the “esto/this” is a negative fact because of how it affected individuals and their private lives – the family “ruptures”. Yet, “this” has been positive for the “country”, the whole of society as opposed to individuals or families. As Andres continues, the importance of the economic system that Pinochet put into place in Chile is based on the strength and stability it provided; this is in contrast to the years prior to the Pinochet regime, when Chile experienced extreme political and economic upheaval. It is worth noting, then, how Andres outlines a dilemma that could be summarized as showing empathy for those who suffered versus displaying support for the Pinochet regime because of the benefits it provided to the country as a whole.

Michael Billig and his colleagues (Billig, 1996; Billig et al., 1988) and other authors (e.g. Condor & Gibson, 2007; Weltman, 2004), who based on Billig’s dilemmatic

approach to explore the rhetoric of political discourse have largely established how common-sense discourses on ordinary topics are organized through the pairing of opposing terms, and that this juxtaposition results in dilemmas or choice-making problems. Billig (1996) goes further to assert that thinking is itself a result of the presence of opposing dilemmatic alternatives, and thus discursiveness is also a product of divergent normative alternatives which are apparent to the analyst in Andres' statements. Andres attempts to present a definitive judgment of Pinochet's legacy, yet the contradictory values implied by awareness of suffering, on the one hand, and on the other, satisfaction about the country's economic stability, make his own "thinking" process difficult.

In *Ideological Dilemmas* (1988), Billig and his colleagues describe their approach as one developed within the context of analyzing Western societies' common-sense embedded in the ideology of liberalism. In other words, the authors' are interested in accounting for how, within such an ideology, individuals think, talk and discuss, stating that liberalism is an ideology⁶⁶ because it holds in its core dilemmatic principles. The authors suggest a central dilemma for the "ideology of liberalism" – both as a formal system of coherent ideas and as a "living culture" – that of individualism and its limitations. The assertion of personal liberty must have limits, without such limits, there would be no order, no family, no society.

From Andres' perspective, the Pinochet regime, then, may have gone too far in repressing individual liberties to enable its imposition of a new economic order. But at the same time, the political upheaval prior to the coup threatened "continuity" and

⁶⁶ The understanding of "ideology" from this perspective is neither a set of recurrent (cognitive or perceptual) schemata for people of the same "cultural community" to make sense of their experiences in the same terms, nor a philosophical system of values and principles articulated by political and intellectual elites. Yet the authors account for both senses in which ideology has been understood within the social sciences and philosophy. Ideologies are ideological because they are dilemmatic, that is to say, because a given ideology defends or promotes *at the same time* different values, which put in combinations ought to produce divergent choices of values and normative orders. In the authors' terms, "ideology may be characterized by its dilemmatic qualities, which ensure that those living within the ideology (ordinary people as well as intellectuals) cannot escape from the difficulties of dilemmas" (p. 40). Thus, the opposing values are not contradictory per se, but in juxtaposition they may (or may not) produce contradiction, depending on how they are treated in place as well as how the speakers deduce the consequences for choosing one or the other normative order, not choosing any or a mixture of both. Finally, since not choosing is also in contrast with choosing, then "opposition enables endless debate and argument" (Billig, et al., 1988: 3).

implied “a lot of risk” for the country, a risk that interfered with individual well-being. In his description of both periods, the sets of values attached to the defence of individual rights and the protection of society are available as rhetoric resources for the maintenance of the debate. In this respect, Andres is addressing the opposition between the needs of individuals versus the needs of a functional society; for him, it is as if a “healthy economy” were sufficient evidence of a society which operates normally. He does not link individual well-being with societal well-being, instead suggesting that the individual is naturally in “competition” with society. This kind of dilemma, according to the ideological dilemmatic perspective, is a central feature of the ideology of liberalism. Chile, both politically and economically, is set squarely within the tradition of liberalism, and so, therefore, is the Chilean Memory Debate.

What is important to underscore here is that while for Andres the pre-coup period is characterized by political and economic ruptures and threats to society as a whole, he views the post-coup period as continuous, from the coup until today, because of the conservation of Pinochet’s economic policies by the post-authoritarian, democratically elected governments of Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle (1994-1999), Ricardo Lagos (2000-2005) and Michelle Bachelet (2006-present).

A closer analysis of Andres’ statements provides some clues for understanding how he faces a dilemmatic situation. At first glance, he appears quite certain of the positive consequences of the negative fact, in lines 8 to 11. His statement, “QUE MIENTRAS no me demuestren lo contrario (0.7) así es/THAT UNTIL somebody demonstrates to me the contrary (0.7) it is like that” tells us that Andres is confident as long as another argument (which presumably exists, since he implies it) does not persuade him otherwise. His position until this point is articulated as a belief, yet as he continues, he refers to his belief as a fact (“es así/it is like that”), in an attempt to go back and imprint more certainty on his words.

But in lines 33 and 34, Andres’ high degree of certainty falters, indicating how controversial it can be to express strong approval of one aspect of the Pinochet legacy while simultaneously acknowledging that the “event” which brought Pinochet to power involved death, family ruptures and “etcetera” (an emphatic “etcetera”). Immediately after Andres provides his concluding statement (“yo creo que eso es una

herencia tremendamente positiva de un hecho NEGATIVO/I think that is a tremendously positive heritage from a NEGATIVE fact) he then steps back, stating in lines 33 and 34 with a lower volume and some laughter “no estoy defendiendo a nadie pero me gustaría heh heh saber^o en qué estoy equivocado/^oI am not defending anybody but I would like heh heh to know^o where I am wrong”. The several pauses in lines 28 to 32, which as a whole constitute about 3.3 seconds of awkward silence, may account for Andres’ repair. There, Andres refers to his position as a non-defensive one, opened to new information. The second part of the utterance (“pero heh heh me gustaría saber donde estoy equivocado/I would like to know heh heh where I am wrong”) is enough to imply that his previous conclusion may generate disagreement.

At the end of the sequence, it is Mario, overlapping with Andres in line 36, who assists Andres and enables the conversation to continue. As Mario takes the floor, he expands and enriches the dilemma one is faced when accounting for the Pinochet regime. A few lines of the interaction in which Mario repeats Andres’ arguments in more or less the same fashion have been omitted. Introducing a new discursive device, Mario tells the group that he has worked for multinational companies and has heard people of other nationalities praise Chile’s economy, which has made him “think carefully”. The use of international comparisons which are favourable to Chile is taken up in the next sequence. Mario adds – similar to Andres – that Chile’s recent governments (he lists them one by one) have maintained the Pinochet economic model.

Extract 11b: Original transcription in Spanish (R2/33:06-34:13)

- 36 MARIO lo económico fue como: lo que marcó la diferencia,
37 (0.2) o sea si Chile (0.2) hubiera tenido un golpe
38 militar (0.2) con un costo social tan alto; (0.2) y
39 más encima hubiéramos estado: como no sé como: Perú
40 o como: Argentina; (0.3) en realidad esto no hubiera
41 valido para nada (0.7) o sea si: (0.2)
42 posiblemente en termino:s (0.3) en términos
43 ANDRES Lclaro
44 MARIO económicos <esto tuvo un un éxito> el el gobierno tuvo
45 un éxito que eh se:: extrapoló (0.2) por (0.2)
46 hartos años más y va a seguir quizás por muchos años
47 más (0.3) Dios mediante cierto e::h (0.6) apoyando
48 al país (0.8) pero claro esa esa esa cuestión
49 ahí ahí; como que tomái las dos áreas (0.2) o sea
50 (0.2) lo social (0.3) la pobre:za lo
51 microeconómico que no hubo crecimiento; (0.3)
52 en cambio lo macroso- lo macroeconómico que creció;
53 (0.2) que se disparó (0.2) pucha teníamos un cobre a
54 más de cuatro dólares (1.2) e:l m- la libra; (0.6)
55 >en fin todas esas cosas te hacen pensar pucha en
56 realidad a ver< (0.4) eh (0.2) como puedes ser certero
57 para hacer una análisis frente a lo que sucedió
58 (0.4)
59 XIMENA mm=
60 MARIO =porque si bien (0.4) hay dolor (0.9) también hay
61 como bona:nza (0.2) producto de las
62 situaciones que acompañaron a ese dolor

Extract 11b: English translation

- 36 MARIO the economy was like what made the difference
37 (0.2) I mean if Chile (0.2) would have had a military
38 coup (0.2) with such a high social cost (0.2) and
39 moreover we would had been like I don't know like Peru
40 or like Argentina (0.3) really this would not have
41 been worth it in any respect (0.2) I mean yes (0.2)
42 possibly in terms of (0.3) in terms of
43 ANDRES Lright
44 MARIO economics <this had a a success> the the government
45 had a success that um was continued (0.2) for (0.2)
46 many more years and it will continue maybe for many
47 more years (0.3) God willing of course um (0.6)
48 supporting the country (0.8) but right this this this
49 question there there like you take the two areas (0.2)
50 I mean (0.2) the social (0.3) (0.3) the poverty the
51 microeconomic in which there was no growth (0.3)
52 instead the macroso- the macroeconomic which grew
53 (0.2) which shot up (0.2) *pucha* we had copper at
54 more that four dollars (1.2) the m- the pound (0.6)
55 >anyway all those things make you think *pucha* really
56 let's see< (0.4) um (0.2) how can you be accurate
57 in doing an analysis faced with what happened
58 (0.4)
59 XIMENA mm=
60 MARIO =because even though (0.4) there is pain (0.9) there
61 is also like bonanza (0.2) [as a] product of the
62 situations that accompanied that pain

In this sequence, Mario uses an economic “logic”, that is to say, he presents his argument as a reasonable one based on an analysis of costs versus benefits. While benefits are greater than costs, the actions are worthwhile, and thus justified within a context in which all the members share and value the same logic. For instance, in lines 37 to 42, Mario hypothetically affirms that if the military coup had not made “any difference” – if it had not resulted in benefits for the country – then the “very high social costs” would had been futile. For the economic comparison to function,

the human losses are translated into terms of economic value that are seen as less significant than the economic benefits.

In terms of the economy, which Mario seems to view as a distinct domain within society, he suggests that the Pinochet regime was correct in its actions. Furthermore, Mario is able to distinguish in his talk between two economic levels; the microeconomic, which is also understood or treated as “the social”, and the macroeconomic level (the overall economy). In weighing one against the other, he finds that the macroeconomic success is far greater and should be self-evident, according to Mario. Nevertheless, within the “microeconomic” domain, there were – and still are – important long-term costs: “poverty” (line 50) and a significant amount of “pain” in order to produce the bonanza.

In this respect, it is important to note how, in lines 55 to 57, Mario accelerates his speech to say “>en fin todas esas cosas te hacen pensar pucha en realidad a ver< (0.4) eh (0.2) como puedes ser certero para hacer una análisis frente a lo que sucedió/>anyway all those things make you think *pucha* really let see< (0.4) um (0.2) how can you be accurate in doing an analysis faced with what happened”. Hence, for Mario the dilemmatic analysis he has just suggested, structured around “the social” versus “the economic”, generates doubts. That is, it produces in him “thinking and arguing” in the particular sense that Billig (1996) indicates. However, in the utterance “pucha en realidad a ver/*pucha* really let’s see”, one may argue that Mario is implying that since such dilemmatic thinking is a never-ending task, at some point “reality” – a reality which can be seen – should help the speaker come to a final conclusion. This analytical suggestion is enhanced by the use of the Spanish term “pucha” here. “Pucha”, according to the dictionary of the *Real Academia Española*, is a term used to indicate surprise, annoyance or anger. The common use of the term in story-telling is the way in which Mario employs it; that is to say, in the process of recounting a particular episode, the speaker uses it to imply that what comes next is, in some sense, regrettable (but true).

Robin Wooffitt (1992), on the other hand, has suggested in his analysis of stories about paranormal experiences, that displaying surprise with respect to controversial topics is a common device in the organization of factual discourse. In other words,

for the speaker's discourse to be heard as an honest and true description of a factual reality, some pieces are treated as "new evidence" which are said to produce the speaker's surprise (and/or anger). Thus, the speaker constructs a self-image that is flexible and reasonable, able to perceive reality on its own merits, rather than perceiving it through the lens of prejudice. Therefore, it may be argued that Mario is trying to convey an image of himself as a serious, unbiased analyst of the Pinochet regime. Yet, the effects of the coup in terms of human rights make it difficult for him, as a right-winger, to be "certero para hacer un análisis frente a lo que sucedió/accurate in doing an analysis faced with what happened". The reasons for this difficulty are recursively phrased in the last lines of extract 17; "porque si bien (0.4) hay dolor (0.9) también hay como bona:nza (0.2) producto de las situaciones que acompañaron a ese dolor/ because even though (0.4) there is pain (0.9) there is also like bonanza (0.2) [as a] product of the situations that accompanied that pain".

Lines 60 to 62 reveal once again the juxtaposed argument framing the dilemmatic situation Mario faces. Whereas pain is part of the emotional domain, and thus, part of one's "inner life", the bonanza is economic, and phrased as it is by Mario, affects Chilean society as a whole. The question, then, is to what extent individual pain – as a cost – affected Chilean society as a whole. Conversely, to what extent has prosperity – as a benefit – been evenly distributed to the individuals who make up Chilean society? Mario seems to assume that the "bonanza" had an equal impact on all members of society. This dilemma is understood within the construct of the principle moral values of liberalism in which the equally/liberty dichotomy is always present (Billig et al, 1988).

In summary, in extract 11 the participants account for their support for the post-coup period, but they do not display a clear preference for either the pre- or post-coup periods as other participants do in the previous extracts. Instead, they bring to the talk the dilemma that prevents them from stating a clear preference for the post-coup period. The acknowledgment of the other's victimization during the period of time for which they display more sympathy produces significant difficulties for the participants.

In the end, the dilemmatic organization of the argument about economic benefits versus victimization during the Pinochet regime allows the participants to assert the normative value of “the country’s economic solidity”. This normative frame operates as a dialogical alternative to values implied by the rejection of the other’s victimization, which the participants view as an unfortunate cost Chilean society had to pay in the past.

5.7 Competing for victimization to overcome dilemmas posed by support for the post-coup period

Extract 12 follows extract 11 by just six minutes and is taken from the same focus group of right-wing participants as extract 5. Extract 11 immediately precedes extract 5, in which Patricia argues that polarisation continues to be present in Chilean society.

Patricia’s concerns about how polarised Chilean society is today (extract 5) are produced after a question from the moderator, who once again addresses Mario’s dilemma regarding how to analyze the “good and bad things” of the Pinochet regime. In doing so, the moderator also displays her orientation to polarisation as an important aspect of the debate that requires greater explanation, asking the participants to speak to “por qué en Chile lo tenemos como lo uno o lo otro ... por qué no se pueden combinar un poco mejor/why in Chile we have it as one or the other ... why they cannot be a bit better combined”. This question is understood by Patricia as a matter of “los de aquí y los de allá/those from here and those from there”. Subsequently, the moderator implicitly suggests that for those who emphasize the success of Pinochet’s policies, there is still a need to take into account “el sufrimiento de determinadas gentes/the suffering of certain people”. A significant pause of 1.4 seconds follows and then Patricia produces a statement equating the suffering of the right with that of the left.

The difference is that the right endured a significant “quantity” of suffering prior to the coup, whereas the left suffered after the coup. Yet the notion that there was suffering on both sides is not questioned; both groups are entitled to consider themselves victims of past events. The issue is the temporal location of the suffering

– pre-coup or post-coup – and whether the quality of suffering is comparable. In this sense, right-wing participants' accounts are more inclusive of the other side's version than left-wing participants' discourse, which is largely oriented to displaying an image of those on the left as protagonists of the events of early 1970s, as in extract 10.

The analysis of extract 12 focuses on how the issue of forgetting is brought to the talk to introduce another element in describing the pre-coup period: the suffering on the right. It is important to underscore that forgetting is brought to the talk in response to the dilemma posed by memories of the post-coup period. Patricia, in this extract, asserts her group's victimization to articulate a clear preference for one of the two periods.

The notion of forgetting allows the speaker to present an account of the past that is an alternative to other versions which are, by implication, taken for granted; that is, their factuality is not questioned, yet they might still be complemented or enriched. This suggests some similarities with the notion of forgetting articulated by Marcela in extract 8. However, it is important to underscore that Patricia's comment is in reference to a version of events in which suffering is present in both groups' memories. It has been already established in the course of the talk how after the coup, those on the left were subject to painful experiences. In this sense, the functionality of appealing to what has been forgotten is part of how participants, as right-wingers, deal with their own political affiliation.

Extract 12a: Original transcription in Spanish (R2/40:59-42:10)

- 1 XIMENA a mí me llamaba la atención de lo que decía Mario como
2 esta: dicotomía de dos áreas (0.2) casi como
3 desconectadas (0.5) el mundo econó:mico donde a Chile
4 le ha ido tan bien y qué sé yo† (0.4) y el mundo
5 social que quizás tiene que ver con las desigualdades
6 económicas pero también (0.6) e::h con otros tema:s
7 que si interpreto bien† (0.3) tienen que ver con un
8 sector de la población que quizás lo pasó muy mal
9 dura:nte: la: (0.7) el régimen militar (0.9) entonc-
10 no sé muy bien por qué y y me lo pregunto no
11 tengo una respuesta por qué en Chile lo tenemos como
12 lo uno o lo otro así onda (0.8) e:::h (0.6) porqué no
13 se pueden combinar un poco mejor
14 (0.6)
15 ANDRES tú te estás refiriendo a desarrollo y: pobreza?
16 XIMENA ¿no una:
17 PATRICIA ¿los de aquí los de allá?
18 ANDRES o ¿personas?
19 XIMENA ¿si también
20 ¿? mm
21 (0.6)
22 XIMENA porque como que la única manera de de (0.8) de
23 entende:r o de:: (0.3) o de justifica:r que
24 a Pinochet le haya ido bien a costa† (0.4) del
25 sufrimiento de determinadas gentes
26 (1.4)
27 PATRICIA yo pienso Ximena que (1.0) en (0.2) los años previos
28 al setenta y tres (1.6) eh muchos: (0.3) momios:
29 pongámosle (0.9) lo pasaron pésimo

Extract 12b: English translation

- 1 XIMENA I was struck by what Mario was saying like
2 this dichotomy of two areas (0.2) almost as if
3 disconnected (0.5) the economic world where Chile
4 has been doing so well and so on (0.4) and the social
5 world that maybe has to do with economic
6 inequalities but also (0.6) um with other issues
7 that if I interpret correctly (0.3) have to do with a
8 sector of the population that maybe had a very hard
9 time during the (0.7) the military regime (0.9) so
10 I don't know very well why and and I ask myself I
11 don't have an answer why in Chile we have it like
12 one or the other just like (0.8) um (0.6) why they
13 cannot be a bit better combined
14 (0.6)
- 15 ANDRES are you talking about development and poverty?
- 16 XIMENA rno a
- 17 PATRICIA Lthose from here and those from there?
- 18 ANDRES or rpersons?
- 19 XIMENA Lyes as well
- 20 ¿? mm
21 (0.6)
- 22 XIMENA because like the only way of of (0.8) of
23 understanding or of (0.3) or of justifying that
24 Pinochet did well at the expense of (0.4) the
25 suffering of certain people
26 (1.4)
- 27 PATRICIA I think Ximena that (1.0) in (0.2) the years before
28 seventy-three (1.6) um many (0.3) momios
29 let's call them (0.9) had a very tough time

When Ximena takes up Mario's dilemma, she reformulates it as a "dichotomy" and adds "casi como desconectadas/as if like disconnected" in line 2. Ximena rephrases the dichotomy in terms of the "economic" world or domain and the "social" world. Yet, in Ximena's view the latter includes other elements that are not easily brought to the talk, which is evident in how she introduces them. She prefaces her question by saying "si interpreto bien↑ (0.3) tienen que ver con.../if I interpret correctly (0.3) have to do with..." how some people had a very difficult time "dura:nte: la: (0.7) el regimen military/during the (0.7) the military regime". In the prolongation of vowels in "dura:nte: la:" and the 0.7-seconds pause that follows, it is worth pointing out that in Spanish the feminine article "la" serves to indicate that the term to follow should be a feminine noun to describe the period during which people suffered, that is, the feminine noun "la dictadura/the dictatorship". But Ximena hesitates and then refers to the post-coup period using the (masculine) noun "el régimen militar/the military regime". The use of one noun versus the other is significant, in terms of how the speaker presents her perspective on Pinochet's regime in the context of a focus group composed only of right-wing participants. It is worthy noting that the term "dictatorship" is controversial in Chile when used to describe the Pinochet regime, and it is generally not used by right wingers who feel that it is overly negative and disregards the economic benefits of Pinochet's policies. On the other hand, it is quite often used by those on the left to emphasize what they see as the more significant aspect of the regime; the human rights violations, as they are so recurrent in "dictatorships!", rather than in "governments" and, probably in a few cases, in "regimes".

Subsequently, Ximena requests that the participants help her understand an apparent contradiction. She informs her audience that her question should be heard as a "genuine" one, that is, a question for which she does not have a pre-formulated answer, as she says in lines 10 and 11. Her query is not an easy one for participants to answer, as it is followed by a question from Andres in line 15 and an alternative presented by Patricia in line 17. Ximena displays agreement only with Patricia's suggestion. But for the conversation to continue, Ximena must rephrase her question in lines 22 to 25, and she does so between two pauses (0.6 seconds in line 12, and 1.4 seconds in line 26).

The moderator's formulation of her query provides some interesting elements for analysis. She implies that for her, the display of a supportive stance toward "how well Pinochet did", is acceptable only if at the same time there is an acknowledgement of "the suffering of certain people". In her words, the only way to support Pinochet is "justifica:r que a Pinochet le haya ido bien a costa↑ (0.4) del sufrimiento de determinadas gentes/justifying that Pinochet did well at the expenses of (0.4) the suffering of certain people". This is a difficult claim for someone on the right to accept, because what is implied is the request for acknowledgment of the victims of the Pinochet regime along with recognition of the economic benefits that resulted from his policies, as if those two aspects of the Pinochet regime cannot be considered separately.

In response, Patricia shifts the subject of the suffering from the moderator's concern, "el sufrimiento de determinadas gentes/the suffering of certain people" during the post-coup period, to the "forgotten" suffering of those from the opposing side – the "momios" – during the pre-coup period. Patricia uses the year 1973 as the temporal limit of the suffering of the "momios", following the predominant pattern for segmenting the past, in which the two periods under discussion are differentiated in terms of how much each group suffered. Second, Patricia employs the pejorative label "momios", a category that is not commonly used by right-wing sympathizers to refer to themselves, but is often used by left-wingers to qualify their political opponents as reactionary and conservative. Third, and in direct relation to the second point, the "pongámosle/let's call them" that immediately follows "momios" implies a sort of concession towards the opposing group; it is hearable as "let's use the category that they use to refer to us". Thus, Patricia affirms the utility of "momios" in terms of how this category effectively refers to all who suffered during the Allende government. As she continues, it is possible to appreciate her viewpoint that the "momios" suffering has been forgotten.

Extract 12b: Original transcription in Spanish (R2/41:57-42:29)

27 PATRICIA yo pienso Ximena que (1.0) en (0.2) los años previos
28 al setenta y tres (1.6) eh muchos: (0.3) momios:
29 pongámosle (0.9) lo pasaron pésimo
30 (1.5)
31 XIMENA mm hm
32 (1.1)
33 PATRICIA al lado mío vive una señora bastante mayor (1.1) que
34 cuando le tomaron el fundo (1.1) le mataron al
35 marido
36 (1.6)
37 XIMENA °mm°
38 (0.4)
39 PATRICIA y cuando el hijo (0.3) agredió (2.0) a los que
40 venían a tomar_rse el fundo;
41 ANDRES Ltomadores °mm si°
42 (1.5)
43 PATRICIA mató a alguien efectivamente (1.2) terminó en la
44 cárcel >y por supuesto que lo liberaron los milicos<
45 (1.2) esa parte me la salto (0.9) pero (1.7) pero yo
46 creo que hay mucho dolor (0.3) anterior
47 XIMENA mm=
48 PATRICIA =al setenta (1.3) que hemos olvidado
49 (0.7)
50 XIMENA mm hm
51 (1.7)
52 PATRICIA >justificado o no justificado< me da lo mismo
53 XIMENA mm
54 PATRICIA las personas lo sintieron igual (1.5) que tenían mucha
55 plata que tenían poco que eran latifundios
56 (0.4) me da lo mismo_r (0.4) no era la forma
57 (0.4) o por ultimo a lo mejor era la forma (0.4) pero
58 el dolo:r (1.4) ES y creo que eh (0.9) que eh como
59 cantidad de personas afectadas (0.8) no por
60 muerte (0.3) por dolor (1.1) es son como similares en
61 cantidad (0.8) hay tanto antes_r (0.3) quizás
62 tantos después_r; no lo sé
63 (1.4)
64 PATRICIA a mí lo que me preocupa fíjate de todo esto (0.3)
65 porque uno siendo (0.5) cargada para el lado de la
66 derecha (0.8) no es enferma de derecha pero ...

Extract 12b: English translation

27 PATRICIA I think Ximena that (1.0) in (0.2) the years before
28 seventy-three (1.6) um many (0.3) momios
29 let's call them (0.9) had a very tough time
30 (1.5)
31 XIMENA mm hm
32 (1.1)
33 PATRICIA next door to me lives a much older woman (1.1) who
34 when they took their farmland (1.1) her husband was
35 killed
36 (1.6)
37 XIMENA °mm°
38 (0.4)
39 PATRICIA and when her son (0.3) attacked (2.0) those who were
40 coming to confiscate the farmland
41 ANDRES °tomadores °mm yes°
42 (1.5)
43 PATRICIA he actually killed somebody (1.2) he ended up
44 in jail >and of course the military released him<
45 (1.2) I skip over this part (0.9) but (1.7) but I
46 think that there is much pain (0.3) before
47 XIMENA mm=
48 PATRICIA =the seventy (1.3) that we have forgotten
49 (0.7)
50 XIMENA mm hm
51 (1.7)
52 PATRICIA >justified or not justified< it is the same to me
53 XIMENA mm
54 PATRICIA the persons felt it anyway (1.5) if they had much
55 money if they had little if they were large estates
56 (0.4) it is the same to me (0.4) it was not the way
57 (0.4) or finally maybe it was the way (0.4) but
58 the pain (0.4) IS and I think that um (0.9) that um
59 like quantity of affected persons (0.8) not by
60 death (0.3) by pain (1.1) is are like similar in
61 quantity (0.8) there are so many before (0.3) maybe
62 so many after I don't know
63 (1.4)
64 PATRICIA what worries me about all this (0.3)
65 because one being (0.5) inclined to the side of the
66 right (0.8) one is not fanatically right-wing but ...

In lines 27 to 46, Patricia provides an example of the kind of suffering she is referring to. The husband of her neighbour was killed in the context of farmland expropriations⁶⁷ and the neighbour's son was imprisoned because in reaction, he killed someone. After the coup d'état, the son was released by the military, which is stated by Patricia with a faster rhythm. She presents her comment starting with ">y por supuesto.../”>and of course...”, finishing with “esa parte me la salto/I skip over this part”. The son's release from prison is articulated as a logical or expected conclusion. The implication of this is that the “milicos” and the “momios” were part of the same group because they helped each other in their struggle against the “others”, including the “tomadores de fundos”⁶⁸. It is important to note how Andres helps Patricia in line 41, by inserting “tomadores de fundos mm si”, displaying that he shares the same understanding of “expropriations” as Patricia.

Prefaced by a “pero/but” in line 23, Patricia expresses her belief that there is “mucho dolor (0.3) anterior/much pain (0.3) before”, which garners an assenting “mm” from the moderator that allows Patricia to finish her utterance: the pain of the pre-coup period and even before then (prior to 1970), after a significant 1.3-second pause, is formulated as something that “we” – the Chilean people – have forgotten. There are several long pauses in Patricia's statements⁶⁹, informing that the subject she is about to discuss – comparing suffering on the right and the left – is a delicate issue. In fact,

⁶⁷ Farmland expropriation was a legal mechanism employed in the 1960s and early 1970s in Chile to achieve the goals of the agrarian reform program, which was designed to reduce the concentration of land ownership and at the same address the country's low agricultural productivity. Using this mechanism, the state was able to confiscate a “latifundio”, a large and often underutilized landholding owned by a single proprietor, in order to distribute the land among peasants (“campesinos”). In Chile, the agrarian reform program was initiated on a moderate scale in 1962, during the government of Jorge Alessandri. During Eduardo Frei Montalva's government (1964-1970), the process of expropriations was accelerated. During Allende's government, the expropriations process became much more rapid in response to pressure from peasant organizations and direct and sometimes illegal occupations of rural land became more common.

⁶⁸ The term “tomadores de fundos” is grammatically incorrect, since “tomadores” is an invented noun derived from the verb “tomar”, to take. Thus, “tomadores de fundos” refers to the individuals who perpetrated the expropriations, “those who take the lands” or “the takers of the land”.

⁶⁹ It is important to point out that Patricia speaks with a show rhythm during the entire session. She is the single older woman of this group composed of two other men (one young, one older) and the moderator. In addition, Patricia is a schoolteacher. These elements may account for the several significant pauses in Patricia's turns. Nevertheless, there are many passages in which she speaks faster, which are noticeable precisely because they contrast with her general slower rhythm of talk.

in what follows Patricia engages in an interesting exercise for suggesting equivalence between both groups' suffering. Patricia presents the notion that the pain felt equally by individuals no matter what the reasons, causes or justifications may be. She then provides a rich and complex account in which she displays arguments and counterarguments at the same time, in such a way that at the end, the only justification of the legitimacy of her claim is that pain exists: "pero el dolor (1.4) ES/but the pain (1.4) IS", in line 58. What Patricia does not question is the other side's suffering. Thus, rather than question the pain of the left or make it appear less important (less dramatic, or of a shorter duration) Patricia reflects on the equal importance of the pain felt by those on the right.

In line 52, Patricia states that the forgotten suffering of the right may be viewed as ">justificado o no justificado</>justified or not justified" but that nevertheless, "las personas lo sintieron igual/the persons felt it anyway". As she continues, a possible justification is invoked: the expropriation of property from landowners. For her, the concentration of wealth (land) among those on the right might have justified the actions of the left (the expropriations), but the result was pain and suffering on the right. For Patricia, the expropriations "no era la forma/was not the way", yet she weakens her argument by immediately questioning herself, not without adding the importance of pain as such: "o por último a lo mejor si era la forma (0.4) pero el dolor (0.1.4) ES/or finally maybe this was the way (0.4) but the pain (1.4) IS". Thereafter, Patricia invokes pain as an undeniable experience no matter how many people feel it nor how deeply it is felt; the point here is not quantity but quality. Yet, subsequently Patricia affirms that quantity is also important in this discussion, not with respect to the number of casualties, but to the number of living persons who suffered. The quantity of suffering people on both sides could be viewed, according to Patricia, as relatively equivalent – "similar". Nevertheless, the equation is not as precise if one takes a closer look at Patricia's statement in the last lines of the sequence: "hay tantos antes↑ (0.3) quizás tantos después↓ no lo sé/there are so many before (0.3) maybe so many after I don't know". She inserts doubts by using "maybe" in reference to those who suffered "after" (the coup), followed by an "I don't know" and a significant 1.4-seconds pause, which is where extract 5 begins.

In summary, in extract 12 a right-wing participant, in response to the moderator's orientation to polarisation, makes a claim that the suffering of those on the right has been forgotten. She then attempts to formulate equivalence between suffering on both sides of the conflict and on both sides of the pivotal year 1973. This rhetorical strategy has been underscored in this research as an element of a discursive competition for asserting victimization on one's side. In addition, by bringing to the talk the notion of "forgetting", Patricia implies that other narratives of the past are inaccurate or incomplete.

It is important to point out that in the case of extract 12, the moderator displays some elements which point to her own involvement in the polarised dynamic of the Chilean Memory Debate. The transition from the unspoken yet insinuated "la dictadura/the dictatorship" to the naming of that period as the "Pinochet regime" is significant in terms of how the moderator attempts to provide a concordant image of herself in the context of a group discussion composed of only right-wing participants. Also, one might argue that participants may attribute, even prior to starting the conversation in each focus group, to the moderator a left-wing political affiliation, since left-wing academics have been more interested in exploring the events of the past, to reclaim those experiences which have been repressed by the military regime for 17 years. And within the context of a polarised debate, there are only two options: in favour of the Allende period (and thus opposed to the military regime) and vice versa, so from the very moment the game (which forces participants to talk about the Chilean political context of the last decades) is announced by the moderator, participants might attribute to the researcher/moderator a left-wing viewpoint.

Thus, this focus group and the two others that are composed only of right-wing participants might alternatively be described as a "group composed of right-wing participants and a left-wing moderator". The important point here, one which is applicable to all of the extracts taken from these groups, is that the analysis of the talk produced in these interactional contexts should acknowledge the presence of an "intruder" or "outsider", which could account for any defensiveness in the right-wing participants' discourse. This may also have an impact on the dialogical aspect of the debate; that is to say, the rhetorical presence of the other side of the debate is more evident in right-wing participants' discourse than in left-wing participants' discourse.

In this sense, the accounts of right-wing participants' tend to be more inclusive of the other side's version than left-wing participants' discourse, which is largely oriented to displaying an image of those on the left as protagonists of the events of the early 1970s (left-wing participants who describe their enthusiasm about "societal changes", tend not to acknowledge that others feared their "dreams and projects").

5.8 Summary and Discussion

The main analytical concern in addressing the extracts included in this chapter has been to explore in detail the display of certain discursive strategies which may explain the construction and maintenance of polarisation at the core of the Chilean Memory Debate. To accomplish this goal from a Discursive Psychology perspective, I have assumed that the so-called "polarisation dynamic" is the effect of a set of discursive practices rather than a social mechanism present in Chilean society.

Polarisation as a discursive practice is displayed in the participants' construction of temporality through two interconnected discursive strategies. Finally, participants rhetorically organize a binary temporality of the 1970s by indicating where in time their side was victimized. In other words, the question "Who were the victims of the past?" organizes which period is preferred and by default, which is rejected by each participant.

These discursive procedures shed light on the dialogical feature of the debate due to participants' constant concern about the presence of the "other". Participants' references to the "other" illustrate how precisely the sense of opposition between the two sides (or between the two mutually exclusive membership categories) is reinforced through dilemmatic arguments. The other's narrative has to be undermined or eroded so that one's own narrative can gain legitimacy. Both narratives cannot be equally valid; one's side legitimacy is inversely proportional to the other side's legitimacy.

For example, in extract 7 Jose implies that the "other" is responsible for his own suffering during the pre-coup period. Although he acknowledges that there were

victims after the coup, the argument about his own victimization allows him to avoid attributing any responsibility to his side for the other's suffering.

In extract 8, Marcela does not directly address the other as responsible for her group's victimization. Yet, she treats the other as a significant threat to her group during the pre-coup period, such that the culmination of the conflict could have been unfavourable to her side. In this sense, the two groups' coexistence is presented as unfeasible in the pre-coup period, as if there was place only for one of them.

Extract 10 is in a certain sense the mirror of extract 8. In both extracts, Pamela and Marcela employ fear as the emotional ingredient that provides proof of their victim status. Both participants emphasize that their reactions in the past were the only possible way to face the conflict. This notion contributes to inhibiting alternative descriptions of the past which are not subject to polarisation. But Pamela's treatment of the other is somewhat different from Marcela's. In Pamela's view, the other appears only after the coup d'état as the victimizer, while her group is pictured as the victim of the other's extreme violence. This sense of violence is also fed by how Pamela recalls the coup d'état as an abrupt and unexpected event. Pamela describes her emotions during the pre-coup period as being in complete opposition to her emotions during the post-coup period. This comparison clearly indicates her preference for the pre-coup period and her rejection of the post-coup period, based on the divergent emotional qualities of her experiences (fear versus euphoria).

In Pamela's statements and in Alberto's version of the past in extract 9, there is no mention of their side's role in the victimization of others during the pre-coup period. Moreover, they justify their preference for the pre-coup period on the basis of normative values implied in their efforts during that period to build a more egalitarian society. On the other hand, victimization is only available as a category for describing one's own group during the post-coup period, such that there is no need for them to demand the other's acknowledgment. Alberto's statements directly contributes to settle the normative values of "being a victim" of the post-coup period. He positively values the pre-coup period and treats the victims of the post-coup period as heroes.

It is worth noting how through extracts 6 and 9, Federico and Alberto employ natural phenomena as analogies of the context surrounding the coup d'état. The eye of the hurricane and the waves, respectively, serve for the participants to portray polarisation as similar to violent and destructive natural phenomena, addressing polarisation as a quasi-natural force from which nobody could have escaped. This polarisation's sense of pervasiveness enables the participants to account for polarised behaviours in the past and to justify the inevitability of the coup, since simply put "there was no other option, no way out" from polarisation.

In extract 11, Andres and Mario speak to the dilemma that results from placing the other's victimization within the period they prefer. In this sense, the other's victimization is what complicates the participants' approval of the post-coup period. Nevertheless as becomes evident in extract 12, for the participants the victim category is usable for describing either their group or the other group. The victimization of one's group is said to be equivalent to that of the other. In the statements of Jose and Marcela, both of whom address their group's victimization, equivalence of victimization is precisely what helps them to rhetorically manage their own accountability with respect to their preference for a post-coup period in which the other was victimized.

In relation to how participants manage membership categories, it is possible to argue that extracts 9 and 10, from the way the participants use discursive strategies for constructing temporality, their left-wing political affiliation becomes quite clear. It may be argued that these extracts provide evidence of what could be called a *left-wing orientation to the past*. Their political affiliation is confirmed by their discourse, through their descriptions of the past and of the past's consequences for the present. *A left-wing orientation to the past* and to the current state of the debate about the past is characterized by a clear preference for the pre-coup period, in which the participants as left-wingers describe themselves as protagonists of worthwhile political projects they view as beneficial for all of Chilean society. The coup d'état (an abrupt, unpreventable event), on the other hand, only brought for them fear and political repression.

As in a mirror, it can likewise be argued that extracts 7, 8, 11 and 12 are produced by right-wing participants, evidence in how in their discourses there is what could be called a *right-wing orientation to the past*. The *right-wing orientation to the past* and to the current state of the debate about the past is characterized by a rejection of the pre-coup period and the location in this period of their victimization. In their view, this victimization has been forgotten in the present. Their suffering is what made the coup inevitable and necessary; it put an end to the chaos produced by the left. The coup, then, was also a consequence of the other's irresponsibility. The right-wing orientation emphasizes that the post-coup period created better economic conditions for Chilean society, although there is some regret expressed about the victims of that period.

The participants themselves make the right and the left labels relevant for the debate, treating them as mutually exclusive membership categories. Furthermore, participants ascribe to one of the two groups during the conversation, by following the rules or prescriptions each membership category affords for talking about the past. In other words, the participants' talk is regulated by either a *right-wing* or a *left-wing orientation to the past*, which, in turn, allows the speaker's audience to categorize his or her accounts of the past as being produced by a member of one of the two categories.

Right-wing participants' discourse reveals a wider and more explicit use of membership categorization devices than left-wing participants' discourse. Nevertheless, it is important to point out what the presence of the moderator/researcher may have implied for the participants. As was mentioned in the summary of extract 12, the participants who were invited to the focus group because of their right-wing affiliation, may have heard in the moderator's statements certain clues that enabled them to categorize her as a left-winger. Therefore, right-wing participants' more explicit orientation to the right and the left as membership categories could also be partially explained as an effect of the moderator's presence. In this respect, their use of the membership categories should be viewed as a defensive position assumed in the company of at least one member of the other side. We cannot know what the interaction would have been like in an exclusively right-wing focus group. Nevertheless, their statements include an important amount of

justificatory discussion of their position within the context of the Chilean Memory Debate, which, as will be shown in the following analytical chapter, contributes to the characterization of the right-wing orientation to the past as a defensive one.

It is possible to argue that in both of the two main narratives of the past, what is in dispute is the same: victimization versus the country's well-being. Yet each side understands differently the concept of national well-being: for the left, the main ingredient is greater social equality, while for the right, social order that ensures (and is ensured by) a healthy economy is more important. Each understanding is based on a unique set of normative values that organize the dilemmatic and dialogical feature of the debate about the past, providing the resources for the participants to build a shared binary temporality around the pre- and the post-coup periods. A central point for the discussion is that the normative orders implied in the competing narratives of the past appear unable to coexist, such that only one can prevail during each period of time.

However, what the right-wing and left-wing orientations to the past share is an appeal to one's victimization. Neither views its membership category as victorious. For the left, the coup signalled defeat, while the right asserts defeat because of the other's victimization, a powerful and widely-held argument that prevents the right from gaining recognition for its suffering before the coup or for the beneficial aspects of the Pinochet regime.

Thus, it may be suggested that the debate is no longer about the past itself – the “what happened” – but about the victims of the past – a narrowed consequential aspect of the “what happened”. By focusing on victimization, both sides disregard ambiguities about human agency and choices made in the past, instead producing stereotyped or rules-driven accounts of the past dictated by the two orientations within the Chilean Memory Debate. Addressing themselves as “agents” would imply acknowledgment of “the indeterminacy of the past”, a concept suggested in the Bergsonian description of “memory as duration” (Middleton & Brown, 2005). In that context, “The exercise of agency is a break, a rendering of oneself as other than was previously understood to be the case” (Middleton & Brown, 2005: 220). The implication of presenting one's side as something other than victims is to question

polarisation as *the* method for making sense of the past, questioning the “taken for granted” frameworks of Chilean collective memory.

Chapter 6

MAINTAINING AND REPRODUCING THE DEBATE: THE PERVASIVENESS OF POLARISATION

6.1 Introduction

In Chapter 4, the analysis explored the senses of polarisation that participants construct through the process of talking about the past. In this talk, the category of polarisation serves as an *explanatory resource* for accounting for both past conflict and current controversies concerning the past. The explicit notion of polarisation that prevails in participants' discourse is that of an *underlying social mechanism* responsible for political disputes in the past and also for the lack of consensus among lay or ordinary people in their approaches to those disputes throughout the past and the present.

In this respect, participants present themselves as analysts of the Chilean Memory Debate, producing accounts of the past as well as accounts of the accounts about the past; such meta-accounts include the display of participants' "awareness" of polarisation. There seems to be agreement on the influential role of polarisation – regardless of the speaker's right- or left-wing orientation to the past – in structuring narratives of the past. The participants also tend to consistently attribute polarisation to the opponent's narrative of the past. Hence, polarisation is addressed as an *unavoidable source of conflict*. The reciprocal manner in which participants employ this notion of polarisation as an inescapable dynamic of the debate in combination with the sense of polarisation as an underlying mechanism in Chilean society, afford the fourth sense of polarisation explored in Chapter 4, that of a *quasi-natural force*. Considering the particular ways in which participants use the category of polarisation (the analysis of which is one of the concerns of Chapter 6), the overall effect, one may argue, is the objectification of a social process or mechanism – in the participant's view – that (should) govern(s) Chileans' perspectives on the past.

What are these particular uses of the notion of polarisation? What do the participants do with the explicit category of polarisation and how? Reviewing extracts 1 to 6 from Chapter 4, three main uses of polarisation can be underscored. First, participants use polarisation as a resource for telling an account of the past, the present, and of “Chilean society”: the nation membership category. The first use of polarisation is then *to characterize Chilean society in polarised terms*, either in the past or the present. Through this characterization, participants point to the division of Chileans into two antagonistic political groups, such that this pervasive segmentation implies a constant search of balance between those two forces. A clear example of this use of polarisation is in extract 1, where Marcela both unity and division among Chileans (unity within subgroups but at the same time, division from others) as part of the same process to characterise the pre-coup period.

Second, polarisation is a resource for accounts of accounts of the past. Participants *offer polarisation in terms of explanation*, as pointed out previously in the sense of an explanatory device. Here, it is important to highlight the recursive and tautological feature of the argument. If polarisation is employed either as a consequence and/or effect of the conflict and the conflict is caused by polarisation, then the argument may continue infinitely. Thus, in this research I have found that polarisation is, for the participants in the focus groups, an unavoidable and inescapable source of conflict. Instances of this second use of polarisation are extracts 3 and 5. In addition to how polarisation is used to characterize Chilean society, while in extract 3 that notion is offered as a cause or consequence of the 1973 coup d'état, in extract 5 polarisation is suggested as the explanation for the maintenance of controversies concerning the past.

Third, participants tell the story of polarisation, which is more or less equivalent to telling a story about the past or more precisely, the story about how a past conflict is maintained as time passes. Participants chronologically *reconstruct the story of polarisation*, outlining its origins, causes, functioning, consequences and effects. In this sense, participants also produce their understanding of how polarisation works; that is, who are the parties in conflict, what the components of the dynamic are and how the elements of polarisation are interwoven with one another. In describing the dynamic of polarisation, that is, in making polarisation intelligible, participants often

bring to the talk the two membership categories – the right and the left – around which accounts of polarisation are consistently organized. They treat polarisation as an “object” through, for instance, the regular pattern of employing Extreme Case Formulations (everybody was/is polarised; the whole society is/was polarised) or the display of natural disasters as metaphors for polarisation (the eye of the hurricane, in extract 6). The implication of this is to construct the phenomenon as a supradynamic, a process that is external to society and the individuals who exist within that society. In the end, polarisation is normalized as a regular practice and therefore justified, despite how negative its effects or consequences may be viewed by the participants. Thus, polarisation is a device used for telling an account of the accounts of the past that maintains the conflict as time passes. It is also a resource for participants to address their own accountability in the conflict, and in particular, to address accountability with respect to the membership category to which they subscribe. If polarisation affects every Chilean, then neither of the two groups is more accountable; both are equally responsible; in the end, no one is responsible.

Examples of this attempt to comprehend polarisation’s functioning may be found in extracts 4, 6 and 8 where polarisation is also offered as explanation – in terms of “cause” – for confrontation. However, those pieces of talk can also be seen as attempts to escape polarisation’s negative effects (this is particularly evident in extract 6). It is as if by understanding how the dynamic operates, one might produce a “better” – in the sense of a more accurate – version of the past that includes acknowledgment of how the pervasive negative effects of polarisation have influenced those versions. In this sense, a “better” description of the past also implies an understanding of the understandings of the past. It is important to note that when participants present themselves as analysts of the controversies around the past, they do so by pointing to polarisation as a key element for analysing the debate.

The sense of polarisation as an inescapable and external dynamic that consistently influences Chilean society, as suggested in this research, is methodically constructed through participants’ discourse. What are, then, the main discursive strategies for making polarisation appear as such? From the extracts in Chapter 4, the sense of polarisation’s inescapability is also provided by the participants’ second and third use of polarisation, that is to say, polarisation as an explanation and descriptions of

polarisation's functioning. In particular, this last use rhetorically justifies polarisation as an external and inescapable phenomenon, such that referring to polarisation only affords its reproduction.

In Chapter 5, the analysis explored the particular way in which participants dialogically construct a binary temporality of the 1970s. In doing so, the location in time of the victimization of one's side plays a central role in dividing time, as well as in dividing the two opposing groups. Certainty about the victimization of one's group seems to be unquestionable; the membership categories of victims versus victimizers are the anchors with which participants organize their accounts of the past. Thus, the construction of temporality has been presented as an area in which discursive resources are systematically employed by participants to produce polarisation. Where the speaker asserts a higher degree of victimization of his or her group (as in extracts 7 and 8) there is less explicit use of the notion of polarisation, or in other words, less "awareness" of the effects of polarisation in one's own account of the past. Conversely, where there is greater "awareness" of polarisation (such as in extract 11), there is also greater recognition of the other's victimization, and thus explicit references to the other group.

That said, the main concern of this final analytical chapter is to explore the viability of escaping from polarisation in terms of both the participants' understandings of polarisation and polarisation as a discursive practice. The latter refers to those discursive devices that participants use to construct their understanding of polarisation – through the dialogical construction of temporality and through how they explain the phenomenon.

In fact, resisting polarisation is a participants' concern; it is something to which their discourses orient. They explicitly state their desire for an end to polarised accounts of the past, by affirming the importance of arriving at a third, potentially "neutral" and/or "objective" version which would, in principle, enable the two sides to agree. This exercise, as if it were possible, is highly desirable from an epistemic as well as an ethical perspective. Thus, polarisation is addressed by participants as *a threat to the search for objectivity*; this is a discursive device that suggests the depolarisation of the debate while simultaneously serving as criticism of Chilean society.

The subject of polarisation and objectivity is linked with previous work and research on how people discursively produce facts (Smith, 1978; Latour, & Woolgar, 1986; Potter, 1996b; Wooffitt, 1992; Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998). Facts are conceived as the primary currency of reality, reality being composed by multiple units of facts. If people succeed in conveying the "essence" of the facts they are referring to or describing them as such, this enables them to argue that their representation of reality is the "correct" one. The epistemological discussion about reality and its representation is far more complicated and goes beyond the scope of this research, yet the issue is relevant for the analysis of how people argue for a good, correct or appropriate representation of the past in the discussions being analyzed here. The focus group participants do utilize epistemological notions to present their versions of the past as "objective", a normative concern the participants display throughout the data.

The analysis of how the notion of reality has been produced has been applied in the field of memory research, particularly through the work of conversational remembering (Edwards, Potter & Middleton, 1992; Middleton & Edwards, 1990b; Lynch & Bogen, 1996; Edwards & Potter, 2005; Middleton & Brown, 2005). In this innovative research programme, detailed work on how memories are invoked as evidence of the past is of special interest. Researchers have stressed that certain discursive and rhetorical strategies are more efficient in presenting a memory as accurate, and that people, in describing the past through memories, do important work to demonstrate their credibility. In this respect, the talk on polarisation as an obstacle for objectivity is also done by addressing discussions about other debates, such as who has the right and ability to produce accurate descriptions of Chile's past.

In describing how polarisation operates or, more precisely, in justifying polarisation's regularity, participants introduce epistemic arguments regarding how events of the past may have been knowable as they unfurled, and also how the past may be reconstructed in the present, especially for those who were not alive at the time. As pointed out previously, participants display emotional talk in constructing various accounts of past events, and in particular for explaining the high degree of polarisation that characterized Chilean society in the past and to a certain degree in

the present as well. In this sense, the division between two mutually exclusive groups and groups' perspectives about the past is firmly rooted in emotions. The division is fundamentally conceived as the result of experiences, both individual and collective, that strongly invoke certain feelings – as opposed to rationality – and which serve as a basis for generating opinions about the past. Thus, participants address the issue of accountability and agency from a personal as well as a social/group perspective.

Considering that, according to the participants, in the past the two opposing political affiliations produced two frameworks in which to interpret their extreme emotional experiences, and that these frameworks are seen as rooted in emotions, then by implication there is no room for anything other than emotional arguments in recalling the past. The other pole, that is, rationality, reasonableness or moderateness, is implied and sometimes explicitly included in participants' talk. What speakers tend to emphasize is the lack of self-control with respect to one's own version of the past; it is as if they are forced by their membership in either of the two categories to follow the "rules" of either a left- or a right-wing orientation to the past.

Use of the emotion/rationality polarity is related to the employment of another polarity: that of involvement in the conflict versus distance from it (which is present in several extracts in Chapter 5), such that feelings and emotions serve to justify the speaker's high level of commitment to one of the two political groups. However, when participants remember the events under discussion today, they refer to a negative aspect of involvement in the conflict: that of not being able to comprehend the scope of the conflict because of how polarisation influenced or biased their approach to the events. This argument justifies polarised behaviour on the basis of epistemic discussions such as, for example, what are the legitimate sources for producing a valid description of the past? Who is more subject to bias -- those who acquired knowledge from personal experiences or those who acquired it from others? Is the past knowable for those who did not experience it directly?

Because memories are viewed as sources of knowledge about the past and at the same time a potential source of bias, forgetting certain parts of the past is also linked to polarisation. In the context of this research, forgetting is mostly used to describe the other's behaviour as explored in extracts 8 and 12, in terms of demanding

recognition for the victimization of one's group, and in the extracts to follow, to introduce competing versions.

In summary, Chapter 6 focuses on how *polarisation as a discursive practice* is accomplished through the process of *justifying the pervasive sense of polarisation*. Interestingly, appealing to polarisation's pervasiveness appears in participants' talk in response to their attempts to depolarise the debate, such as when they address the notion of *polarisation as a threat to the search for objectivity*.

To establish the pervasiveness of the so-called "polarised dynamic" from participants' perspective (in addition to the analysis presented in Chapters 4 and 5), in Chapter 6 I explore how participants account for their inability to acknowledge the other's perspective on the basis of *the epistemic consequences of the dynamic of polarisation*, which are blamed for the maintenance of polarisation. In doing so, participants deal with their own (and their group's) accountability with respect to key issues: from a left-wing perspective, the impossibility of preventing the coup d'état, and from a right-wing perspective, the impossibility of preventing the victimization of the other.

Seven extracts are analyzed in this chapter. In the first two (extracts 13 and 14), one taken from a focus group composed only of left-wing participants and the other from a focus group of only right-wing participants, the speakers address the accountability of the left and the right, respectively. They justify the key issues already mentioned on the basis of epistemic notions.

In extracts 15 and 16, both taken from the same focus group composed only of right-wing participants, the speakers display various dichotomies, including forgetting/remembering and personal memories/informed knowledge in discussing the possibility of depolarizing the debate. The participants tend to weaken the possibility of depolarisation as they develop arguments about how embedded emotions are in polarisation; the result is the treatment of polarisation as a cause and consequence of controversies about the past.

In extracts 17 and 18, both taken from the same politically mixed focus group, the participants display and enrich the discussion about polarisation as a threat to objectivity, bringing to the talk the issue of who has the right and ability to produce a valid description of the past. The argument revolves also around generational issues, that is to say, the impossibility of conveying knowledge of the past to younger generations. The main point of discussion here is how within a polarised context one may grasp a sense of certainty about the past and the criteria for judging the accuracy of versions of the past. It seems that, finally, it is only possible to generate confidence in one's account by establishing oneself as a member of any of the two opposing political groups, that is, ascribing to one of the two mutually exclusive membership categories and following the prescriptions that either membership imposes for talking about the past. This, in turn, reproduces polarisation, such that only by being "inside" the conflict one may be heard as a valid interlocutor.

Finally, in the last extract the speaker, an older, right-wing woman, produces an interesting piece of talk in which she first displays her concern about polarisation and her desire to overcome the dynamic, while at the same time expressing her ambivalence about whether an alternative interpretation (one that is free of the effects of polarisation), would be either plausible or effective.

6.2 Addressing the accountability of the left through polarisation's epistemic consequences

Extract 13 is taken from the same focus group as extract 2, that is, a group composed only of left-wing participants. This interaction is produced after 17 minutes of talk; the moderator has introduced the game beforehand and Gaston, an older participant, takes the floor for about 10 consecutive minutes. In Gaston's first long turn (a part of which is presented in the Prelude) there are numerous pauses, some of which are quite long (1.5 to 2 seconds), and his narration is only interrupted by minor utterances such as "yes", "okay" and "mm hm", or by questions from younger participants asking for more details or clarifications of his account of his life during the pre- and post-coup d'état periods.

Immediately after the moderator finishes introducing the game, Gaston states that the game seems "very interesting" because it gives him the opportunity to explain "the many contradictions" he sees in the course of the last 35 years of Chilean history. He starts by producing an account of the early 1970s, in which he describes the pre-coup d'état period as a time of "political ferment", yet with "no conflicts at all" in the neighbourhood where he grew up, a peripheral, lower-middle class area of Santiago, where he used to "participate in a very friendly way" in political activities with friends of the same age (he refers to being 15 years old at the time) who belonged to various political parties on the left. But when the "coup arrived", he and his friends felt too intimidated to continue their political activities. He describes the post-coup d'état period as "un período de oscurantismo/a period of darkness". Gaston continues with an account of his life during the 1980s, attributing great importance to what young people did to resist the Pinochet regime. He finishes his 10-minute turn by affirming that young people have a responsibility in terms of mobilizing society towards social transformation. At the same time, he complains that young people today are less politically active or committed to that praiseworthy objective than his generation had been in the past.

The moderator interrupts Gaston, asking the younger participants if they share his opinion about the participation of young people in political activities today. Catalina, a younger participant, asks if the question refers to the 1970s or to the present, which

allows the moderator to re-specify her question in terms of both the past and the present. Subsequently, Ramiro, another young participant, states that today there is a lack of “political projects” that could unite university students. Nevertheless, he states that he is currently involved in a left-wing student movement. Ramiro adds that his participation in this movement is guided by his desire to support a given “point of view” and to promote general political discussion, but he does not feel mobilized in terms of “como de sentirse como eh como como llevado porque hay algo algo está pasando↑ yo diría que eso no sucede/like feeling as if you are being swept along because there is something going on I would say that doesn’t occur”.

Once Ramiro finishes his turn, Ximena, the moderator, asks him, “How would you imagine yourself as a youth in the seventies?” and Ramiro answers with a 0.5-second pause and an “mm”, which produces a quick rephrasing of the question by the moderator. Ramiro overlaps with Ximena by stating “me pasan varias cosas porque: (0.4) eh (0.7) pienso en los setenta y los divido en dos/many things happen to me because (0.4) um (0.7) I think about the seventies and I divide them in two”.

Before reviewing the extract, it is important to highlight two features of how Ramiro prefaces his view of the division of the 1970s into two distinct periods of time. First, Ramiro repeats in the extract the phrase “como llevado por/like swept along” which he first uses in negative (we do not feel as swept along today) to describe the level of political and social mobilization that characterizes young people and Chilean society in general today. Later, he uses the phrase in a positive sense (people felt swept along by events in the past) to portray how in the early 1970s, Chileans were heavily involved in the defence of opposing ideological ideas. Second, it is notable how in producing his account of the 1970s, Ramiro reveals ambivalence, since his answer is not straightforward and, as he himself states, “many things happen” to him.

The analysis of extract 13, which is divided into four parts, focuses on the discursive process by which the speaker *justifies polarisation as a regular dynamic* characterizing Chilean society in the past, which reinforces the sense of pervasiveness of the dynamic (linked to the *unavoidable, quasi-natural force* sense of polarisation). As in Chapter 5, Ramiro’s talk reveals the regular pattern of viewing the 1970s as divided by the pivotal year 1973 into two distinct periods of

time, followed by the formulation of two mutually exclusive options for him to imagine the pre-coup period. For Ramiro, there would have been only two alternatives, yet he dismisses one of them as he develops his argument. The polarity is articulated as being too involved, to the extent of "being swept along by" the political context, versus marginalizing oneself from the "feverish" political context in order to understand the dimensions of the conflict. The rhetorical strength of the polarity is enhanced by the introduction of a complementary distinction between being "inside" or "outside" the high level of conflict attributed to the 1970s. For Ramiro, being "inside", or taking a side in the conflict, was the default condition of all Chileans; being "outside", on the other hand, was practically an impossible option. Thus, the alternative description Ramiro offers when he imagines himself during the pre-coup period is ruled out. The final result is the justification of the polarised behaviour of those who were old enough to be aware of events during the years before and after the coup d'état on the basis of *polarisation's epistemic consequences*. A significant effect of Ramiro's talk is how he makes the coup d'état appear inevitable.

Extract 13a: Original transcription in Spanish (L1/17:09-18:13)

- 1 RAMIRO ... pienso en los setenta y los divido en dos;
 2 (0.5)
 3 XIMENA mm ꞑhm=
 4 RAMIRO ꞑcla- lo(h)s parto por la mita: (0.5) o sea pienso
 5 en el setenta y tres pa atrás:sꞑ y pienso: después en
 6 los años de la dictadura (0.5) y pienso que son:
 7 mu:ndos es- es como si fueran dos mundos
 8 absolutamente distintos (1.7) cuando pienso en el
 9 setenta setenta y tres (0.7) se me imaginan dos
 10 alternativas (0.4) así como: pensando como soy yo y
 11 estuviera ahíꞑ (1.4) por una parte (0.5) podría (0.4)
 12 estar en una posición (1.6) tal que me sintiera como:
 13 (0.8) llevado por una voráGINE así: como: de:: de como
 14 de actividad ah cómo eh cómo (.) cómo decirlo (0.5)
 15 e:h (2.1) de esa épocaꞑ la re- como la sensa- la
 16 imagen que tengoꞑ es como que todo el mundo estaba a
 17 caballo de algo (0.4) ah? ꞑcomo=
 18 XIMENA ꞑmm
 19 RAMIRO =que todos iban corriendo para alguna parte °cachai?°=
 20 XIMENA =mm=
 21 RAMIRO =unos que iban corriendo para transformar la sociedad
 22 y moverla hacia el socialismoꞑ por el lado de la
 23 Unidad Popularꞑ (0.8) y el otro mund- o sea el
 24 cu- el- (0.4) el otro sector de la sociedad estaba muy
 25 a caballo justamente de de- detener el proceso: (0.3)
 26 de aportillar al gobierno: (.) y luchar contra el
 27 cáncer etcétera ꞑfasí marxistaꞑ ꞑy todo ese:
 28 ¿? ꞑ((suaves risas))ꞑ

Extract 13a: English translation

- 1 RAMIRO ... I think about the seventies and I divide them in two
 2 (0.5)
 3 XIMENA mm hm=
 4 RAMIRO Lrigh- I split them in half (0.5) I mean I think
 5 about before seventy three and I think after in
 6 the years of the dictatorship (0.5) and I think they
 7 are worlds it's- it's like as if they were two
 8 absolutely different worlds (1.7) when I think about
 9 seventy seventy-three (0.7) I imagine two
 10 alternatives (0.4) like thinking how I am and I
 11 were there (1.4) on the one hand (0.5) I could (0.4)
 12 be in a position (1.6) such that I'd have felt like
 13 (0.8) carried by a whirlwind such as like of of like
 14 of activity oh how um how (.) how to say it (0.5)
 15 um (2.1) of that time the re- like the sensa- the
 16 image I have is like everybody was a
 17 *caballo de algo* (0.4) ah? rlike=
 18 XIMENA Lmm
 19 RAMIRO =that everybody was running to somewhere °you know?°=
 20 XIMENA =mm=
 21 RAMIRO =some who were running to transform the society and to
 22 move it toward socialism on the side of the
 23 *Unidad Popular* (0.8) and the other worl- I mean the
 24 *cu-* the- (0.4) the other part of society was very
 25 a *caballo* precisely to to- stop the process (0.3)
 26 to sabotage the government (.) and to fight against
 27 the cancer etcetera rlike Marxistf r and all that
 28 ? L((soft laughter))J

For Ramiro, the 1970s are divisible into two periods, “dos mundos absolutamente distintos/two absolutely different worlds” (lines 7 y 8). The point of partition in the time line that divides the decade “in half” is the year 1973 – the year of the coup d'état – even though three years are not equivalent to half a decade. Note how Ramiro, in lines 5 and 6, designates the year 1973 as the starting point from which he constructs, backward and forward, a temporally spatialized framework. The years “setenta y tres para atrás: s↑/before seventy-three” do not receive a particular name –

just dates – while he labels those after the year 1973 “los años de la dictadura/the years of the dictatorship”.

With respect to the first alternative Ramiro imagines, he takes several lines to explain how deeply involved in the events he would have been and also to describe the context in which this involvement would have taken place. In describing the context, there are some significant details in lines 11 to 15 that reveal Ramiro’s difficulty in producing a description that satisfies him. The details are: significant pauses (1.4 seconds in line 11, 1.6 seconds in line 12 and 2.1 seconds in line 15) and the prolongation of vowels and a few hesitations, for instance, in lines 13 and 14 “así: como: de:: de como de actividad ah cómo eh cómo (.) cómo decirlo (0.5) e:h/ such as like of of like of activity oh how um how (.) how to say it”.

In line 13, Ramiro introduces a new climate metaphor – similar to Federico’s use of the “eye of the hurricane” metaphor in extract 6 and to Alberto’s use of the “waves” metaphor in extract 9 – a “vorágine/whirlwind” of activities that “sweeps you away” quickly (“running”, in Ramiro’s terms) to “transformar la sociedad y moverla hacia el socialismo/transform the society and to move it toward socialism” (lines 21 and 23), on one side, or, on the other, to “detener el proceso, aportillar al gobierno y luchar contra el cáncer marxista/stop the process, to sabotage the government and to fight against the Marxist cancer” (a remarkable three-part list, from lines 25 to 27, which Ramiro uses to describe the actions of those on one side).

The “vorágine/whirlwind” metaphor suggests many interesting features concerning Ramiro’s account of the context of the pre-coup d’état period. Its rhetorical effects are similar to those explored in the analysis of extract 6, although there Federico uses the metaphor to explain the difficulty in producing consensus between the two sides of the debate today, while here Ramiro displays his metaphor to explain difficulties in the past. In extract 9, Alberto employs the “waves” image to illustrate the seriousness of the danger opponents to the coup faced in the post-coup period. In all of these cases, the metaphors are taken from the realm of nature, to suggest the power of natural forces against which human agency has little recourse. Therefore, it can be argued that participants ascribe to the conflict a special quality and strength that is normally attributed to natural disaster. Thus, there is a connection between the

past and the present in terms of how polarisation is used to describe both periods as subject to violent natural forces.

This is enhanced by a second metaphor, that of everybody being “a caballo de algo” in the early 1970s. Being “a caballo” literally means “being mounted on a horse” and when “de algo/of something” is added, it is transformed into an idiomatic Chilean expression, a rough English translation of which is “to be ahead of the game”, that is, having access to the latest resources or developments in a particular subject or area. Because this idiomatic expression includes the image of a horse, an animal that is able to move quickly – to gallop – over long distances, avoiding obstacles, for instance, to be “a caballo de algo” in Chile implies not only keeping abreast of what is happening, but also doing so with velocity and skill. For example, being “a caballo de algo/being on a horse of something” is a common way to characterize those in the vanguard or on the leading edge.

Ramiro adds something else that indicates how he is utilizing the phrase “estar a caballo de algo/being on a horse of something”. In line 16, he states that “todo el mundo”, literally “all the world”, or, more precisely, “everybody”, was “a caballo de algo” and then, he reformulates it in line 19 as “todos iban corriendo para alguna parte/everybody was running to somewhere”. As shown in the analysis of extract 3, many Extreme Case Formulations are utilized to describe polarisation in the past as an unavoidable and ever-present phenomenon which characterized all of Chilean society. In this case, the double use of the “everybody” EFC enhances the velocity embedded in the idiomatic expression “to be a caballo de algo”. Linked with the whirlwind image, this reinforces the sense of violence with which Ramiro accounts for *polarisation as an unavoidable quasi-natural force, the underlying dynamic* accounting for the conflict in the past. It is important to note that Ramiro displays the “being a caballo de” idiomatic expression three times in the extract, twice in a very similar way. First, in lines 15 to 17 and later in the continuation of extract 10 in lines 31 and 32.

The notion of polarisation as an ever-present feature of Chilean society in the past is strengthened by the use of two opposing and mutually exclusive membership categories: those fighting “to transform the society” and those fighting “to stop the

process". Just as in extracts 3 and 4, Chileans are viewed in the past as belonging to one of the two available membership categories, with no possible alternative, which serves to reinforce polarisation's pervasiveness.

The frequent use of Extreme Case Formulations (Pomerantz, 1986; Edwards, 2000) with respect to polarisation, as explored in the previous chapter, in particular in extract 3, is an effective discursive strategy used by focus group participants to avoid attributing responsibility to one side of the debate. The implication of the use of ECFs is that if polarisation was embedded in both groups, neither can be considered more or less accountable for what participants view as the negative effects of polarisation in the past (and the present). Thus, from the participants' perspectives, the issue is not how and when polarisation started but who maintains it and how, because both sides are subject to the same dynamic (as Patricia claims in extract 5). One can always argue that one's polarised action is in reaction to the other's polarised action, creating a circular pattern.

Note how Ramiro introduces the "Marxist cancer", in lines 27, and what this produces. He states "y luchar contra el cáncer etcetera/and to fight against the cancer etcetera" which produces soft laughter from other participants, overlapping with Ramiro's laughter in "¿así marxista? y todo ese:/like Marxist? and all that". "Marxist cancer" was a phrase commonly used by the military junta in public speeches in the early years of the authoritarian regime to appeal to its supporters and increase rejection of Allende's sympathizers. Ramiro uses this notion with irony, which is recognized by another unidentified participant who laughs. Adding "etcetera" and "all that" could be viewed as Ramiro displaying knowledge about how his political opponents refer to the side he sympathizes with, while at the same time rejecting such language. There appears to be no need to do this explicitly; the use of an ironic tone when employing the language of the opposing side is enough to disqualify it in the context of this particular focus group.

In the continuation of extract 13, it is possible to appreciate how Ramiro disregards the second option he suggests for imagining how he would have acted in the "first half" of the 1970s. According to him, given the events of the past, it would not have been possible to step back and think about the scope of the conflict in those years.

Therefore, the dilemma between being too involved in the “voráGINE/whirlwind” context versus removing oneself in order to reflect – as opposed to “act” – is resolved since the second option is ruled out. As a result, behaviour directly influenced by overwhelming political “forces” is justified, particularly since “everybody” was forced to take a side.

Extract 13b: Original transcription in Spanish (18:12- 18:54)

27 RAMIRO cáncer etcétera [¿así marxista& ¿y todo ese:
 28 ¿? L((suaves risas))J
 29 (0.6)
 30 RAMIRO todas esas ideas! (0.4) entonc- por una parte e::h me
 31 senti- e:h (0.4) me imagino como: a caballo de eso; de
 32 la transformación social a lo mejor y un poco: como
 33 (.) muy muy involucrado en: ahí (0.4) y un poco a lo
 34 mejor sin tanta capacidad de: (0.4) de pensar mucho al
 35 respecto más bien llevado por la situación (0.4) me
 36 imagino
 37 (1.2)
 38 RAMIRO y la otra posibilidad es que efectivamente me hubiera
 39 puesto un poco al margen de eso (1.0) si hubiera:
 40 (0.6) como tenido la capacidad como de pensar al
 41 respecto tal vez me [hubiera puesto un poco al margen¿
 42 GASTON L((carraspera))J
 43 RAMIRO °cosa: que igual no creo que hubiera: (.) tenido mucha
 44 cabida°
 45 XIMENA [mm
 46 GASTON L((tose))
 47 (0.5)
 48 RAMIRO °por lo mismo que por lo mismo que
 49 des- describe:: (0.6) usted [poh°
 50 XIMENA L[Gastón
 51 RAMIRO °o sea Gastón (1.2) de una cosa como° (0.3) o sea de
 52 las personas mayores que he conversado también; o sea
 53 como que era una cosa que como que estaba en el aire

Extract 13b: English translation

- 27 RAMIRO the cancer etcetera [like Marxism] and all that
 28 ? L((soft laughter))
 29 (0.6)
 30 RAMIRO all those ideas (0.4) so- on the one hand um I
 31 fe- um (0.4) I imagine myself a *caballo* of that of the
 32 social transformation maybe and a bit like
 33 (.) very very involved in there (0.4) and a bit maybe
 34 without so much capacity to (0.4) to think much
 35 about it rather carried away by the situation (0.4) I
 36 imagine
 37 (1.2)
 38 RAMIRO and the other possibility is that effectively I'd have
 39 put myself a bit at the fringes of that (1.0) if I'd
 40 had (0.6) had like the capacity like to think about it
 41 maybe [I'd have put myself a bit at the fringes]
 42 GASTON L((clearing throat))
 43 RAMIRO °which anyway I don't think it'd have (.) had much
 44 room°
 45 XIMENA [mm
 46 GASTON L((coughing))
 47 (0.5)
 48 RAMIRO °because of the same that because of the same that you
 49 des- describe (0.6) you [poh°
 50 XIMENA L[Gaston
 51 RAMIRO °I mean Gaston (1.2) a thing like° (.) I mean from
 52 older people with whom I've talked as well I mean
 53 it was something that was like in the air

In line 31, Ramiro again uses the metaphorical image of being “a caballo de algo” in a similar way as in lines 15 to 17. Both utterances are preceded by repairs, which serve to insert “an image” in the place of a sensation or a feeling. In the first instance, Ramiro states that “como la sensa- la imagen que tengo↑ es como.../like the sensa- the image I have is like...” and in the second “me senti- e:h (0.4) me imagino como: a caballo de eso↓/I fe- erm (0.4) I imagine myself *a caballo* of that”. It seems as if “feeling” or “sensation” is not a preferable way for Ramiro to introduce his point of view, yet they appear to have been his initial, spontaneous choices.

At this point in the interaction, the second alternative for describing how people could have acted in the early 1970s is introduced cautiously by Ramiro. After affirming how involved he would have been in the events of the early 1970s in line 33, he states that probably he would not have had much capacity to think; instead he would have been “llevado por la situación/carried away by the situation”. By stating this, Ramiro is reformulating the polarity between being “carried away” by the political context versus removing oneself from the conflict as a dichotomy between acting on feelings (acting in a fashion ruled by irrational and/or emotional motives) versus acting reflectively (a thoughtful position). In other words, Ramiro reframes his argument as embedded in the dichotomy between irrationality and rationality. However, the possibility of maintaining a position outside the conflict is characterized in line 42 as one that “no hubiera (.) tenido mucha cabida/would not have (.) had much room”, implying that “thinking” would probably not have had much acceptance among people at that time.

Ramiro presents the possibility of people acting rationally but quickly rejects it as unfeasible in the past. But referring to this alternative, Ramiro reveals his ambivalence about how the conflict was handled in the past. On the one hand, “thinking” or acting rationally is commonly viewed as preferable, particularly in politics. On the other hand, Ramiro begins his turn in lines 10 and 11 by stating that what he has to say is based on his own point of view (“así como: pensando como soy yo y estuviera ahí/like thinking how I am and I were there”); only after his introduction does he describe the two alternatives. Later, in lines 38 and 39, he states that “la otra posibilidad es que efectivamente me hubiera puesto un poco al margen/the other possibility is that effectively I’d have put myself a bit at the fringes”. The term “efectivamente/effectively” tells us for Ramiro the “rational” alternative would have been preferable to him if the conditions for it had existed.

After a significant 1.2-second pause in line 37 as a “transition-relevance place” (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974; Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998) which is not taken up by any of the other participants, Ramiro continues to display his account of the “rational” option in conditional terms (“if I had had the capacity to think with respect to”). While doing so, Ramiro reduces the volume of his voice from lines 43 to 51.

Also, other participants, including the moderator and the two older participants in this focus group, subtly interact with Ramiro without questioning his suggestion. Ramiro only returns to his normal speaking volume at the end of line 51, once he has referred to Gaston's contributions as representative of an older generation of persons who have transmitted to him that in the early 1970s "there was something in the air" that made "everybody take a side for something". What was there "in the air" that forced all Chileans to adopt a stance in this story? The "voráGINE/whirlwind" or "eye of the hurricane" metaphors tells us about some of the qualities attributed to the context of this story, which rhetorically transform the context into a protagonist of history. It is as if the context possesses a special quality, drawn from "natural" destructive forces that governed people's behaviour in the past, and to some extent, that continue to govern their behaviour in the present as well.

Ramiro completes his description of the 1970s by producing a brief and direct statement (not included in the transcripts) about how he imagines the post-coup d'état period, which greatly contrasts with his account of the earlier period. Ramiro states that "la sensación que tengo↑ es que hubiera andado asustado siempre↓/ the sensation I have is that I would have been always afraid" and then adds with a tone of nervous laughter "como esperando que me pasara algo o que le pasara algo a alguien que conocía:£ (0.6) o que me pasara algo a mí/like expecting that something would happen to me or that something would happen to somebody I knew£ (0.6) or that something would happen to me".

In the lines omitted from the transcription, Ramiro states three times that he would have been "siempre asustado/always afraid", which helps to ensure the ever-present character of the dangers faced in the post-coup d'état period. The Extreme Case Formulation "always" qualifies the threat as being constantly present during the post-coup years, with no exception. This reflects a high level of alert and paralysis in comparison to the significant level of political and social mobilization that is attributed to the pre-coup d'état period.

Note how Ramiro produces a three-part list, repeating in each part the same terms (que "pasara algo/that something would happen"); however, the three-part list is not achieved in terms of content but only in form, as the first and the last parts of the list

are equivalent (“que me pasara algo/that something would happen to me” and “que me pasara algo a mi/that something would happen to me”). In doing so, Ramiro uses the vast and heterogeneous category of people he knew to describe the persons who would have been in constant danger, when he states, as the second element of the list, that “le pasara algo a alguien que conocía/something would happen to somebody I knew”. By inserting this category of the people as a subject vulnerable to repression, the speaker is visibly affirming the victimization of his own group during the post-coup period.

Following the analysis in Chapter 5, asserting one’s own group victimization is one of the devices used by participants to rhetorically organize their preference for one of the two periods of time into which the past is divisible. What is significant in extract 13 is that until this point, Ramiro has not used the argument of victimization to display his preference for the pre-coup period. He has limited his account to a description of the pre-coup period employing the notion of polarisation to characterize Chilean society at that time. However, although his focus is on the first period of time, it seems that he can’t avoid referring also to the second period. This confirms the dialogical feature of the discursive organization of temporality, in sense that one period is understood in relation to the other. As a result, it becomes clear that Ramiro is producing a version of the past with a left-wing orientation.

Thereafter, Ximena, the moderator, again takes up Ramiro’s second “rational” alternative for imagining the early 1970s. Here, Ramiro manages to explain – with several long pauses – why it would have been impossible to prevent the coup. The dichotomy between being too involved in the “vorágine/whirlwind” context versus completely removing oneself from the conflict is reformulated as a matter of being “inside” or “outside” the conflict, respectively. In the last part of the interaction, these polarities enable Ramiro to address a controversial issue for the left: that is, whether the coup d’état could have been avoided and whether the left was able to provide armed resistance to the Pinochet regime.

Extract 13c: Original transcription in Spanish (L1/19:16-20:15)

- 54 XIMENA y cuando tú dices que: e:h como te habrías quedado al
55 margen y habrías pensado un poco más las cosas (0.4)
56 e:h por qué dices eso? por qué como que esa necesidad
57 de pensar un poco más las cosas? tú crees que en esa
58 época no se pensaban?
59 (0.9)
- 60 RAMIRO no ta:nto: eso: (0.8) sí se pensaba
61 (3.5)
- 62 RAMIRO yo tengo la imp- la la idea (0.4) no sé si es correcto
63 o no pero tengo la impresión sí
- 64 GASTON L((carraspera))
65 (1.4)
- 66 RAMIRO de que (0.9) cuando uno vive: (0.3) una situación
67 (1.0) histórica (2.3) sí se puede:: (1.0) >pensar
68 respecto de cuales van a ser las consecuencias de<
69 esa:: de las acciones que se están llevando a cabo en
70 ese momento: (1.8) y: que:: (3.6) >y que a lo mejor
71 para pensar qué va a pasar< (.) °cuáles son las
72 posibilidades que se están° (0.7) configurando al
73 respecto: (0.5) para poder ver el panorama: (.) hay
74 que estar afuera (.) no estar adentro
75 (0.3)
- 76 XIMENA rmm hm
- 77 RAMIRO lporque estar adentro siempre tení un corte muy
78 parcial de lo que está pasan:do: ((con voz
79 quejumbrosa))

Extract 13c: English translation

- 54 XIMENA and when you say that um you'd have stayed on the
55 fringes and you'd have thought about things a bit more
56 (0.4) um why do you say so? why this necessity
57 of thinking about things a bit more? do you think that
58 people didn't think at that time?
59 (0.9)
- 60 RAMIRO not as much (0.8) they did think
61 (3.5)
62 I have the imp- the the idea (0.4) I don't know if
63 it's correct or not ,but I do have the impression
64 GASTON L((clearing throat))
65 (1.4)
- 66 RAMIRO that (0.9) when one lives (0.3) a historical (1.0)
67 situation (2.3) yes one can (1.0) >think
68 about what will be the consequences of<
69 these of the actions which are taking place at the
70 moment (1.8) and that (3.6) >and maybe to think about
71 what is going to happen< (.) °what are the
72 possibilities being° (.) shaped with respect
73 to this (0.5) to be able to see the panorama (.) one
74 has to be outside (.) not be inside
75 (0.3)
- 76 XIMENA rmm hm
- 77 RAMIRO Lbecause being inside you always have a very
78 partial slice of what is happening ((with a moaning
79 voice))

The particular manner in which Ramiro addresses the moderator's request, after a pause of 0.9 seconds ("no ta:nto: eso↓ (0.8) si se pensaba/not as much (0.8) they did think"), indicates a "dispreferred" activity (Pomerantz, 1984; Atkinson, & Heritage, 1984) in answering the moderator's question ("tú crees que en esa época no se pensaban?/do you think that people didn't think at that time?") in this particular context of left-wing participants. The moderator's question is displayed as closely based on what Ramiro has just stated; she repeats his words and reformulates his contribution as a "necesidad de pensar un poco más las cosas/necessity of thinking about things a bit more" in the past. By implication, this "necessity" was not taken

seriously. Subsequently, the moderator directly asks Ramiro for more explanation, as if he had implied that people were not thinking while the events were unfolding. In doing so, Ximena confronts Ramiro with the alternative that he implies would have been desirable in imagining the stance he would have taken in the early 1970s. However preferable this alternative would have been, presenting people in the pre-coup d'état period as unable to "think about things more" is a controversial notion he recognizes as such. The degree of controversy is evidenced by the many pauses and hesitations in Ramiro's turn.

Ramiro hesitates for 3.5 seconds in line 61 before starting his account. This is followed, in lines 62 and 63, by a halting presentation of his account as an "impression" which he does not know "si es correcto o no/if it's correct or not". Then, Ramiro introduces a general and abstract level of analysis, stating that it is possible to consider the "consequences" of "given actions" with respect to "historical situations". As he continues, he implies that to be able to "ver el panorama/see the panorama" one must be "outside" the conflict. The polarity between being "outside" or "inside" enables Ramiro to account for why Chileans were unable to prevent the consequences of the conflict -- because of their high level of involvement in it. And because everybody was forced to take a stance on the conflict, as has been articulated in many passages of this extract (e.g., the "vorágine/whirlwind" context, the "everybody was *a caballo de algo*"), being "inside" the conflict was the default condition of all Chileans in the early 1970s. Hence, lines 66 to 79 contribute to portray the coup d'état as an event that its protagonists or witnesses could not have anticipated (and therefore prevented, in the case of those who would have wanted to). The interests at stake were, by implication, of such a magnitude so as to disable any endeavour to stop a process which history was already writing.

The rhythm of the talk enables Ramiro to present his argument in a coherent and cautious way, given that his argument may be unpopular. The first part of his overall argument in lines 66 and 67 ("cuando uno vive↑ (0.3) una situación (1.0) histórica (2.3) sí se puede:: (1.0)/when one lives (0.3) a historical (1.0) situation (2.3) yes one can (1.0)") includes several pauses, in comparison to the second and seemingly more controversial part in lines 67 to 70, where the delivery of the talk is notably faster (">pensar respecto de cuales van a ser las consecuencias de< esa:: de las acciones

que se están llevando a cabo en ese momento↓>think about what will be the consequences of< these of the actions which are taking place at this moment”). Then there is a delay of approximately 6 seconds in the talk in line 70 (the two pauses of 1.8-seconds and 3.6-seconds and the “y: que:./and that” in between) after which Ramiro changes the level of analysis, applying his abstract claim to the “historical situation” in Chile in 1973. He accelerates his rhythm at the end of line 70, stating that “>a lo mejor para pensar qué va a pasar</>maybe to think about what is going to happen<“, then, he lowers the volume of his voice and produces several pauses to finally state that “para ver el panorama (.) hay que estar afuera (.) no estar adentro/to be able to see the panorama (.) one has to be outside (.) not be inside”. In this sense, Ramiro uses a faster rhythm for talk about the more controversial issue – the ability to rationally think about the consequences of given actions – and displays a slower rhythm and pauses frequently when introducing abstract reflections.

After a short pause in line 75, and overlapping with Ximena’s “mm hm”, Ramiro explains that being “inside” “always” implies a “partial” view of the events under discussion. In addition, having a partial view due to the unavoidable condition of being overly involved in the conflict is considered an obstacle that prevents Chileans from being able to rationally analyze events in the past. At the end, Ramiro’s discourse is coherent, in that he manages to save his argument in general and abstract terms, while introducing the distinction between being “inside” or “outside” to refer to the concrete challenges faced by Chileans in the past.

After line 79, some lines have been omitted from the transcription, since they do not directly contribute to the focus of the analysis of extract 13. In the audio, these lines cover from 20:15 to 21:26. In that interval, Ramiro claims that only “in retrospect” is it possible to appreciate that “se veía venir algo/something was going to happen” but at that time “nadie podía ver que se veía venir nada/nobody could have seen what was going to happen”. Then he suggests that today, past events may be seen as connected, which produces expressions of approval and contributions from the other participants. For instance, they discuss two military revolts, the *Tacnazo* in October 1969 and the *Tanquetazo* in June 1973, as proof that the military was already showing signs of disagreement with the civilian government. Yet, in the past, those events were not viewed as connected, according to the participants. At the end of the

interaction, Ramiro himself produces a kind of summary of his argument, finishing with the conclusion that the left would not have been able "to fight against" the military or "to stop a coup".

Extract 13d: Original transcription in Spanish (L1/21:26-21:50)

80 RAMIRO a lo que voy es claro; a poste- a posteri o sea como
81 después; uno empieza a revisar pa atrás y dice claro
82 habían indicios como que de algo que iba a
83 pasar cachai? (0.6) de que: los m- de que los
84 militares hicieron tales y cuales y tal cosas
85 ((golpeando la mesa)) o que la derecha estaba haciendo
86 tales y cuales cosas ((golpeando la mesa))
87 cachai? y que la izquierda estaba haciendo tales y
88 cuales cosas; y que también (0.6) uno hubiera dicho
89 claro (.) se veía venir que tampoco iba a tener
90 &suficiente fuerza como para:& (0.2) para luchar
91 contra lo que: (0.2) o para detener un golpe
92 rpor ejemplo=
93 GASTON Lclaro
94 XIMENA =mm hm

Extract 13d: English translation

80 RAMIRO what I'm saying is clear in retros- in retrospect I
81 mean like after one starts to look back and says right
82 there were signs like that something was going to
83 happen you know? (0.6) that the m- that the
84 military did such and such and such things
85 ((banging on the table)) or that the right was doing
86 such and such things ((banging on the table))
87 you know? and that the left was doing such and
88 such things and also (0.6) one would have said
89 right (.) one could see it coming that nor was it
90 going to have &enough strength to& (0.2) to fight
91 against what (0.2) or to stop a coup
92 rfor example=
93 GASTON Lright
94 XIMENA =mm hm

According to Ramiro, the analysis “in retrospect” allows one to see the connections between the events as they were unfolding. As he repeats three times the term “claro/right” in line 80, at the beginning of his turn, and in lines 81 and 89, his analysis may seem obvious today. In the context of Ramiro’s previous statements, the retrospective view enables a global examination of history from the outside, something that was not possible in the past as the events were occurring. Thus, those on the left would not be expected to fully understand the scope of the conflict at the time.

Without explicitly describing the actions of the military, the right and the left, in that order, Ramiro addresses each group in a similar fashion, particularly the military and the right. Each of the three groups was doing “things” (treated as “such and such things”). This implies that the “things” each group was doing are identifiable and may be analyzed retrospectively and that it is possible to establish a chain of connection between the “things” – events, actions or activities – attributable to each group. The result is to present the coup as the final consequence of several chains of events (“things”). In this sense, Ramiro’s analysis presents a historically determinist vision of the 1973 coup d’état. Ramiro attaches the term “claro/right” in line 89 to what the left could or could not have done. Following Ramiro’s rhetorical articulation of his argument about the coup as the result of a chain of connected events, it seems, at a first glance, self-evident that the left could not do anything to stop it. Note how Ramiro states with a laughing tone, “£suficiente fuerza como para:£/£enough strength so to£” in line 90, which indicates that he is addressing a controversial issue in the particular context of this conversation among left-wing participants. Finally, he adds “por ejemplo/for example”, producing another “claro/right” from Gaston and “mm hm” from the moderator.

In summary, the analysis of extract 13 reveals how in a left-wing focus group, a younger participant, having defined himself as a “left-winger”, produces an account of the 1970s in which the construction of temporality has several polarities embedded within it. The first and more obvious one is the distinction between the pre- and post-coup d’état periods as “two completely different worlds”. What differentiates each period is the level of political and social mobilization attributed to

them, similar to how Pamela, in extract 10, distinguishes both periods from a left-wing orientation to the past.

In this orientation, during the pre-coup period “everybody” was very much involved in political issues; it is as if all Chileans were being “swept along by” the political context, no matter which side they belonged to. To describe the context of the pre-coup period, two antagonistic membership categories are introduced: support for or opposition to the Allende government; this is similar to how Marcela, in extract 8, addresses the pre-coup period from a right-wing orientation to the past. Yet what is not subject to debate is that “everybody” was “inside” the conflict.

The “inside/outside” dichotomy with which the pre-coup context is described plays a central role in accounting for the inevitability of the coup. As it is displayed, the “inside/outside” distinction entails in turn epistemic consequences such that “being inside” implies that the witnesses had access only to partial knowledge about events as they occurred. And partial knowledge would not be enough to make the connections between certain actions or events that one might elaborate today. In this sense, the argument displayed in extract 13 also points to a third period of time; that is, in addition to the past (the pre- and post-coup periods), the current period is also present in the construction of temporality, since today’s context is the “outside” from which it is possible to comprehend what could not be fully understood in the past.

Throughout extract 13, it is possible to appreciate the working up discursive process of polarisation; the ongoing display of rhetoric devices that produce, maintain and reinforce the senses of polarisation that participants construct, as they have been analysed in Chapter 4. In other words, the senses of the unavoidable, inescapable underlying source of conflict are in Ramiro’s talk a discursive achievement. Within the discursive resources Ramiro manages to accomplish polarisation there is the “whirlwind” metaphor of the early 1970s context stated with the help of a Maximum Case Proportion (Pomerantz, 1986), that of “every Chilean”, and enhanced by the sense of “velocity” implied in the idiomatic Chilean expression of “being a caballo de algo” (“running” towards transformation of society or towards a sabotaging of this process). Thus, every Chilean is said to have been subject to the effects of

polarisation, yet many in opposite directions (those fighting against/those fighting for).

These resources provide left-wing participants with the arguments for constructing a past in which the coup is seen as an unavoidable event. The narrative in extract 13 is oriented by having to account from the left for the left's responsibility for the coup. What is remembered about the 1970s is the impossibility for the left to have changed the evolution of events.

Simultaneously, the discursive devices Ramiro uses in extract 13 are among those analyzed in Chapter 5 as contributing to the construction of *polarisation as an unavoidable quasi-natural force* through establishing a binary and dialogical construction of the chronology of the past. Ramiro organizes his preference for the pre-coup period by ridiculing the other side's activities during the pre-coup period and his imagined victim status during the post-coup period. Ramiro also justifies the dynamic of polarisation, holding it responsible for the epistemic negative effects that made the coup inevitable.

It is interesting to point out the similarities between Alberto's (extract 9) and Ramiro's accounts. While the latter focuses on describing the pre-coup period with the help of binary distinctions, the former uses similar dichotomies to characterize the post-coup period. For Alberto, there were two options for left-wing Chileans in the coup period: to exclude themselves from conflict or actively engage in it, which implied certain risks.

In the context of a mixed focus group, Alberto articulates a temporality of the 1970s that reveals his left-wing orientation. He describes the pre-coup period as a time of happiness and freedom, while the post-coup d'état period is articulated with images of extreme fear and danger. Both Ramiro's and Alberto's accounts share a common view of the late 1970s: a time of constant danger for people on the left. Although Ramiro's view does not describe the early 1970s as a period of happiness as Alberto does, he enthusiastically talks about this period as one in which there was a significant level of political and social mobilization. In Ramiro's terms, the pre- and

post-coup d'état periods were "two completely different worlds", which coincides with Alberto's description.

Another similarity between the accounts of these two young left-wing participants is how they first suggest that there were two ways in which people could approach the conflict of the past, and, subsequently, they rule out one of them. Ramiro does so with respect to the pre-coup period when he discards the notion that Chileans could have understood the magnitude of the conflict. For Ramiro, by default every Chilean was "inside" the conflict, and thus did not have access to the kind of knowledge that could have prevented the coup. Alberto suggests that maintaining a passive stance in the post-coup period is less morally valuable compared to the active stance of the victims ("the cannon fodder"). Like Ramiro, Alberto also implies that removing oneself from the post-coup conflict is only possible in retrospect, or in Ramiro's terms, "in retrospect". Thus, Alberto's and Ramiro's accounts indicate their agreement that in the past, all Chileans were or should have been involved in the conflict, as the default condition was to be "inside" the dynamic of polarisation. Polarisation is then normalized as a regular and pervasive social force in Chilean society.

6.3 Addressing the accountability of the right through polarisation's epistemic consequences

Extract 14 is taken from the same focus group as extracts 5, 11 and 12, a group composed only of right-wing participants. Extract 14 is produced after 13 minutes of discussion and comes before all of the other extracts taken from this focus group (for a view of the sequence in which the extracts taken from this group were actually produced, see appendix D, table D2).

In the first turns of this focus group, each participant expresses support for the coup d'état. Patricia and Andres, the older participants, do this first and are followed by Mario, a young adult participant. Extract 14 is part of how Mario, in sharing what he knows about the pre- and post-coup periods, displays his support for the coup, yet at the same time, introduces what is for him a significant issue: what he somewhat vaguely refers to as "el tema del régimen/the regime issue" or "la situación/the situation".

Prior to the extract, Mario shares his childhood memories from the early 1970s. His account follows the pattern analyzed in the previous chapter, that is, the dialogical construction of temporality according to the "rules" of a right-wing orientation to the past. Mario's primary memories of the pre-coup period are of "queuing for food" and political disputes within families. The "11th" put an end to those problems for Mario. Subsequently, he states how he and his family celebrated the 11th of September 1973, not without suggesting how "weird" it was that while his family (or part of it) celebrated, they witnessed the despair of some neighbouring families. In this sense, Mario's pre-coup description shares the same contents and structure displayed in Jose's and Marcela's accounts of this period, which are analyzed in extracts 7 and 8, respectively.

Thereafter, Mario continues with an account of his life after the 11th of September 1973. In describing his memories – his actions in the past – after the coup (although he does not use the term "coup" per se), Mario suggests that he was "too involved" in the events and as a result did not "see" what was going around him. Mario brings to the talk a salient element of his past: he served for a time as one of Pinochet's

security guards. Mario knows this is not unimportant because of how he prepares his audience before sharing this information. This suggests similarities with Ramiro's discourse in extract 13, in that there is reference to the dichotomy of being "inside" or "outside" the conflict of the 1970s and how this dichotomy relates to one's accountability for the events under discussion. At the end of extract 14, Mario refers to a "process of realization" through which he has modified his "absolutely" supportive stance towards the military regime to a more critical position. The suggestion is that he has moved "outside" the conflict in the present.

It is worth mentioning that throughout the talk in the three right-wing focus groups, instances of recalling the post-coup period through the participants' own experiences were rare. Instead, what right-wing participants tend to do is recall events of the early 1970s, producing ostensibly richer and more detailed accounts of the pre-coup period than of the post-coup period. In general, their focus is on recalling "the causes" of the coup. In doing so, they sometimes distinguish between the coup itself as a "necessary" breaking-point in Chilean political history and the imposition of military rule for 17 years. As participants proceed within a temporal frame for their accounts, one might expect them to move from the pre-coup to the post-coup period, yet their statements rarely continue on to this second period of time. Only in a few cases – as in this extract – they share personal stories from the post-coup period.

Therefore, the analysis of extract 14 focuses on how the speaker as a right-winger addresses the post-coup period, considering that he emphasizes the inevitability of the coup and more interestingly, he introduces the other's victimization during the post-coup period, outlining what will be taken up several minutes later as the dilemma of how to analyse the good and bad aspects of the military regime together (analyzed in extract 11). Special emphasis is placed on the use of the "inside/outside" dichotomy as the speaker accounts for his lack of awareness of the other's victimization while the events were unfolding. Still, for Mario the obstacle was not merely a lack of knowledge about what was happening, but the impossibility of "seeing" it. This inability to see is explained by his deep involvement in the past to one of the two sides in conflict.

Extract 14a: Original transcription in Spanish (R2/13:22-14:08)

1 MARIO bueno ya después llegó el once y yo recuerdo también
2 chico salí a celebra:r me acuerdo e izamos
3 la bande:ra si era era una cosa como bie:n bien freak
4 si uno lo ve así como mirado para atrás ahora (0.6) y
5 que había una familia que eran pro Alle:nde y nosotros
6 nos reíamos de ello:s ellos lloraban era una cosa así
7 como una serie de (0.3) de emociones que daban vuelta en
8 ese minuto (1.7) bueno de ahí yo crecí yo me me siento
9 hijo del régimen militar¡ (1.7) yo me empecé a
10 desarrollar en esa época¡ (0.4) al alero ya del régimen
11 militar¡ (0.7) ignorando completamente lo que pasa:ba
12 viviendo como (0.7) desde el lado: de aprobar todo lo
13 que hacía el régimen militar (2.2)
14 y:: bueno y después ya fui creciendo y
15 tomando otra- otras actitudes frente a la vida de-
16 o sea conociendo un poco más¡ interiorizándome un poco
17 má- en el tema del régimen

Extract 14a: English translation

1 MARIO well afterwards the eleventh came and I remember also
2 young I went to celebrate I remember and we raised the
3 flag it was it was a thing like very very weird
4 if one sees it like looking back now (0.6) and
5 there was a family who was pro Allende we
6 laughed at them they were crying it was a thing like
7 like a series of (0.3) of emotions going around
8 at that moment (1.7) well from thereon I grew up I I
9 feel that I'm a son of the military regime (1.7) I
10 started to develop in that time (0.4) under the wings of
11 the military regime (0.7) completely ignoring what was
12 going on living like (0.7) from the side of approving of
13 everything that the military regime was doing (2.2) and
14 well and afterwards I start growing and
15 taking other- other attitudes with respect to life of- I
16 mean knowing a bit more internalizing a bit
17 mo- in the issue of the regime

Immediately before the extract, Mario recalls his early childhood during the Allende government, stating that his memories are “marcada/marked” by the image of queuing with his mother for many hours to buy food. But his childhood memories are also “marcada/marked”, as he states, by a family story. In the early 1970s, one of his older brothers sympathized with the left while the other was right-wing, and of the right-wing brother threatened to kill the left-wing brother in response to a threat to take over the company where he worked. Mario concludes his story by emphasizing that violence due to political differences could also cut across and divide families. Then Mario states the first line of extract 13, “bueno ya después ya vino el once/well afterwards the eleventh came”. This utterance is significant in that a number (without its respective month and year) is treated as a date that “arrived”. Dates do not come, arrive, leave or go unless in metaphorical terms. In Chilean vocabulary the number eleven accompanied by the article “el/the” has become a noun, that of a national historical day.

“El once/the eleventh” is remembered by Mario as a day of patriotic celebration. Nevertheless, the happiness he felt was not shared by all Chileans, specifically Mario’s neighbours. The scene as he recalls it is “freak/weird”⁷⁰. In other words, at that moment in time, it did not seem strange to Mario that some were crying while others were celebrating, but in retrospect, it seems to him grotesque. Mario’s explanation is that there were many “emociones que daban vuelta en ese minuto/emotions going around at that moment” in lines 7 and 8. Recurrently, as in previous extracts, emotions were – and still are through memories – an important and pervasive ingredient of the past.

Subsequently, in line 8 there is a significant pause of 1.7 seconds. It is not taken up by the other participants, so Mario carries on with an emphasized “bueno/well” to shift the topic and continue with his account. He moves to the post-coup period and in doing so, Mario displays a categorical stance with respect to the Pinochet regime in lines 8 to 11. His statement that he is a “son” of the military regime who grew up “under the wings” of the military regime is, after a 0.7-second pause in line 11,

⁷⁰ Mario uses the English term “freak” as well as several other English words, such as “insight”. The use of English terms is not infrequent in Chilean Spanish. “Freak” in the context of Chilean Spanish means weird, grotesque, bizarre or eccentric, depending on the context in which it is used.

followed by a comment which links his condition (under the wings of the military regime) with having “completely ignored what was going on” and “approving of everything the military government was doing”. The protection the military regime provided to Mario also rendered him unable to be critical of past events, since he could not “see” other aspects that might have changed his view. A pause of 2.2 seconds follows this claim, which is then followed by an explanation of how Mario later modified his view of the military regime based on a change of “actitudes frente a la vida/attitudes with respect to life”, stated as an equivalent (through the use of “o sea/I mean”) of the resulting process of “interiorizándome un poco más- en el tema del regimen/interiorizing a bit mo- in the issue of the regime”.

The phrase “actitudes frente a la vida” in Spanish may be heard as a general stance, that is, the wide range of values and priorities one has with respect to issues encountered in everyday life. Yet in this interactional context, as becomes clearer as Mario continues, by introducing the topic of the victims of the military regime, the utterance is heard as also as a literal one. The implication is that Mario would have valued life itself differently had he known more about the military’s activities in the past.

After describing his change of attitude with respect to the military regime, Mario ends his account at that point in time, as the other two older participants do. None has yet engaged in describing the post-coup period. But none of the other participants proceeds, as there is a pause of two seconds after Mario’s turn. He takes the floor again, stating, “si quieren les cuento más adelante/if you want I’ll tell you more about what follows” with soft laughter in between and unhesitating laughter at the end, producing the moderator’s laughter as well. Here, Mario’s laugh generates expectations among his listeners, as if he has something controversial to share with the group. Subsequently, Mario keeps the floor for another three-minute turn.

Extract 14b: Original transcription in Spanish (R2/14:31-15:41)

18 MARIO estábamos en una época de caos (0.7) en la cual (0.6)
19 toda la la institucionalidad no estaba funcionando;
20 que había un desorden total (0.3) y que era necesaria
21 la intervención (1.8) llá:mase:: militar fuerte:
22 mesura:da: (0.2) un tiempo no sé; pero era necesaria
23 una intervenció:n (0.4) de orden social en
24 el país (1.0) lo que pasa es que después yo
25 seguí estudiando; y después yo a los diez y siete años
26 (0.3) entré a la policía de investigaciones (0.6) fue
27 mi primera: fue mi primer estudio que tuve y fui
28 detective (1.3) y me tocó trabajar en el área de
29 inteligencia dura:nte muchísimos años; yo llegue al
30 área de inteligencia (0.9) entonces ahí fui conociendo
31 un poco más; bueno yo: completamente identificado con
32 el régimen ese tiempo (1.0) eh (0.2) de hecho yo
33 trabajé durante mucho tiempo en la: en la casa: en la
34 casa de Pinochet (0.5) ahí en aquí en (0.3) Presidente
35 Errázuriz (1.2) fui parte del equipo de segurida:d de:
36 de Pinochet (0.5) y de VARIOS OTROS GENERALES (0.4)
37 entonces yo estaba como muy metido en el tema y:
38 (0.5) y bueno y uno después se da cuenta también de
39 que al estar muy inmerso dentro de un contexto
40 tampoco eres capaz de ver lo que está pasado a tu
41 alrededor o sea: (0.3) uno ve no más lo que está aquí
42 y todo lo aprueba porque es parte
43 tuya y tu crees que todo está bien

Extract 14b: English translation

18 MARIO we were in a time of chaos (1.7) in which (0.6)
19 all the the institutions were not working
20 there was total disorder (0.3) and the intervention
21 was necessary (1.8) call it military strong
22 measured (0.2) for a while I don't know but it was
23 necessary an intervention (0.4) of a social order in
24 the country (1.0) what happens is that afterwards I
25 continued studying and after I at the age of seventeen
26 (0.3) I joined the *Policía de Investigaciones* (0.6) it
27 was my first it was the first time I studied and I was
28 a detective (1.3) and I happened to work in the
29 intelligence area during many years I arrived at the
30 intelligence area (0.9) then I got to know
31 a bit more well I completely identified with
32 the regime that time (1.0) um (0.2) in fact I
33 worked during a long time in the in the house of
34 Pinochet (0.5) there in here in (0.3) *Presidente*
35 *Errázuriz*⁷¹ (1.2) I was part of the security team of of
36 Pinochet (0.5) and of SEVERAL OTHER GENERALS (0.4)
37 so I was much very like involved in the issue and
38 (0.5) and well and one after realizes also that
39 because of being very immersed in a context
40 you are neither able to see what is going on
41 around you I mean (0.3) one only sees what is here
42 and one approves everything because it is part of
43 yourself and you think that everything is right

⁷¹ *Presidente Errázuriz* is the name of the street where Pinochet lived for many years.

In lines 18 to 21, Mario displays a three-part list of the causes of the coup d'état, in which he refers to the difficulties affecting the country during the Allende government, the preceding political and social conditions which made "the intervention" "necessary". This passage is considerably more formal than Mario's earlier description of the Allende years (the queues and the family story which are not included in the transcripts), in the sense of how he formally links the parts of his argument and includes terms such as "institution" that are more characteristic of sophisticated political analysis. However, Mario's formal depiction of the pre-coup period matches those provided by Jose (extract 7) and Marcela (extract 8). Perhaps Mario changes his terminological repertoire to a more sophisticated one in order to be heard as a serious analyst.

Despite Mario's claim that the coup was necessary, he seems to encounter difficulty in coming up with a single term for it in lines 21 to 24: "llámase: militar fuerte: medida: (0.2) un tiempo no sé/call it military strong measured (0.2) for a while I don't know". The controversial points implied are those of the use of force (strong versus measured) and the duration in time ("for a while I don't know") of the military regime after the necessary "intervention". Finally, in lines 23 and 24, Mario ends with a description of the events of the 11th of September 1973 that allows him to continue: it was an "intervención de orden social en el país/intervention of a social order in the country".

The events of the 11th of September 1973 are referred to by Chileans in different ways. As pointed out in Chapter 2: A Context for the Chilean Memory Debate, there are counter-terms. Mario refers to this controversy, displaying his awareness of the differences between himself and others and implying that despite these differences, the necessity of the coup cannot be negated given the historical context that produced it.

"What happens after the coup" – just as what follows in Mario's discourse, having stated the necessity of the coup – is something which Mario has to explain. Lines 25 to 37 make sense of Mario's prior comment "si quieren les cuento más/if you want I'll tell you more" followed by laughter before the beginning of the second part of extract 13. Certain details in these lines are relevant to the focus of this analysis.

First, the use of passive voice, besides omitting the agent of the action (his decision of working in such an institution), is quite significant precisely because of how, on the one side, this police institution has been syndicated as running centres of torture and making people to disappear. On the other, this police has also been seen as part of those who fought against the “internal enemy” to save the country’s interests. Second, Mario describes how for “many years” or “a long time” he “in fact” “worked” as a security guard for Pinochet – the main hated and loved protagonist of this drama – as well as for “several other generals”. So, Mario is pointing to two issues that within the context of the Chilean Memory Debate are not neutral neither can they be – once brought to the talk – easily sidestepped, since they are inextricably embedded within the controversies about the past. And precisely because of that, these elements are expressed as evidence that he was “muy metido en el tema/very much involved in the issue”.

To be “metido en algo” in Spanish implies more than being involved in something, since it holds a spatial sense. “Metido en” is a way to express that something is located inside of, or at the core of, something else. An alternative translation of the utterance “yo estaba muy metido en el tema” could be “I was very much inside in the issue”. Mario is suggesting his presence at the centre from which “things” were happening, however he later suggests that his central location was a disadvantage, because of being “muy inmerso dentro de un contexto tampoco eres capaz de ver lo que está pasando a tu alrededor/very immersed in a context you are neither able to see what is going on around you”. As he explains later, “uno... todo lo aprueba porque es parte tuya/one... approves everything because it is part of yourself”. By implication, the military regime was part of Mario, and Mario was part of the military regime.

Mario’s statements imply, in some respects, the same polarity that Ramiro displays in extract 13, that of being “inside” or “outside” the conflict of the 1970s. Mario does not explicitly refer to the “outside” pole, yet he implies that today’s awareness represents the opposite of being “inside”. In Ramiro’s statements, the present time figures as the place “outside the context” from which he is able to produce his analysis, or as he says, “to see” the connections he was unable to see in the past.

The similarities between these two ways of accounting for the realization of a new and "more accurate" perspective of the past are notable, although their contents differ. In the last part of extract 14, Mario links his awareness with "el dolor de los otros/the other's pain", which led to his change from an absolute supporter of the military to a less unconditional one.

Extract 14c: Original transcription in Spanish (R2/15:41-16:32)

43 MARIO y todo lo aprueba porque es parte
44 tuya y tu crees que todo está bien
45 (0.8) pero: no sé po uno después uno empieza a mirar
46 y el otro día lo conversaba con (0.4)
47 con otros colegas (1.6) lo: lo indolente que se pone
48 uno frente al dolor de los otros (0.6) cuando (0.6)
49 ese dolor; que genera dolor a los otros; (0.4) a
50 ti te genera entre comillas satisfacción (1.2)
51 entonces volver atrás y mirar que de repente si yo ví
52 excesos (0.8) quizás si yo fui parte de de excesos
53 (0.4) quizás NO DE ACCIÓN (0.8) posiblemente de
54 omisión (0.4) o de no de no: haber quizás en un
55 minuto haber dicho oye no po paremos esta
56 cuestión esto no corresponde; (0.7) pero tú sentís
57 quizás como un dolor; frente a algo que quizás en
58 algún minuto te generó; (0.7) un poco de
59 satisfacción; (1.4) entonces n- no sé a mi me ha
60 generado en el último tiempo; (0.7) como emociones
61 bastante encontradas

Extract 14c: English translation

43 MARIO and one approves everything because it is part of
44 yourself and you think that everything is right
45 (0.8) but I don't know *po* one later one starts seeing
46 and the other day I was talking about this with (0.4)
47 other colleagues (1.6) how indifferent one becomes
48 when faced with the other's pain (0.6) when (0.6)
49 this pain which generates pain to others (0.4) for
50 you it generates quote-unquote satisfaction (1.2) so
51 going back and seeing that maybe I did see
52 excesses (0.8) perhaps I did take part in in excesses
53 (0.4) perhaps NOT OF ACTION (0.8) possibly of
54 omission (0.4) or of not of not having perhaps at a
55 moment having said look no *po* let us stop this
56 thing this does not correspond (0.7) but you feel
57 perhaps like a pain facing something which perhaps at
58 a given moment generated in you (0.7) a bit of
59 satisfaction (1.4) so I don't know to me it has
60 generated in the recent time (0.7) like quite
61 opposing emotions

Many features of the last part of extract 14 are of interest for the analysis, particularly five details, all of which are used to address the implications for the speaker of the utterance in line 47 and 48: "lo indolente que se pone uno frente al dolor de los otros/how indifferent one becomes faced with the others' pain". By implication, once somebody becomes indifferent, it is not possible to simultaneously empathize with the pain of another, since tautologically one is completely insensitive or impervious to it. The suffering of the other is simply invisible. This is a curious statement because generally speaking individuals attempt to present rather positive images of themselves or self-images which are according to shared norms and values about what is to be a "normal" or "ordinary" person (Sacks, 1984). Thus, addressing oneself as indifferent should not be carried on only if there are good reasons for the speaker to create such an image of himself or herself. In other words, asserting one's own indifference is most probably something that has to be accounted or explained.

However, the action of describing oneself as indifferent is an indication that his stance toward the military regime has changed.

The first feature, then, to note in Mario's turn is how he begins in line 45 by saying "después uno empieza a mirar/later one starts seeing", pointing to the temporal character of the realization process. Mario's awareness has a starting point and has developed over time, differentiating the past from the present. The second significant feature is that of including other persons in his account, in this case his colleagues with whom he has recently ("the other day") talked about "this issue", as he states in lines 46 and 47. Mario's reflective position or conclusions about "indifference" are presented not just as his, but also shared by other people, and thus he is not alone in this realization process.

Another significant aspect of Mario's statements is the repetition of the term "quizás/perhaps" in his turn. From lines 51 to 57, there are five "quizás/perhaps" in addition to one "de repente/maybe". The use of "quizás/perhaps" to preface his statements indicates the sensitivity of the issues Mario is dealing with, since they require that much mitigation. "Quizás/perhaps" serves to carefully introduce and anticipate, with some uncertainty, questions about his degree of responsibility for the pain of others.

The last important device is the interconnected display of two polarities, "actions versus omissions" and "pain versus satisfaction". The former is used in lines 52 to 54: "quizás si yo fui parte de de excesos (0.4) quizás NO DE ACCIÓN (0.8) posiblemente de omisión/perhaps I did take part in in excesses (0.4) perhaps NOT OF ACTION (0.8) possibly of omissions". The possible excesses in which Mario could have taken part are understood dilemmatically (Billig, 1987; Billig et al., 1988), that is to say, articulated through opposing actions versus omissions, in terms of their implications with respect to intentionality, will, and planning versus unintentionally, coincidences and regrettable but unplanned effects.

The opposition of "pain" and "satisfaction" are also dilemmatically and rhetorically organized. The first time Mario uses these terms in lines 48 to 50, he includes the "quote-unquote" mitigation, which after a significant 1.2-second pause is followed

by the "actions versus omission" explanation. The second time the terms "pain" and "satisfaction" are stated as opposites is in lines 56 to 59: "pero tú sentís quizás como un dolor↑ frente a algo que quizás en algún minuto te generó↑ (0.7) un poco de satisfacción↓/but you feel perhaps like a pain facing something which perhaps at a given moment generated in you (0.7) a bit of satisfaction". Here, the "pain" is in the present, whereas "satisfaction" was in the past. In the first instance (lines 48 to 50) "pain" is an emotion that Mario feels in the present when remembering the past. Yet in the second instance, he describes "quote-unquote" how he felt in the past "a bit of satisfaction" with respect to the other's pain. Finally, he explains that recently he has felt "opposing emotions" as an indication of his conversion, to convey the "seriousness" with which he has taken this epistemic (his knowledge of the past has changed) and emotive process.

The overall result of Mario's delicate process of accounting for his personal involvement in the suffering of those on the other side, may be seen, finally, as an expression of the speaker's feeling of regret. Although he at times describes himself as someone who "enjoyed" the pain of the other in the past, he now regrets his behaviour; he has changed. In this respect, Mario makes explicit reference to the other, acknowledging the other's victimization during the post-coup period and moreover, acknowledging his side's participation, and presumably his satisfaction, in the suffering of the others. This suggests how dialogically the construction of the past is shaped.

In addition, to justify his once absolute support for the military and his subsequent shift to less unconditional support, Mario displays the polarity of being "inside/outside" the conflict, a device which reinforces *the sense of pervasiveness* attributed to polarisation in the past. In fact, most of Mario's argument is based on his being under the influence of the negative *epistemic consequences of polarisation*, which did not allow him to remove himself from the conflict in order to comprehend all of its dimensions. On the other hand, Mario explicitly asserts that the coup d'état was a necessary and inevitable event and in doing so, he displays his preference for the post-coup period.

In relation to Ramiro's account in extract 13, it is important to underscore how both Ramiro and Mario are dealing with their own group's accountability. What is especially interesting is that although Ramiro and Mario ascribe to one of the two mutually exclusive membership categories, they both consider undesirable consequences of polarisation. The effect of this argument is two-fold. First, they account for polarisation itself, characterizing it as inescapable; polarisation's effects on people's approaches to what was happening are transformed into the causes of more polarisation. And given that membership in one of the two opposing groups is understood to be the default condition of every Chilean, polarisation is rhetorically justified and attributed to society as a whole.

Second, "insider" status in relation to polarisation's epistemic consequences helps the participants to account for their group's responsibility for the events under discussion, and to some extent, for the other's victimization. The argument is formulated as "we/I could not see", or alternatively, "we/I could not understand, comprehend or grasp what was going on because we/I belonged to one side". In this sense, a polarised stance in the past serves to exonerate the speaker from liability for events in the past. Therefore, the discussion remains in psychological terms; emotions, feelings, prejudices, people's approaches, and the like.

6.4 Forgetting as a threat to the accuracy of past accounts

Extract 15 is taken from the focus group composed only of right-wing participants that extracts 1, 7 and 8 are taken from. But extract 15 precedes extracts 7 and 8 in the conversation. Extract 15 is produced after 20 minutes of discussion and five minutes after extract 1. Until this point in the conversation, Dario, a younger participant, is the only person who has not yet engaged in the talk. At the beginning of his turn, he answers the moderator's question regarding what subject he would have studied had he been a university student in the early 1970s⁷². All of the other participants, younger and older, have already commented on their first impression of the game, and have added brief remarks about the "political environment" in Chile at that time. Many have also criticized today's political climate, stating that politicians are corrupt and inefficient regardless of their place in the political spectrum.

The sequence in which the extracts were produced during the conversation is as follows (for a view of the sequence in which the extracts taken from this group were actually produced, see appendix D, table D3): first, extract 1, where Paulina and Marcela, both older participants, orient to present themselves as protagonists of a polarised past; second, extract 15, where Dario criticizes the forgetting of a more accurate version of the past which would provide reasons for the coup as the culmination of concatenated events; third, extract 11, where Jose remembers the kind of forgotten version to which Dario refers, implying that the other side is responsible for generating the political conditions leading to the coup; and fourth, extract 18, where Marcela once again brings up the issue of forgetting in a fashion that is similar to Dario.

Dario, who is currently a psychology student, says that in the early 1970s he would not have chosen to study the same subject, and then shifts the topic. He states, "ahora en cuanto a la política.../now concerning politics..." to start an account in which he displays the temporal segmentation pattern of the 1970s. In addition, he displays a polarity of forgetting versus remembering to introduce his view of the

⁷² The game consisted of suggesting to the younger participants that they imagine themselves as young people in the 1970s and encouraging the older participants to imagine themselves as young in the 1990s and 2000s. Introducing the settings of the talk and the game were the only standard talk procedures applied by the moderator in every group.

military coup as one that “people have forgotten”, while he asserts the ethical importance of encouraging people to remember the causes and context in which the coup took place. In this respect, he suggests that another, “less accurate”, version of the coup is more widely accepted among Chileans today.

The analysis of extract 15, then, focuses on two aspects. On the one hand, how by referring to the 1970s in a particular way, a younger participant is able to display his support for the right, without explicitly stating so. Specific features of his talk reveal to the other participants his right-wing orientation to the past. On the other hand, the analysis explores how a polarity between forgetting and remembering as two rival processes, as brought to the talk by Dario, also relies on and contributes in a circular fashion to the rhetorical argumentation of the undesirable consequences of polarisation for construction of knowledge of the past. In this sense, describing the behaviour of the “other” in regard to the debate in the present as “forgetting” certain important elements of the past, is one of the devices for maintaining polarisation as both *an underlying social dynamic* and as an *unavoidable source of conflict*, in this case, for the present. It is important to point out that in comparison to the discussion among left-wing participants explored in the previous extracts, here the introduction of the concept of “forgetting” is key to drawing out participants’ versions of the past. The same is not true for the focus groups composed only of left-wing participants.

Extract 15: Original transcription in Spanish (R1/20:58-22:25)

1 DARIO (...) ahora en cuanto a la política (0.5) e:h (1.0) yo
2 creo que: bueno en los setenta hay un: (.) principio
3 de los setenta y después po
4 (0.8)
5 XIMENA mm hm=
6 DARIO =yo creo que al principio hubiera estao: muy
7 en contra del gobierno (1.2) y después no tanto
8 heh heh (0.8) pero: habría participado harto
9 XIMENA =habrías participado en política
10 DARIO Lsi J si si (1.4) si me
11 gusta harto la política de hecho estuve haciendo unos
12 cursos en la universida: de: ciencias políticas y
13 °todo eso°

14 (1.0)

15 XIMENA y cómo habría sido esa participaci6:n (.) qué habrías
16 hecho los primeros año:s tú dijiste que había un
17 antes y un despué†

18 (1.7)

19 DARIO si

20 XIMENA ahí qué habría pasao: cómo habría sido tu:
21 participación despué

22 DARIO e:m (1.5) es que no sé si en ese- en ese momento como
23 que: me gustaría: (0.6) como participar más ahora:
24 (0.8) de lo que lo hago (.) cach como que (.) hay
25 muchas cosas que que pasaron en esa época bueno yo
26 no las viví y to:o pero también me gusta leer al
27 respecto y todo (0.5) y:: hay cosas que que pasaron
28 que como qu- la gente las olvidó (0.8) c'chai y como
29 que ahora me gustaría trabajar en eso como pa hacer
30 que la gente recuerde por qué pasaron las cosas que
31 pasaron

32 XIMENA mm hm

33 DARIO =cachai (0.8) como que d- [no no]se se paró un día=
34 MARCELA L((tose))†

35 DARIO =los militare:s y dijeron ya (.)
36 dejemos la cagá (0.3) 'chai si no que algo había
37 pasado ante (0.5) y eso y- la acción de ellos
38 fue en respuesta a algo no digo que sea
39 buena o sea mala c'chai (0.7) pero hay como que muchas
40 cosas que se pasaron por alto y: no† si aquí:
41 (1.6) no sé si me explico

Extract 15: English translation

- 1 DARIO (...) now concerning politics; (0.5) um (1.0) I think
2 that well in the seventies there is a- (.) beginning
3 of the seventies and after *po(h)*
4 (0.8)
5 XIMENA mm hm=
6 DARIO =I think that at the beginning I would have been very
7 much against the government (1.2) and after not that
8 much heh heh (0.8) but I would have participated a lot
9 XIMENA =you would've participated in politics
10 DARIO Lyes J yes yes (1.4) I
11 like politics a lot in fact I took some courses in
12 political science at the university and
13 °all that°
14 (1.0)
15 XIMENA and how would that participation have been (.) what
16 would you have done in the first years you said there
17 was a before and an after
18 (1.7)
19 DARIO yes
20 XIMENA what would have happened there what would your
21 participation have been after
22 DARIO um (1.5) I don't know if at that- at that point it is
23 like I would like (0.6) like to participate more now
24 (0.8) than I do (.) you know it is like (.) there are
25 many things that that happened in that time well I
26 didn't live them and all that but I also like reading
27 about it and all (0.5) and there are things that that
28 happened that it's like people forgot them (0.8) you
29 know and so now I would like to work on it like to
30 make people remember why they happened the things that
31 happened
32 XIMENA mm hm
33 DARIO =you know (0.8) like it's not not J as as if=
34 MARCELA L((coughing))J
35 DARIO =the military stood up one day and said okay (.)
36 let's fuck things up (0.3) you know but something
37 had happened before (0.5) and this an- their
38 action was in response to something I don't say it
39 was good or bad you know (0.7) but there are like

40
41

many things overlooked and just as if here (1.6) I
don't know if I make myself clear

Following a right-wing orientation to the past, for Dario the 1970s are divided into two periods: the first is the "principio de/beginning of" the decade and the period in which he would have been "muy en contra del gobierno/very much against the government" (lines 6 and 7), and the second is the "después/after" period for which he displays sympathy. Dario's laughter at the end of the utterance in line 7 "y después no tanto heh heh/and after not that much heh heh" indicates his preference for the second period.

It is important to underscore that Dario does not need to explicitly describe the event that divides the decade into "before" and "after", since within his statements the 1973 coup d'état figures as the temporal limit of both periods. In this case, as Billig (1999) suggests, the unsaid is as important as what is said in the rhetorical articulation of the coup. The coup is present throughout Dario's turn and both his audience and the analyst recognize its role in the discourse.

Dario is the first of the participants in this particular focus group to display relative approval of the military's action in the past, and, at the same time, he presents a clear rejection of the Allende government. At this point in the discussion, the participants are not aware of the political leanings of the others in the focus group. Considering the controversial nature of past events, it is understandable why Dario reveals his position indirectly, through his laughter. Similarly, it is also understandable why from line 1 until line 22, the conversation between Dario and Ximena, the moderator, encounters some difficulties that hinder its fluidity. There are significant pauses between turns, as in lines 4 (0.8 seconds), 14 (1 second) and 18 (1.7 seconds) and other pauses within Dario's turns, which are followed by the moderator's rephrasing of the question ("how would you have participated in politics during the pre- and/or the post-coup periods?"). The pattern of pauses - moderator's interrogations - short answers (or no answer) - pauses, indicates that for Dario, answering the moderator's request is a dispreferred activity. Subsequently, Dario, starting in line 22, explains why he prefers not to answer it.

Dario also displays an image of himself as someone who has invested in learning about politics through taking university classes (lines 11 and 12), and later, in lines 26 and 27, he comments that although he did not live through the events under discussion, he has read a great deal about the past. This may be Dario's attempt to provide legitimacy for what he is about to say. In other words, Dario prepares his audience to receive his opinion as one that is well-founded and should not be dismissed as uninformed by the other participants.

From line 22, Dario takes the floor fluidly, stating how much he would like to help "people" to remember those "cosas que que pasaron que como qu- la gente las olvidó/things that that happened that it's like people forgot them". More important than simply remembering, according to Dario, is to recall why the events happened. He stresses certain words, such as "ahora/now" and "por qué pasaron las cosas que pasaron/why they happened the things that happened" to signify their importance.

In Dario's statements, the notions of forgetting and remembering make sense only in opposition to each other. Only remembering prevents forgetting – it is as if they are two rival processes. While remembering the causes of and the context in which the coup d'état took place implies work – it is an endeavour that is not cost-free or spontaneous – conversely, forgetting them does not imply any effort, and, thus, is presented as a regular practice in the debate about the past.

Interestingly, Dario introduces his view of the military intervention as one that has been forgotten, implying that his is an alternative with respect to the current dominant understanding of the events of 1973. Here, forgetting is used by Dario to account for why "other people" do not share his understanding of the past, which for him is as straightforward as the facts: "las cosas que pasaron/the things that happened", an utterance he repeats several times in the extract. "People" do not come to the same conclusion he has arrived at because they have forgotten, or "pasado por alto/overlooked" some relevant information. In this respect, Dario is describing a general societal forgetfulness – a social unit that forgets – implying the presence of a generalized "other" – "the people" – not the speaker nor those

who subscribe to the same version of events as the speaker, but all of those who, because they do not share Dario's view, may be described as having forgotten what really happened.

Moreover, remembering "las cosas que pasaron/the things that happened" is described as a task that "people" need help with. By implication, people know already what they have forgotten; it is then a matter of investing time and effort, and perhaps having the will to remember. Remembering the background to or causes of the military intervention in 1973 implies an effort that "other" people seem unwilling to make in the current context (2005-2006). However, for Dario the record of events is not enough to provide a fair and accurate view of the military coup. The remembering process must be reflective, so as to include the historical perspective Dario suggests. Remembering is, then, a normatively valuable action; it is ethically correct and necessary to remember. Yet it is remembering only in the sense that Dario suggests.

Dario enhances his argument by bringing to the talk the language used by the other side of the debate, caricaturing those who believe that "se paró un día los militares y dijeron ya (.) dejemos la cagá⁷³/the military stood up one day and said okay (.) let's fuck things up" (lines 33 to 36). Thus, the opposing side's version of events lacks the contextual information that would explain the military action as a reaction to "something else", as Dario states from line 36 to the end of the extract. The events did not happen in a vacuum "si no que al↑go había pasado ante (0.5) y eso y- la acción de ellos fue en respuesta a algo/but something had happened before (0.5) and this an- their action was in response to something". Moreover, when he adds that "hay como que muchas cosas que se pasaron por alto y: no↑ si aquí:/there are like many things overlooked and just as if here". The "y no↑ si

⁷³ To "dejar la cagá" is a Chilean expression used in informal contexts; a possible English translation is "let's make a big mess". "Cagá" is literally "shit" (a short version of "cagada"), and may be employed as a verb ("cagar algo" or "cagarla") the English translation of which could be "to fuck it up"; a noun ("quedó la cagá", mostly in the past tense as Dario uses it) or an adjective ("esto es cagón"). This idiomatic expression is a common way to express that a conflictive situation has reached an irreversible status or to describe the result of an argument in which the parties do not come to a resolution. When the "cagá" already exists, it is not easy to determine the responsibility of the parties in conflict and frequently each will blame the other for the impasse. However, the expression refers to the failure to prevent the negative consequences of an on-going and irreversible conflict, just as when "everything is covered with shit".

aquí:/ and just as if here” is left unfinished, but Dario makes the claim that the other side’s version seems unfair to him because it lacks contextual information necessary for an accurate understanding of the military coup.

By using in line 33 the format “It is not as if... it is as I say”, and first explaining the incorrect option (it is not as if) as a consequence of forgetting, it seems that for Dario, the notion of forgetting resolves the dilemma presented by his assumption that there is only one true version of the past. Others’ (incorrect) versions of the past are described as the result of forgetting or overlooking the true sequence of events. The reasons for the military intervention are so self-evident for Dario that, in his estimation, anyone who remembers them would also agree that the military intervention was a reaction, a defensive rather than an aggressive strategy.

However justifiable the military action is for Dario as the consequence of a chain of events, he explicitly states that he is not judging the merits of the military coup, when in lines 38 and 39, he says “no digo que sea buena o sea mala c’chai/I don’t say it was good or bad you know”, evidence of how issues of “stake-management” (Edwards and Potter, 1992; Potter, 1996) appear in the debate. If just prior to this, Dario has stated the importance of remembering the causes of the coup, is it then desirable to recall its effects, from Dario’s point of view? It is only possible to infer from Dario’s discourse an orientation towards establishing the historical events that account for the necessity or appropriateness of the coup, yet “stake-management” suggests that in recalling the coup and its consequences, different interests are at stake. Because his previous statements have been oriented toward portraying a fair and accurate description of the pre-coup era, Dario’s argument would be undermined if he were heard as a prejudiced analyst.

In summary, the analysis of extract 15 shows how a younger participant’s stance toward the conflict of the past is demonstrated by the way he refers to the 1970s. The way in which he imagines his attitudes during the pre- and post-coup periods tells his audience simultaneously about his disapproval of the pre-coup period and his preference for the post-coup period, even though the speaker never actually mentions the term “coup” in the extract. He refers to the breaking-point between the pre- and the post-coup as the military action in response to “something that

happened before". This is carefully introduced after Dario has claimed that "people have forgotten many things" about the context of the events under discussion. Furthermore, from Dario's point of view, the problem is not just that people have forgotten; he also refers to an apparently widely accepted version of the pre-coup period and the coup itself which disguises the true (and forgotten) version he provides. Dario enhances the accuracy of his version by stating that he would like to teach others about it, so that they will remember it.

The dichotomy of forgetting versus remembering plays a central role in how a supporter of the coup d'état sets in place the justification of his point of view. This notion of "forgotten" elements of the story is similar to extract 12, where Patricia brings up the forgetting of her group's victimization during the pre-coup period. This rhetorical device is a common feature of narratives framed within a right-wing orientation to the past. However, it is important to point out that "remembering" and "forgetting" are presented as two adversarial perspectives struggling over the past; when one is pushed aside, the other gains more space over the territory under dispute – the representation of the past or, simply, the past itself.

Following Brockmeier (2002b) in the psychological memory literature – in which he refers to mainstream theories of memory based on cognitive as well as empirical research logics – remembering has been treated as the "radiant hero" while forgetting has played the role of the "shady villain". These notions of remembering and forgetting are similar to those displayed by Dario. "While Remembering strives to defend this precious treasure [the past's wealth], maintaining it as untouched as possible, Forgetting never tires of trying to steal and destroy it (or at least to damage or, insidiously, to distort and falsify it)" (Brockmeier, 2002b: 15). Just as in Dario's contribution, forgetting is ethically reprehensible because it attempts against his truth – treated as "the" truth – whereas remembering (the way he suggests) preserves it.

The polarity between remembering and forgetting as Dario handles it also follows the logic and arguments one may find within the discipline of psychology and theories about memory. As pointed out in the analysis of extract 14, the debate

tends to revolve around ordinary or lay understandings of psychological notions: emotions, feelings, rationality, and prejudices, as well as victimization and forgetting and remembering. Thus, an analysis of the Chilean Memory Debate from a Discursive Psychology is suitable.

The uses of such psychological arguments are, then, also discursive devices that participants in the Chilean Memory Debate employ to describe the actions of one's side or the other. Dario describes the other's actions as "forgetting" and in doing this, he positions himself in opposition to those who have forgotten. He is, in sum, denouncing the other's forgetting as an incorrect epistemic attitude toward the debate, a strategy that accounts for the maintenance of *polarisation as a discursive practice*. Dario also makes use of an explicit reference to the other's narrative as inaccurate or unfair, which in turn outlines the differences between the two political membership categories.

It is important to note the interactional effects of Dario's claim. In extract 7, which comes immediately after extract 15, Jose forms an alliance with Dario. By completely agreeing with Dario ("what you say is real") and producing the kind of narrative that provides content for Dario's claim concerning what others are forgetting, Jose presents himself as part of the same group as Dario (those who remember accurately) and, simultaneously, in opposition to another group (those who have forgotten and/or remember inaccurately). In this respect, in Jose's statements, the collaboration with Dario's support for the coup d'état is articulated as a reasonable position and, hence, the coup itself is viewed as justifiable.

Jose also performs the action of "remembering"; his version that fits with what Dario has recently described as a necessary and valuable action. One of the first discursive moves that right-wing participants often make when addressing the debate (which was evident in all of the right-wing and the mixed focus groups of this research) is to state that certain elements of their narrative have been forgotten. This produces a sort of group cohesion, once the participants recognize that they belong to the same side of the debate. As the conversation continues in the particular focus group from which extract 15 is taken, Marcela (extract 8) and Paulina, both older participants, subsequently produce more detailed memories,

focusing on the war-like environment before the coup d'état and portraying the coup as "the only possibility" for re-establishing order and legality in the country.

6.5 Making experience a valid, yet problematic, source of past knowledge

Extract 16 is taken from the same focus group composed of right-wing participants as extracts 1, 7, 8 and 15. Chronologically, extract 16 corresponds to the last selected interaction from this particular focus group, such that this extract is produced after 30 minutes of talk; eight minutes after extract 15 and two minutes after extract 8. Prior to this extract, Dario (extract 15) expresses his desire for people to remember "muchas cosas que se han olvidado/many things that have been forgotten" about the context leading up to the military coup. Subsequently, older participants begin to share their memories of the pre-1973 era, including Jose (extract 7) and Marcela (extract 8). Once they finish sharing their personal stories, the moderator turns to the younger participants, inviting them to follow up with questions for the older participants. A younger participant, Eliana, begins by rephrasing the moderator's request, producing an interesting argument: that accounts based on personal experience possess a special yet problematic epistemic status.

The notions of experience and opinion, as well as remembering and telling stories about the past, are handled altogether by Eliana in a way that might sound contradictory. If one follows her argument, by the end of the extract it seems that she has undermined it. However, she succeeds in making her point about the importance of direct experience because it provides knowledge she cannot obtain today. In this sense, extract 16 shows how epistemic issues are dealt with in relation to the past, that is to say, how the past can be known aside from one's own memories.

The analysis of extract 16 focuses on how Eliana presents herself as an intellectually honest and rigorous analyst, as well as an informed and reasonable member of Chilean society, implying that she is in a more advantageous epistemic position than others in relation to the debate. Second, the analysis examines how

Eliana handles the notion of polarisation at the core of the debate by, on the one hand, appealing to the two groups competing for public opinion through the media, and, on the other, explaining how polarisation's epistemic consequences strongly influence the approach people take to the past. Her conclusion is that none of the available narratives of the past is accurate.

These features emphasize how polarisation, used as an explanatory category, produces dilemmatic arguments in participants' discourse. Once polarisation is established as a cause and consequence of the debate, despite how desirable it would be from the participants' perspective to have "reliable" accounts, the very notion of "neutral" or "objective" descriptions of the past becomes problematic. An argument that helps Eliana to deal with the implication of polarisation's consequences is the claim that aspects of the past have been forgotten and information has been distorted; she thus continues Dario's suggestion, analyzed in the previous extract. On the whole, the analysis of extract 16 highlights the arguments participants display to discursively construct polarisation as an obstacle to "objectivity".

Extract 16: Original transcription in Spanish (R1/ 30:17-31:16)

1 ELIANA a mí sí me gustaría preguntar cosas pero: (0.3) como
2 que más que preguntar cosas me gustaría igual haberlo
3 vivido porque yo creo que (0.5) hhh actualmente e::h
4 como que: la comunicación de masas ha tirado más pa un
5 lado que pal otro (.) más pa: e:l lado: socialista que
6 más pa el otro lado entonces .hhh como que yo creo que
7 se han (0.4) se han olvidado muchos detalles y como
8 que se han desvirtuado muchas informaciones entonces
9 no sé por ejemplo mi papá me contaba que .hhh (1.3)
10 que hay detenidos desaparecidos que también eran del
11 otro lado (.) que no sólo todos los des- los
12 detenidos desaparecidos era:n (0.6) era:n comunistas
13 entonces igual .hhh me hubiera a mí gustado vivirlo pa
14 yo tener una opinión porque yo la opinión que yo tengo
15 es porqu- es por lo que a mí me contaron (0.8) pero
16 obviamente que lo que a mí: mis papás me contaron y y-
17 todo el resto de las personas sus opiniones están

a way to resolve her dilemma in this polarised context. In doing so, Eliana implies that directly experiencing the events of the past is an essential element for this debate.

With respect to how Eliana introduces her analysis, it is important to consider that interactionally, this extract comes immediately after the older participants have described the atmosphere prior to the military coup in 1973 using terms such as “dangerous” and “chaotic”. Her statement “me gustaría igual haberlo vivido/I would like anyway to have lived it” in line 2 could be understood by the older participants as expressing suspicion of their versions, in the sense of Eliana wanting to be there in order to confirm their stories. Including “igual/anyway” in the utterance is a softener; she wants to have been there, despite how dangerous the situation may have been, which is re-emphasized in line 21 (“era riesgoso/it was [a] risky [time]”), and 23 (“igual prefiero esta época/anyway I prefer this time”), implying that she accepts the sense of danger that the older participants have conveyed, suggesting her preference for the post-coup period. However, Eliana does not set herself in opposition to the older participants, nor does she align herself with them without reservations, since as she suggests in line 2 when she says “más que preguntar cosas/more than asking questions”, she implies that full understanding events of the past requires more than hearing about them from those who lived them.

Eliana’s argument starts with the statement of her desire to have lived the events in lines 1 to 3, followed by a “porque/because” which permits her to introduce her reasoning. What follows is her first reference to the media’s preference for one version of the events (lines 4 to 6) and an “entonces/so” in line 6 that is linked to the second statement about forgetting and information distortion as a consequence of this media bias. A second “entonces/so” in line 8 connects with the third statement about what her father told her about the “detained-disappeared”, as an example of the type of information that has been distorted and/or forgotten. In line 13, a third “entonces/so”, links a conclusive utterance in line 11 and 12 (not all those who were imprisoned and disappeared were from the left), summarizing her previous arguments (the media’s apparent preference, forgetting and information distortion and her father’s story about the “detained-disappeared”) as valid reasons for her desire to have lived the events. This desire is reformulated in line 13 in terms of what

is necessary in order to produce valid opinions about the past. This is reaffirmed in line 14, prefaced by a new “porque/because” which precedes a statement that those who lived the events are overly influenced by their emotions. Finally, she states a third “porque/because” in line 19, summarizing all of the reasons. In line 19 and 20, she affirms that “me hubie:ra gustado vivir eso: (.) pa saber/I would like to have lived this (.) to know”, emphasizing “to know” in line 21.

With respect to how Eliana addresses polarisation, she bases her argument on how the media and personal bias distort versions of past events. According to her reasoning, none of the versions available today are sufficiently accurate, and her desire for direct experience is then justified. In the first part of this extract, the complaint about media bias toward one side of the debate is immediately followed by a new claim about forgetting and information devaluation, as if there were a media’s preference for the socialist version as directly responsible for such distortions. The statements in line 7, “se han olvidado muchos detalles/many details have been forgotten”, and line 8, “y como que se han desvirtuado muchas informaciones/and it is like much information has been devalued”, are phrased in the passive voice. These two statements constitute a general complaint, the main effect of which is to imply that widely accepted versions of the past fail to present an accurate picture of the events. Because information has been distorted, the past cannot really be comprehended or remembered “correctly”.

In addition, to state that a version of a given situation has been “desvirtuada/distorted” also implies that the new version has been altered purposefully; the implication is that the right-wing version has been intentionally undermined. However, by implying that information about the past has been deliberately distorted, Eliana is also suggesting that her version is the correct one. In other words, the speaker’s argument that details have been forgotten and information has been distorted implies that that the mainstream understanding of the past does not correspond with the speaker’s own view. Hence, the statements about forgetting and distortion of information rest on the assumption that there is one version of events which is accurate, leading to discussions of issues of accuracy and inaccuracy, with the corresponding moral and ethical implications.

Eliana's introduction to her account (lines 9 to 12) seems designed to challenge what the participants may know about the past, particularly since she prefaces it as an example of how certain details have been forgotten. In doing so, Eliana claims to be in a better and more rational epistemic position than others, allowing her to compare different versions of the past, such as those heard from relatives and friends. She presents herself as intellectually honest, able to integrate a wide spectrum of perspectives and details into her version of the past. She places particular emphasis on the inclusion of details that would complicate considerably the predominant understanding of Chile's recent political past, which she has deemed inadequate.

Eliana's story is an attempt to demonstrate that this predominant understanding of the events prior to, during and after 1973 is overly simplistic. For instance, she states that some of those who were jailed and disappeared "también eran del otro lado/were also from the other side" (lines 10 and 11), the "other side" referring to opponents of Allende. In other words, according to Eliana, the widely accepted understanding of the category "detained-disappeared" to describe only those who were jailed and disappeared due to their leftist political beliefs illustrates how inadequate that version is.

Note that references to "lados/sides" have already been made by Eliana in lines 5 and 6, where she claims that the media is tendentious and unfair in generally ascribing to a version of events advanced by those on the left. By using the phrase "ha tirado más pa un lado que pal otro/being more on one side than the other", she frames the discussion as one with two sides and no place for alternative positions. Within such a framework, any critique of either position is undermined by accusations of belonging to "the other side", i.e., one is either "with us or against us". As a result, disagreements risk being treated as morally incorrect; both "internally", among those "belonging to the same side", and "externally", with respect to alternative perspectives which do not align with either of the two sides. In this context, Eliana's expectation that the media should provide a balanced or objective vision of the past is both significant and contradictory. If it were widely accepted, a media-driven, "objective" version would provide a way out of the debate. However, at the same time, her references to "lados/sides" indicate that objectivity is prevented by the

debate itself, because it allows for only two highly polarised and exclusionary positions.

At this point, it may enrich the analysis to include a brief parenthesis about how the categories “detenido desaparecido/detained-disappeared” and “comunista/communist” are used in Chile, since both terms are used by Eliana in her statements. On the one hand, the category “detained-disappeared” is used to describe a well-defined category of persons in relation to the political events of the last 35 years or so. It refers to those who were taken prisoner, sent to jail or a torture centre by military or police forces during or after the 1973 coup and whose whereabouts are still unknown. In some respects, the term is similar to “missing in action”, since for the most part it has been impossible to determine the circumstances in which these people died. Even today, only a small number of bodies of the detained-disappeared have been found. According to the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report (otherwise known as the Rettig Report, 1991), about 1,200 people are in this category. Concerning the wide range of political repression strategies carried out by the Pinochet regime (execution, torture and exile, among others), the “detained-disappeared” is viewed as the most “extreme” victim category, since it has been impossible to determine what actually happened to them. Relatives of the “detained-disappeared”, the “living victims” continue to press the Chilean government for truth and justice in these cases. On the other hand, the category “communist” in Chile, as elsewhere, is used to refer to the extreme left. That Eliana has chosen to use both of these categories in phrasing her claim is significant for the analysis since both terms represent extremes. Eliana does not choose to seek any middle ground to make her point; instead, she looks to the extremes, again demonstrating the extent of the polarisation in this debate.

Eliana’s assertion in line 10 that the “detained-disappeared” were from both ends of the political spectrum is re-elaborated in lines 11 and 12, after a slight pause and a higher intonation on “del otro lado/on the other side”. Then, there is a repair on “que no sólo todos los des- los detenidos desaparecidos era:n/not only all the dis- the detained disappeared were”, that could be indicative of how Eliana is using the category detained-disappeared, the “des-/dis-” being the first part of “desaparecidos/disappeared”, disappeared being equivalent to dead. On the other

hand, the category “communist” is used as a general label in line 12 to describe all those who opposed the Pinochet regime. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that before using the term “communist”, Eliana says twice “era:n/were” with a relevant 0.6 pause in between. This phrasing may be explained by her difficulty in finding a suitable adjective that would qualify all the people she wants to include, in order to construct an effective membership categorization. By using the term “comunista/communist” here she achieves two objectives: first, she presents the other side as extreme (communist equals extremist), and second, she includes all Allende sympathizers in the same extreme category.

As has been noted, a new “entonces/so” in line 12 links the last part of the “detained-disappeared” story with the next point she makes in her argument. Eliana presents her desire to have experienced the events of the past as a rational and logical consequence, inspired by her unbiased epistemic perspective.

Extract 16, second part: Original transcription in Spanish

- 13 ELIANA entonces igual .hhh me hubiera a mí gustado vivirlo pa
 14 yo tener una opinión porque yo la opinión que yo tengo
 15 es porqu- es por lo que a mí me contaron (0.8) pero
 16 obviamente que lo que a mí: mis papás me contaron y y-
 17 todo el resto de las personas sus opiniones están
 18 influidas por por (.) por .hh como sus senti+mi:entos
 19 y todas esas cosas entonc-igual me hubie:ra gustado
 20 ? L((tose))
 21 ELIANA vivir eso: (.) pa saber pero- igual era
 22 riesgoso
 23 XIMENA um
 24 ELIANA igual prefiero esta época

Extract 16 second part: English translation

- 13 ELIANA so anyway .hhh for me I would have liked to live it to
14 have an opinion because I the opinion I have is
15 bec- of what I have been told (0.8) but
16 obviously what my parents have told me and and
17 all the rest of the people their opinions are
18 influenced by by (.) by .hh like their feelings and
19 all those things so- anyway I would like
20 ? L((coughing))
21 ELIANA to have lived it (.) to know but- anyway it was [a]
22 risky [time]
23 XIMENA um
24 ELIANA anyway I prefer this time

According to Eliana, the opinions of her parents and others she has spoken with are “obviamente/obviously” influenced by their emotions (line 18). There seems to be no way out of this situation, since an opinion, by definition, reflects the unique perspective of its holder. However, Eliana undermines her own argument, disqualifying the ideas presented in the story she has just shared with the group, because they too represent an opinion (in this case, her father’s opinion or her own opinion). Eliana is aware of this contradiction, stressing her honest epistemic attitude to everything she might hear, but at the same time she undermines her argument.

From Eliana’s perspective, if she had had the chance to experience the past that is at stake, the validity of her opinions would somehow be assured and she could be more confident about her own opinions than she actually is. It could be argued that what distinguishes the accounts of first-hand witnesses is precisely their “feeling”, as she states in line 18. However, by adding “y todas esas cosas/and all those things” makes her statement somewhat nebulous and decreases the strength of the argument. Emotions, then, are seen as providing the witness with a basis for beliefs about what went wrong or right in the past.

The way feelings are articulated as part of a wider range of psychological notions shifts the discussion to dichotomies, such as what is emotional/internal/subjective versus factual/external/objective. Eliana's argument paradoxically presents the bases for arguing the impossibility of there being only one past to be "discovered". If the accounts of witnesses are inherently subjective, then no one person or group can claim to hold the "truth" about the past. What is left for those who were not there? Considering how polarisation is viewed as a characteristic of Chilean society, the younger participants are faced with a dilemma in terms of who to believe.

In summary, in extract 16 two main aspects have been underscored. First, the speaker attempts to enhance her position as an analyst of this polarised debate by explicitly stating her epistemic dilemmas. Second, in the analysis of how polarisation is addressed by certain participants, the two sides of the debate are constructed as exclusive and competing positions, resulting in partial understandings of the past.

According to Eliana, the origins of these "inaccurate" approaches to the past may be found in two areas. On the one hand, there is her understanding that media support for one side of the debate should be addressed in order to provide more complex and complete accounts, such as the story she has shared about acknowledging certain categories of victims on both sides. On the other hand, Eliana believes that the analysis of personal narratives should take into account that Chileans' descriptions of past are heavily influenced by emotion, and are thus inaccurate. Yet at the same time, Eliana implies the impossibility of there being accounts which are not influenced by emotion. Therefore, given how emotions colour descriptions of the past, for those who did not experience the events, it would be difficult to discriminate between what is accurate and what is not. It is important to note how Eliana rhetorically handles the notion of emotions as unavoidable yet regrettable. She is facing the dilemma of recognizing the legitimacy of individual perspectives while at the same time defending the value of objectivity.

6.6 Personal experiences versus informed knowledge

Extract 17 is part of an interaction that occurs within the first 15 minutes of conversation in the same focus group as extracts 6 and 9, a group composed of an equal number of right-wing and left-wing participants. Prior to extract 17, participants introduce themselves and the moderator suggests that they begin playing the game. As a reminder, the game consists of exchanging roles: the younger participants are to imagine having been young adults in the 1970s, while the older participants are asked to imagine being young today. When extract 17 is produced, participants are discussing which of the two generational groups finds the game easier. Older participants, in particular, express their difficulties in understanding the game; they also indicate that younger participants do not have the knowledge resources they need to play the game.

To some extent, the polarised reaction which surfaces as a primary response to the game may be explained as a result of how the game itself is articulated in terms of generational differences. Nevertheless, the sequence of interactions from which extract 17 is taken lasts for 10 minutes. During this time, rather than begin playing the game (as occurred in the other focus groups), the participants first focus on discussing which generation will find the game easier. The initial reaction from Alonso, a younger participant, is that the game seems easier for older participants. When he is about to explain the reasons, he is interrupted by Jeronimo, an older participant. Later, Maria, another older participant, states that the younger participants "no lo vivieron/they didn't live it", followed by a statement that "vivencias/life experiences" represent "the most" valid source of knowledge about the past. Maria also adds that because younger participants did not live the past, they may have more "prejuicios/prejudices" concerning that time.

The analysis of extract 17 focuses on how a comment about imagining a given situation evolves into a claim about the legitimacy of sources of knowledge about the past, positioning knowledge of the past gathered from direct experience in opposition to knowledge obtained from others. What is interesting about this extract is that accounts based on second-hand knowledge are described as more prejudiced than the accounts of those who witnessed the events.

Extract 17: Original transcription in Spanish (M1/10:59 - 11:37)

1 ALONSO yo la verdad que creo que es más fácil pa' uste;des el .
2 ejercicio ¿ah? porque:
3 CAMILA Lsí pu(h)
4 (1.2)
5 ALONSO porque si yo me:: me pongo en la situación de estar en
6 los setenta e:m=
7 JERONIMO =no los conociste
8 (1.0)
9 ALONSO NO; (.) algo mucho se de eso=
10 JERONIMO =o sea si lo sabes por por lo que
11 escuchas ¿por lo que lees ¿por lo que:
12 CAMILA Ltípico |
13 ALONSO Lclaro
14 (0.6)
15 ¿? m
16 JERONIMO por¿las experiencias (cotidianas)
17 MARIA Lno están las vivencias
18 ¿que es lo más importante
19 ALONSO Lpero DE MÁS me da eso PARA: para poderme imaginar
20 (0.5)
21 ¿? m
22 (1.6)
23 XIMENA ella dijo algo que es re importante
24 CAMILA no tie- ¿las vivencias
25 MARIA Lno están las vivencias
26 (1.7)
27 JERONIMO °si tú no tienes las vivencias¿°
28 (0.4)
29 MARIA sí porque yo siento que: eh en el fondo: (1.3)
30 nosotros tenemos la vivencia y ellos pueden tener más
31 prejuicios (0.9) mm?

Extract 17: English translation

- 1 ALONSO the truth is that I think the exercise is easier for
 2 you ɾah? because
 3 CAMILA ɿyes pu(h)
 4 (1.2)
 5 ALONSO because if I put myself in the situation of living in
 6 the seventies um=
 7 JERONIMO =you didn't know them
 8 (1.0)
 9 ALONSO NO (.) something a lot I know about it=
 10 JERONIMO =I mean if you know it's because because of what you
 11 hear ɾbecause of what you read ɾbecause of what
 12 CAMILIA ɿtypical |
 13 ALONSO ɿright
 14 (0.6)
 15 ? m
 16 JERONIMO because of ɾ(everyday) experiences
 17 MARIA ɿthere aren't the life experiences
 18 ɾwhich are the most important
 19 ALONSO ɿbut it's MORE THAN ENOUGH to to be able to imagine
 20 (0.5)
 21 ? m
 22 (1.6)
 23 XIMENA she said something that is very important
 24 CAMILA they don't ha- ɾthe life experiences
 25 MARIA ɿthere aren't the life experiences
 26 (1.7)
 27 JERONIMO °if you don't have the life experiences°
 28 (0.4)
 29 MARIA yes because I feel that um deep down (1.3)
 30 we have the life experiences and they may have more
 31 prejudices (0.9) mm?

In line 7 and considering that Alonso hesitates at the end of his utterance in line 6, Jeronimo offers a way for Alonso to articulate his reasons for stating that the game is easier for “you”, the older participants. However, Jeronimo’s suggestion is firmly rejected by Alonso in line 9, indicating that this is a sensitive point in the discussion. Alonso could have simply agreed with Jeronimo, who states “no los conociste/you didn’t know them”, since Alonso was born after the military coup, and continued with his point. Instead, the way Alonso emphasizes his “NO” response, loudly and with a low intonation, indicates that he strongly disagrees with Jeronimo’s point. What Jeronimo is doing in 7 is to change the focus of the conversation from a hypothetical situation (imagining) to the value of having personally experienced the events of the 1970s.

In line 9, Alonso attempts to lessen the importance of having “been there” as emphasized by Jeronimo. After a relevant one-second pause, Alonso says emphatically “NO”, immediately followed by an unusual way of quantifying how much he knows about the past (“algo mucho/something a lot”), implying that “algo/something” does not express his position forcefully enough. The emphasis on “mucho/a lot” can also be understood as a qualification of the “something” he knows, that is to say, some things he knows in great detail. In this sense, Jeronimo’s suggestion is taken by Alonso as a disqualification of his opinions of the past on the basis of his age.

As the interaction continues, Jeronimo produces in line 10 a re-specification of his previous turn in order to facilitate the conversation. Thus, Alonso’s quantification of his level of knowledge is reformulated in terms of what he has learned or come to know through others; both Camila, another older participant, and Alonso himself agree with Jeronimo’s point, overlapping with him in lines 12 and 13, respectively. Then, after a 0.6-second pause and an “m”, Jeronimo and Maria, overlapping with Alonso, simultaneously point that “having lived” through the events gives their accounts legitimacy. In line 16, Jeronimo introduces what the younger participants are unable to claim: “experience” of the time being discussed. In lines 17 and 18, Maria upgrades Jeronimo’s argument, introducing another subtly different notion of “experience”, the “vivencias/life experiences” which the younger participants obviously lack, and adds that such “vivencias/life

experiences" are "lo más importante/the most important" resource for producing opinions about the past. In other words, the older participants bring to the talk an argument of authority, implying that because "they were there" whatever they state about the past should be taken as true.

Almost simultaneously, and apparently without having heard Maria's statement, Alonso affirms loudly in line 19 that what he knows is more than sufficient "to imagine" what occurred in the past. In doing so, Alonso is not denying that he lacks experiences of the past that is at stake, nor is he disregarding Maria's point about "vivencias/life experiences" as "the most important" source for producing legitimate opinions about the past. However, Alonso's utterance in line 19 decreases the epistemic value of his own opinions as products of his imagination.

What follows Alonso's statement is a pause of nearly two seconds (lines 20, 21 and 22) during which a soft "m" is uttered by an unidentified participant, revealing that the discussion has reached an uneasy point as a result of the interaction between Alonso and Jeromino. Subsequently, the moderator interjects, giving the floor to Maria, who presumably was not heard by the group before. Considering the overlapping statements in lines 24 and 25, Maria's point seems to have been heard by Camila, who voices her support along with Jeronimo in line 27. In line 29, after a significant pause of 1.3 seconds and having said "en el fondo/deep down", Maria distinguishes between two groups of interlocutors in the discussion: those who have life experiences and those who do not. She suggests that the second group, because it lacks the "life experiences", is more prejudiced. Maria is careful to add "pueden/may" and "más/more", yet a subsequent 0.9-second pause, followed by an "mm" with a questioning intonation (roughly equivalent to "isn't it?" in English) orients to enhance the reasonableness of what she has stated.

In Maria's argument, there are significant rhetorical elements to be underscored. She repeatedly uses the Spanish term "vivencias"⁷⁴, the English translation of which is "life experiences" (although this sounds repetitive in English). Maria's use of this term is significant considering that Jeronimo has just introduced a very similar one, "experiences", implying that for Maria, this term is not strong enough to emphasize the special status of the older participants' memories. In this respect, Maria employs the term "vivencia" to mark the difference between her generation's approach to the past and the younger generation's approach, which she characterizes as more prejudiced. She refers to "live experiences" as holding a special quality, as if they provide direct access to the past; for the speaker; the assumption is that first-hand experiences remain "pure" or uncontaminated, in a certain sense, as time passes. It could be argued that Maria differentiates her perspective as a "judgement" based on her experiences of the past, and thus not susceptible to "prejudice" as she believes the younger generations are.

Another implication of Maria's argument is that the special quality of "vivencias" cannot be conveyed to younger generations through stories, anecdotes and arguments; that in the course of transmitting one's personal life experiences, the account is distorted. Thus, younger participants' accounts of the past are not considered equally valid.

In summary, in extract 17 the disagreement between Alonso and Jeronimo reveals the sensitivity of the issue of direct experience for participants as they discuss what constitutes a legitimate account of the pre- and post-coup periods. In addition Maria's statements help establish two epistemic positions vying for acknowledgment as the more valid source of knowledge about the past. On the one hand, Maria argues that knowledge resulting from direct personal experience

⁷⁴ "Vivencia" is translated by Ortega y Gasset from the German "Erlebnis" (lived experience). While "experience" implies a learning process, a "vivencia" is an experience that one felt but did not necessarily learn from. In this respect, feelings play a central role in "vivencias". Definitions taken from German philosophers provide more clues about these subtle differences. "*Erlebnis* (lived experience), does not provide self-understanding. Self-understanding is obtained only to the extent that the self relates to itself as it relates to others, i.e., in a mediated way. Yet *Erlebnis*, synthesizing and active, remains the psychological source of all experience, the experiential potential that is articulated and conceptualized in understanding". From the Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy (<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hermeneutics>, accessed on 14th of January 2008).

is “less prejudiced”, while younger participants argue for the validity of second-hand knowledge. The latter position appears weak in this extract and is often presented as an explicit counterpoint to the former position in this extract. The older participants’ defence of the superior status of life experiences in contrast with other sources of information is a difficult argument for the younger participants to counter, since it practically disqualifies their contributions. Nevertheless, this perspective on life experiences is refuted in extract 18, which comes from the same focus group, in terms of how witnesses’ understandings of the past are more polarised in terms of more prejudiced precisely because their “vivencias/life experiences” were shaped in a polarised context.

However, it is important to underscore that the unique nature of “vivencias/life experiences” and the older participants’ insistence that such experiences are impossible to communicate to others leads to a sort of solipsism with respect to how the different perspectives on the past relate to one another. In this sense, to characterize Maria’s argument as leading to a sort of solipsism is an analogy for stating that she is psychologizing the discussion, justifying an individualist epistemic and methodological approach to the past, which ultimately may provide the arguments for the denial of the others’ experiences, since the only experiences of which the agent can be certain are one’s own memories. Even the process by which the other’s experiences are made intelligible is questioned by implying the unfeasibility to communicate one’s own “life experiences”. If this were the case, then there would be no debate; the debate would be settled once and for all because of the impossibility of acknowledging any perspective but one’s own. For the debate to continue, it is necessary for both parts to attribute some credibility to the other side. Therefore, if there is a debate, then what is implied is that the sides are able to make intelligible the other’s experiences.

In other words, Maria’s emphasis on life experiences reinforces an individualistic approach to the debate, giving a special status to the perspectives of witnesses. This can be related with the analysis of extract 1, 2, 3 and 4 in Chapter 4. As suggested there, older participants engage in a sort of discursive competition for who can be seen by the other participants in each focus group as a protagonist of the past, as is this strategy provided them with more legitimacy to produce an

account of the past which is most probably heard as an accurate description of the conflict. Interestingly, then to be taken as a protagonist, that is someone who participated in political polarised activities, thus an “insider” of the conflict, is seen in the interactional context of those extracts, a desirable condition.

6.7 Polarisation as a threat to objectivity

Extract 18 is produced about three minutes after extract 17, so both extracts are part of the same sequence of interactions within the initial 15 minutes of discussion in the politically mixed focus group (the same that extracts 6 and 9 are taken from). Thereby, the statements in extract 17, stated by Julio, a younger participant, are in direct relation to the series of statements analyzed in extract 16.

In this extract, Julio presents the reverse of Maria’s argument in the previous extract: because Chilean society was more polarised in the past, the perspectives of young people today reflect a less polarised position, and thus, they are in a better epistemic position to judge the events “objectively”. In other words, for Julio, polarisation is a threat to the quality of the debate. What is at stake here is the notion of who is able to produce accurate and/or legitimate accounts of the past; those who lived through extreme emotional experiences in a polarised past or those who have come to learn about the past from a variety of perspectives.

Julio distinguishes between the past and the present in terms of the degree of polarisation that characterizes Chilean society. To him, depolarisation of the debate is a relevant concern, since, one may argue, this would allow young people to engage in the debate in a more open fashion. In this sense, Julio’s concern about the “objective” character of accounts of the past may also be seen as a discursive strategy to enhance his “right” to be taken as a valid interlocutor. Therefore, the analysis of extract 18 focuses on how emotions are viewed as an inherent element of witness accounts, which prevents them from portraying an accurate picture of the past.

Extract 18a: Original transcription in Spanish (M1/13:55-14:51)

1 JULIO bueno de la forma en que yo lo veo igual nosotros
2 tenemos como: (0.5) como en cierto modo una ventaja
3 (.) porque nosotros estamos analiza:ndo una situación;
4 (.) e:h (1.3) en un clima mucho más tranquilo (0.2)
5 porque en ese tiempo la solie:- la:: (1.0) la- la- la-
6 sociedad estaba mucho más polarizada (0.6) entonces
7 nosotros podemos analizarlo más objetivamente (0.2)
8 tenemos distintas visiones (.) tenemos visiones
9 neutrales (.) que dict- cada tendencia va
10 postulando (0.9) su:(h) (0.9) su idea sobre lo que
11 pasó ese año; (0.8) pero nosotros tenemos una visión
12 mucho mucho más: objetiva; que las personas que lo
13 vivieron porque ellos (0.6) están marcados por
14 vivencias familia:res (.) por vivencias
15 personales

Extract 18a: English translation

1 JULIO well how I see it anyway we
2 have like (0.5) like in a certain way an advantage
3 (.) because we are analyzing a situation
4 (.) erm (1.3) in a much calmer atmosphere (0.2)
5 because at that time the solie- the (1.0) the-the-the-
6 society was much more polarised (0.6) so
7 we can analyze it more objectively (0.2)
8 we have different versions (.) we have neutral
9 versions (.) which dict- each tendency goes on
10 postulating (0.9) its (0.9) its idea about what
11 happened that year (0.8) but we have a much much
12 more objective version than the people who
13 lived it because they (0.6) are marked by
14 family experiences (.) by personal experiences

The notion that Chilean society had been highly polarised in the past is explicitly introduced in line 6. Bringing polarisation into the discussion does not appear easy for Julio, since there is a relevant 1-second pause and some hesitations in line 5 before he finally states how polarised Chilean society used to be. In contrast, he suggests that polarisation is less extreme or influential today, which is affirmed in line 4 with the help of the climate metaphor (“en un clima mucho más tranquilo/in a much calmer atmosphere”).

The way in which Julio introduces his ideas has two relevant features. First, he explicitly states that he is analysing the debate in lines 3 and 7. Second, he does so as a representative of a particular generational group: we, the young people, as opposed to “las personas que lo vivieron/the people who lived it” (lines 12 and 13). Therefore, Julio presents himself as an analyst and as a member of a group that is able to produce more accurate descriptions of the past.

Nevertheless, Julio seems to question his own statements about an improvement in the “climate” for the debate in lines 8 to 11, indicating that polarisation continues to be a difficult issue to deal with in the present. Julio states that there are multiple versions of the past, some of which are neutral. However, these versions are produced and postulated by “cada tendencia/each tendency”, tendency here used as a softener to qualify the two extremes. In addition, he states that versions are still being created in the current context, that is to say, polarised versions. Therefore, it becomes difficult to understand how neutral versions of events could be generated, if polarisation continues to allow “tendencies” to postulate their “ideas”. It is important to note how in line 10 there are two pauses of 0.9 seconds each, which give a faltering rhythm to his statements. Conversely, Julio’s talk becomes more fluid after a 0.8-second pause in line 11 and a “pero/but” that allows him to shift back to his previous point about older people being overly influenced by personal experiences.

Thus, lines 8 to 11 disrupt and question Julio’s first argument, which becomes more complex as he continues. He introduces yet another threat to objectivity. Having said that in Chilean society there are biased versions of events still put forward by “cada tendencia/each tendency” as a first threat to objectivity, in lines 13 and 14 Julio presents a second threat: the effect of having lived through the events (“están

marcados por vivencias familiares, por vivencias personales/they are marked by family experiences, by personal experiences" in lines 13 and 14).

Extract 18b: Original transcription in Spanish (M1/13:55-14:51)

14 JULIO vivencias familia:res (.) por vivencias personales
15 ALONSO las personas que vivieron qué época?
16 JULIO el setenta y tres
17 (0.5)
18 ALONSO a:†phɪ
19 JULIO †tenemos †que ponernos en eso
20 ¿? †((carraspera))
21 (1.5)
22 JERONIMO >(solo para hacer un) paréntesis lo que pasa es que<
23 el setenta y tres †<marca>
24 JULIO †y y un poco más antes mi- (0.5)
25 mi mamá tiene muchas vivencias que a lo mejor la
26 nublan un poco y: mm (0.3) >no he conseguido de
27 repente discu-< discutir con ella y todo (1.0)
28 pero es porque ella tuvo un >()< personal <y
29 nosotros† (.) podemos analizarlo (.) completamente
30 objetivo>

Extract 18b: English translation

14 JULIO family experiences (.) by personal experiences
15 ALONSO the people who lived when?
16 JULIO the seventy-three
17 (0.5)
18 ALONSO oʃh
19 JULIO ʌwe ʃhave to focus on this
20 ? ʌ((clearing throat))
21 (1.5)
22 JERONIMO >(just as a) parenthesis what happens is that< the
23 seventy-three ʃ<marks>
24 JULIO ʌand and a bit more before my- (0.5) my
25 mother has many life experiences which may
26 cloud her a bit and mm (0.3) >I haven't had any
27 success in disc-< discussing it with her and all (1.0)
28 but it's because she had a >()< personal <and
29 we (.) can analyze it (.) completely
30 objectively

From line 15 to line 23, the discussion includes a reference to the gravitational weight of the year 1973. It is relevant to note how Julio answers Alonso's question in line 15, which is made in terms of a period of time ("las personas que vivieron qué época?/the people who lived when?"). Julio responds with a specific year ("el setenta y tres/the seventy-three"), thus, the year 1973 is understood as more than simply a point in time. It is instead a significant period of time at the heart of the analysis the participants are undertaking, as is suggested in line 19. Then, one of the participants clears his or her throat and a relevant 1.5 second pause is produced. This is the first time in this focus group that the year 1973 is mentioned. What follows in line 22 could be considered an irrelevant "parenthesis", that is to say, a view that is shared by every participant or does not add anything new to what participants already know about 1973 ("el setenta y tres marca/the seventy-three marks"), since Jeronimo is unable to finish his statement because he is interrupted by Julio.

Julio re-enters the conversation in line 24, overlapping with Jeronimo's statement. This time he adds an example of how the second threat works against objectivity (the threat he mentions in lines 13 and 14). The example he uses is that of his mother. According to Julio, prior to 1973, his mother had "vivencias/life experiences" (making use of the same term Maria uses in extract 17) which may have "nublado un poco/clouded her a bit" (lines 25 and 26) colouring her perception and memories of the events. A climate metaphor ("clouded") is delicately introduced once again, suggesting that emotions based on experiences may prevent objectivity about past events, to the extent of disqualifying memories as valid sources of information. The extent to which Julio's mother is influenced by emotion is rhetorically articulated in lines 26 to 28, when he describes his difficulty in persuading his mother to talk about the past, thus far without success. She is, Julio appears to say, so "marked" by her life experiences that she is unable to share or discuss them. He disqualifies his mother's version, then, because she "lived the events".

Whether someone has lived through the events, then, becomes a significant theme for discussion. What would be the impact of first-hand experiences on

remembering them later? How may having such experiences be constructed as a threat to remembering the experience "objectively"? According to some participants, direct experiences may prevent people from confronting the past because of emotional interference, the origin of which is located in the experiences themselves. Therefore, emotions are constructed not as part of how the past was experienced, nor as part of memory processes, but as an obstacle to talking about the past which must be confronted and sorted out if an "objective" description is the goal.

In summary, in extract 18 two sources of contamination that complicate the analysis are introduced by Julio. Both are viewed as degrading the quality of the debate in terms of its "objectivity". The first source is articulated in terms of interest groups or "tendencies" which continue to put forward polarised versions of the past. The second source of contamination is rooted in the experiences of those who lived during the 1970s and the emotions that results from those experiences, interfering in the ability to "objectively" describe the past.

Polarisation is the common thread linking the two sources of contamination that operate against what is considered "objectivity" in this context. By implication, Chilean society was greatly polarised in the past, when the events being discussed were experienced, and, thus, the events were rigidly signified by people. In such a context, experiences were forced into a framework of two polarised extremes. The quality of the experiences is said to be emotionally disruptive, and thus even more susceptible to extreme and rigid formulations. However, stating that members of political tendencies or groups continue to advocate in the present biased versions of events surrounding the 1973 coup allows little space, if any, for other non-polarised versions. Hence, polarisation in the past appears to be responsible for the two sources of contamination, that is to say, interests operating today and extreme emotional experiences lived in the past work together against objectivity in this debate.

Julio is aware of polarisation in the past; moreover, he suggests a way to subvert polarisation in the present, stating he can do so. Nevertheless, when his argument reaches a concrete level (specifically in lines 8 to 11, where he affirms that "the

neutral versions” would be somehow connected with what “each tendency has postulated”), his suggestions become less clear and forceful. What is left unsaid (and is not rectified as Julio continues, i.e., there is no repair), is the source of these neutral versions. If polarisation is believed to be operating everywhere in producing polarised versions of the past, then the existence of neutral or non-polarised versions would be impossible. Therefore, in this extract it is evident that the category of polarisation is used to understand and describe a debate as such, and at the same time, because of the way Julio plays with the notion of polarisation, he is also contributing to the reproduction of the debate.

Reflecting on the similarities between extract 16, 17 and 18 provides insights about how polarisation is seen as a *threat to objectivity*. Julio and Eliana, both younger participants, express a desire to be engaged in a “more objective” debate about the past. They clearly see polarisation operating against the search for objectivity. Yet they simultaneously treat polarisation as an uncontested characteristic of current Chilean society, both past and present, displaying the dilemma at the core of the debate, while accounting for the contradictions resulting from handling the notion of polarisation as an explanatory resource.

The younger participants express a desire for the depolarisation of the debate, through which the two main narratives or perspectives on the past would be transformed in terms of new, uncontested parameters. It is these new parameters that are understood to be objective. Here, the participants do not defend “objectivity” on purely philosophical grounds, but as a rhetorical device that serves their purpose. The hope is that this would lead to a non-controversial perspective, a “more complete” understanding of the past which might mitigate the differences between the two mutually exclusive membership categories.

Because the discussions being analyzed here were produced in a context in which two generations are present, it is not surprising that participants address generational differences. Nevertheless, one particular distinction appears most significant: those who are too young to have their own experiences and memories of events versus those who were witness to events and thus are entitled to claim such experiences as an advantage in terms of knowledge. In this sense, the

younger participants question whether descriptions, opinions or accounts of the past can be discursively legitimate or adequate if they are produced in a highly polarised context. As a result, discussions about objectivity are characterized by an emphasis on the role of views drawn from personal experience versus informed knowledge.

6.8 Reconciliation as a threat to polarisation

Extract 19 is taken from the same focus group composed of only right-wing participants as extracts 5, 11, 12 and 14. In fact, extract 19 comes immediately after extract 5, when the discussion has run for more than 40 minutes. The sequence in which the extracts were produced during the conversation is as follows (see appendix D, table D4): first, extract 14, where Mario accounts for his change of perspective about the military regime; second, extract 11, where Andres takes up some of the elements displayed by Mario in extract 14 for expressing a dilemma in describing the post-coup period; third, extract 12, where in response to the moderator's orientation to polarisation, Patricia brings to the talk the issue of victimization of one group being forgotten; fourth and only a minute after extract 12, extract 5, in which Patricia continues by producing her account of how polarisation functions in order to explain the controversies about the past. Extract 19 corresponds to the final part of the sequence of interaction that includes extracts 12 and 5.

As a reminder, in extract 5 Patricia states that the two extremes of the political spectrum are equally responsible for the maintenance of the Chilean Memory Debate. To exemplify this, she juxtaposes the reactions of two widely known Chilean political figures to each other's perspectives on the past and the consequences for the present. Both political figures, who played key roles in the pre- and the post-coup periods, are subject to the dynamic of polarisation as they play out a never-ending discussion made possible by their inability to recognize any value in what the other says. Subsequently, in extract 19, Patricia produces what first seems to be a desire for the depolarisation of the debate, then an attempt to do so and finally as reasoning for the (im)possibility to resist the dynamic of polarisation, such that encouraging the depolarisation of the debate results in the

speaker's location outside the political spectrum and the inability to be a member of any of the two political groups that provide polarised accounts of the past. In this sense, the analysis of this last extract revolves around two issues. First, how the speaker displays her orientation to polarisation as a relevant category for the analysis of the Chilean Memory Debate and, second, how the speaker implies the consequences of resisting the dynamic of polarisation, which ultimately poses the question of the viability of overcoming polarisation.

Between extract 5b and the beginning of extract 19, there is only a "mm" from the moderator and a pause of 1.4 seconds. Patricia has just stated "y cuando (0.3) el señor Escalona dice tal cosa viene Hermógenes y °hace exactamente lo mismo°/and when (0.3) mister Escalona says such a thing Hermógenes comes and °does exactly the same°". The 1.4-second pause after this statement is not taken up by any other participant, such that Patricia is able to continue.

Extract 19: Original transcription in Spanish (R2/45:14-46:14)

1 PATRICIA entonces digo yo en qué (0.9) minu:to:† (1.5) en qué
2 instante de la histo:ria:† (0.8) vamos a empezar a
3 (1.5) a accepta:r >hemos tenido una chacota de
4 reconciliación< que pa mi la palabra me produ:ce:
5 ANDRES †heh heh heh hehe heh |
6 XIMENA †mm
7 PATRICIA tres tiritones pa qué te voy a deci:r una palabra me
8 molesta porque yo la siento muy fa:lsa (1.1) por
9 todos lados ah† no: (1.5) en esto soy bien
10 anárquica soy (1.3) no soy ni de aquí ni de allá
11 (0.4) pero siento que (2.6) en alguna forma mis hijos
12 (0.7) han dejado de poder (1.1) goza:r de un
13 entorno sociopolítico (1.6) menos (0.8) hiriente
14 menos agresivo (0.5) bue- (0.7) me habría gustado que
15 ellos pudieran gozar de algo más (1.3) de ver a los
16 constructores de la nación

Extract 19: English translation

- 1 PATRICIA so I say at what (0.9) minute (1.5) in which
2 instant of the history (0.8) are we going to start to
3 (1.5) to accept >we have had a joke of a
4 reconciliation< that, to me the word produces me
5 ANDRES |^Lheh heh heh hehe heh|
6 XIMENA |^Lmm
7 PATRICIA three shivers what can I tell you a word that
8 bothers me because I feel it is very false (1.1) on
9 all sides okay no (1.5) in this respect I am very
10 anarchist I am (1.3) I am not from here or from there
11 (0.4) but I feel that (2.6) in some ways my children
12 (0.7) have not been able to (1.1) enjoy
13 a socio-political environment (1.6) less (0.8) painful
14 less aggressive (0.5) well- (0.7) I would have liked
15 for them to enjoy something more (1.3) of to see the
16 builders of the nation

Prior to this extract, Patricia describes the behaviour of others as if she were an external observer; now, however, she refers to “our” behaviour, wondering in lines 1 to 3 “en qué instante de la historia:↑ (0.8) vamos a empezar a (1.5) a acepta:r/in which instant of the history (0.8) are we going to start to (1.5) to accept”. This is immediately followed, with a faster rhythm, by the statement “>hemos tenido una chacota de reconciliación</>we have had a joke of a reconciliation<“ which produces laughter from Andres, another older participant, and “mm” from the moderator. Thus, Patricia’s attempt to bring together the two sides of the debate is, subtly, yet without delay, undermined by her opinion that the reconciliation process in Chile since the end of the Pinochet regime has failed.

A “joke of a reconciliation” is not a proper reconciliation; that is, some fundamental elements have not been respected. As Patricia continues, she adds that the word produces in her “tres tiritones/three shivers”, in line 7 after Andres’ laughter. Patricia uses the term “shivers” to express her rejection of endeavours toward reconciliation as a visceral and spontaneous reaction, one that is beyond her control. Patricia then rhetorically articulates her point of view as a genuine and honest perspective, when in lines 7 and 8 she adds that the “palabra me molesta porque yo la siento muy

fa:lsa/word bothers me because I feel it is very false". Patricia, by describing her discomfort as physical and involuntary and claiming that Chilean reconciliation up to now has been a "false" process, rules out any possible recognition and value of attempts at dialogue and acceptance between the two sides of the debate.

Patricia attributes the false character of reconciliation to both sides of the debate, using in line 9 the ECF "todos lados/all sides", as if the two sides represent all possible perspectives in this discussion. Therefore, neither side is more responsible for polarisation, which reinforces Patricia's argument (explored in extract 5) that both Hermógenes Pérez de Arce – as a representative of the right – and Camilo Escalona – as a representative of the left – react "exactly the same" way to one another. The ECF "todos los lados/all sides" is followed by a significant utterance in lines 9 and 10: "en esto soy bien anárquica. soy (1.3) no soy ni de aquí ni de allá/in this respect I am very anarchist I am (1.3) I am not either from here nor from there". For Patricia, eschewing alignment with one side or the other is considered "very anarchist"; it is as if challenging the strict division or order imposed by polarisation is an extreme position in itself. Finally, rejecting polarisation's order by labelling herself (and others who do not belong to one side or the other) an anarchist (someone who rejects all order, on principle), is yet another way in which participants orient to polarisation as a relevant explanatory category of and for the debate. When polarisation is challenged, the speaker is forced to account for his or her vision as one that does not respect "any" order whatsoever.

Patricia simultaneously rejects the structure imposed by polarisation and the legitimacy of Chile's reconciliation. She also expresses regret and discomfort about how Chilean politics currently operate since her "hijos (0.7) han dejado de poder (1.1) goza:r de un entorno sociopolítico (1.6) menos (0.8) hiriente menos agresivo/children (0.7) have not been able to (1.1) enjoy a socio-political environment (1.6) less (0.8) less aggressive", as is claimed in lines 11 to 14. The function of this claim is to rhetorically manage her own investment in the conversation. By invoking her role as a mother she presents herself as a person who is genuinely concerned about Chilean politics and who should not be taken as defending the interests of either side.

In summary, in extract 19, although Patricia's statements imply that she rejects polarisation, in a certain sense she also supports it by criticizing Chile's attempt at reconciliation Chilean. According to her, Chile's reconciliation has been an adulterated or insincere process, and thus, has not contributed to dialogue and encounter between the two sides of the debate in the way she would prefer. On the contrary, she implies that reconciliation may have deepened polarisation since the result is a "chacota de reconciliación/joke of a reconciliation".

It is important to note that while Patricia criticizes both sides' efforts toward reconciliation, she manages to articulate her own perspective as one that is not aligned with either side of the debate. However, this is followed by a statement in which she describes herself as an "anarchist" precisely because she does not agree with how the two sides have dealt with reconciliation. In Patricia's statements, to question the division produced by polarisation is to take an extreme position, one deserving of the "anarchist" label. Hence, the only possibility of challenging polarisation is to reject all order, not just the one imposed by polarisation. This would be the only available category for those who do not align themselves either with the right or the left membership categories, showing participants' orientation to polarisation as one of the most significant structural axes of the debate analyzed in this research.

The talk in several extracts has shown that controversy about the past is firmly organized around the two membership categories, to the extent of characterizing all of Chilean affect by the dynamic of polarisation. The omnipresence of polarisation implies that Chileans cannot avoid belonging to one of the groups or at the very least, they cannot avoid having others identify them as belonging to one of the two groups. Thus, Patricia's statements suggest her misalignment with Chilean society, as wider category that is undesirable precisely because of its profound division that determines the controversies about the past and vice versa. There would be no place among Chilean people for somebody who resists the pervasiveness of this dynamic, unless she or he is considered an "anarchist", that is, someone who does not follow any societal order, who is outside social regulations. Then, is "being an anarchist" a successful alternative for the depolarisation of the debate? Or is it a manoeuvre to remove oneself from the debate, by detaching oneself from society?

The significance of the “anarchist” label, as Patricia uses it, is that it presents a way to escape polarisation; whether this alternative is plausible is debatable. Yet if the rejection of the current procedures for making sense of the past does not construct new methods for understanding the past; the polarised order will be maintained. Then, the question is, is it viable within a polarised context the introduction of novelty about the past?

6.9 Summary and Discussion

In Chapter 6, the analysis has explored how epistemic notions are explicitly employed in participants’ discourse to address accountability on both sides of the debate, as well as how polarisation as a discursive practice affords given epistemic discussions which in turn serve to maintain polarisation’s pervasiveness.

In relation to what they knew in the past, participants repeatedly refer to having been unable to “see” what was occurring, whether they are referring to “the events” themselves, the connections between events, the scope of the conflict or the other’s perspective, including the other’s victimization. The recurrent use of the verb “ver/to see” is frequent in participants’ talk, regardless of their political alignment, to justify their inability to confront the pre- and post-coup conflict in a manner that is different from how they actually faced it. The implication is that because they could not see what was happening, they had only partial knowledge of events and in that context, their actions are justifiable. The denial of one’s sense of sight, in metaphoric terms, has a powerful effect; “seeing” plays a central role in “perceiving” and thus is fundamental in building inductive knowledge. If one cannot “see”, one cannot acquire new knowledge, question predisposed ideas or open oneself to dialogue with different perspectives.

Participants treat the argument of having been unable to see as a consequence of the high level of involvement they had in the past to one of the sides of the debate. The polarised nature of the conflict forced them to align with one side or another; thus they were all “inside” the conflict. Regardless of how such behaviour may be judged today, in the past there was no alternative to being “inside”, precisely because of

polarisation's epistemic consequences, which did not allow people to be aware of its full dimension. Thus, polarisation reproduces itself; its consequences are transformed into causes. Nevertheless, participants themselves display "awareness" of polarisation today as they describe its functioning, distinguishing the present from the past.

The participants' discourse, one may argue, depends on polarisation's epistemic consequences as well, for instance, when they discredit the opposing perspective. Polarisation as a discursive practice explains how participants engage in the epistemological discussions about how the past can be knowable, which in turn, provide the arguments for reinforcing the dynamic of polarisation with the help of epistemic notions.

In what follows, I underscore the relevant analytical outcomes of each extract in this chapter, pointing to how participants make use of the notion of polarisation and its epistemic consequences as well as how participants' talk relies on that notion. The discussion is organized through two main issues and its discursive effects: What does it mean, according to participants, to be "inside" the conflict? And, to what extent can polarisation be subverted?

In extracts 13 and 14, Ramiro and Mario each speak to the "inside/outside" dichotomy in relation to the conflict. Ramiro does so to address the left's accountability in the pre-coup period, whereas Mario refers explicitly only to the "inside" pole, although he implies the other as he addresses the right's accountability in the post-coup period. Interestingly, for both Ramiro and Mario, it seems that each category – left and right – is only accountable for its actions in one of the periods of time, reinforcing the dialogical construction of temporality.

Ramiro uses polarisation to characterize Chilean society in the past in polarised terms, enhancing the significance of the two membership categories in the confrontation of two mutually exclusive political visions. While one part of society was putting forward a socialist vision, the other part was sabotaging it; one implies the defeat of the other. In this context, all Chilean were involved: it was a "vorágine/whirlwind" from which nobody could have escaped. Everybody was

“inside” the conflict; everybody belonged to one of the two political groups and acted accordingly. In other words, everybody was subject to the effects of polarisation and its epistemic consequences: being unable to comprehend the scope of the conflict, the limits of one’s own perspective, and the other’s actions. Finally, for Ramiro, the dynamic of polarisation biased or obscured how people understood reality, which accounted for an (inevitable) coup.

Mario does not directly employ the notion of polarisation as Ramiro does. Nevertheless, his argument that being “inside” the conflict prevented him from seeing the victimization of the other relies on the notion of polarisation’s imperceptible effects. For Mario’s discourse to be intelligible (as it appears to be to his audience), the notions of polarisation and its epistemic consequences have to be available and shared by participants. In this sense, it is understandable that Mario presents himself as a former “insider”, a supporter of the Pinochet regime. Therefore, to be “insider” as in Ramiro’s discourse is also to display explicit preference for one of the two political visions that dominated one of the two periods of the 1970s; this implies the rejection of the other period. Moreover, Mario considered this vision to be a part of him. However, today he distances himself from that unconditional support. It seems that he has overcome, to some extent, his polarised commitment and as he presents his arguments, he displays an “awareness” of polarisation.

Mario’s argument is that being “inside” the conflict means defending a certain version of the past and undermining the opposite one. This is what Dario does in extract 15, when he introduces the notion of “forgetting” as a concern about how knowledge of the coup is constructed today. Therefore, Dario is arguing his stance with respect to the debate as an “insider”. And being an “insider” permits oneself to attribute forgetting to the other’s perspective, as one that is inaccurate or incomplete. Here, forgetting here allows for the existence of two versions of the same past, eliminating the possibility of discussing the past itself and promoting the psychologization of the debate. In the notion of forgetting that Dario uses, polarisation and its effects are implied. If not, then the past itself should be subject to discussion, yet since polarisation is the default condition, then the other’s inaccuracy is understandable and one’s own perspective about the past is invulnerable. Polarisation is what provides Dario with a basis for claiming forgetting on the other

side; polarisation explains the coexistence of different versions without confronting each other.

In extract 16, Eliana uses the notion of polarisation to explain the lack of consensus in arriving at a shared version of the past; it is as if achieving such a version would only be possible if polarisation is overcome. In this sense, she is addressing polarisation's effects by making epistemic dilemmas explicit. She displays concern about the difficulty of coming up with an accurate description of the past, but because she is aware of polarisation, to rely on other's accounts is problematic since they are inherently polarised. Emotions driven by witnesses' personal experiences play a central role in Eliana's explanation of how polarisation functions today. Despite the role of emotions in reproducing polarisation, Eliana expresses her desire to have lived in the past, as if this would provide her with a sense of certainty about her own perspective. For Eliana, the past is only unknowable to those who lived it. Thus, the only alternative she sees is to blame the other for having forgotten or distorted the available information (to which she has access).

Eliana's attempt to resist the dynamic of polarisation is unsuccessful. She becomes trapped in her argument, as she elevates the value of the older participants' personal experiences as a source of knowledge about the past. This leads to the discussion analyzed in extract 17, where Alonso, a younger participant, argues with Jeronimo and Maria, both older participants, about the validity of sources of knowledge about the past. In Maria's view, personal experiences are reliable sources, but knowledge mediated through others' accounts is suspicious; for her, the secondary sources are inherently prejudiced. Her argument that knowledge acquired from personal experiences is less biased than informed knowledge directly contradicts the common-sense notion that individual subjectivity is what differentiates one description of reality from another.

In this sense, the argument that individual interests or emotional predispositions attempt against objectivity (this is the younger participants' argument explored in extract 17) is subverted in participants' talk. Polarisation as a discursive practice may explain this subversion. The defence of individual memories' uniqueness might be argued as an effect of polarisation. In a polarised context, the unfeasibility of non-

controversial accounts promotes the preference for individual approaches. Once objectivity is defeated by polarisation, subjectivity based on a first-hand perspective, that of the “insiders” or protagonists of the polarised past, appears to be preferable.

Like Eliana, in extract 17 Julio displays a desire for the depolarisation of the debate. He explicitly brings up the notion of polarisation and attempts to resist it. He also implies that the epistemic consequence of polarisation discredits his mother’s approach to the past, precisely because she is unable to avoid the influence of emotions. Yet Julio’s argument is also trapped in polarisation’s web. Even though he welcomes alternative – “neutral” or “objective” – descriptions of the past, he creates doubt about whether such a version could exist by asserting that interpretations of the past are still being produced by the two political groups and criticizing the reliability of first-hand accounts.

Personal experiences are treated by participants as a source of legitimacy for a speaker’s arguments, despite how controversial their description of the past may be. The speaker’s “insider” status is enhanced and reinforced through participants’ discussions about sources of credibility. An “insider’s” account is understood to be plausible, credible; it is probably not shared by every Chilean, but by all those who ascribe to the same membership category. Because Chilean society affords no alternative to the binary positions that polarisation creates, the only valid perspectives are those that respect the order imposed by polarisation. What Eliana and Julio are doing, by introducing the notion of polarisation as a threat to objectivity, is to suggest another source of credibility: their epistemic, unbiased and honest approaches to the debate. Nevertheless, neither younger participants are able to subvert polarisation, because of the *sense of pervasiveness* attributed to it.

In extract 19, Patricia’s suggestion about overcoming polarisation ultimately remains ambiguous. She displays a desire for the two sides to accept each other’s perspective, yet she criticizes the notion that the two main groups in Chilean society have reconciled since the return to democracy. It could be argued that the impasse produced by Patricia’s talk with respect to how the debate could move to a different – depolarised – phase is an effect of the pervasiveness of polarisation; because the dynamic of polarisation does not allow for acknowledgement and agreement, the

result is "a joke of a reconciliation". In addition, Patricia addresses the lack of alternatives, while reinforcing the significance of the two opposing membership categories, such that not belonging to either of them is equivalent to being "an anarchist".

There is a fundamental paradox implied in the participants' discourse on polarisation, which may account for Patricia's difficulty in suggesting alternative membership categories within Chilean society. The paradox is produced when a Chilean states that every Chilean is polarised. Is this a reliable statement? The only alternative, it seems, in the face of this paradox is to exclude oneself (as Patricia does) from the category of Chileans.

Affirming Chilean society's polarisation has practical consequences for Patricia herself: to prevent her argument from being undermined by polarisation, she places herself outside of any social order. But in other cases, it seems that asserting polarisation does not produce any important consequences for the speaker's discourse; for example, the consideration of how polarisation affects the accuracy of one's own account. Eliana, in extract 16, addresses this issue to a certain extent. She cannot avoid meta-polarisation, in the sense that acknowledging polarisation only produces more polarisation, since any account of the past is intrinsically inaccurate. Nevertheless, this sense of pervasiveness provides the resources for addressing accountability on both sides of the debate. Although participants most often refer to polarisation in relation to the "other", they dialogically imply their own polarisation as well. Finally, polarisation's universal effect is what helps to maintain this impasse, with respect to past events that imply extreme suffering for a large number of Chileans, regardless of their political affiliation.

Chapter 7

MEMORY AND POLARISATION

7.1 Memory Controversies and Discursive Psychology: a well-matched couple

The main objective of this research has been to analyse from a Discursive Psychology perspective what has been called in this work the Chilean Memory Debate. In order to contribute new accounts and insights into how the recent political past in Chile has become a battlefield, I have used Discursive Psychology as a theoretical and methodological framework. This perspective has allowed a reconceptualisation of the various controversies around which the last four decades or so of Chilean history are constructed and recalled. It is worth mentioning that within those controversies, some psychological notions play a central role. Examples of this are notions of memory, trauma, repression, remembering and forgetting as well as perceptions and emotions.

As pointed out in Chapter 2, these psychological terms are also utilised by scholars and academics to explain the lack of a single and relatively unproblematic account of this period in Chilean history. The absence of a legitimate, shared version is understood as a problem, and for some authors the reasons for this are psychological in nature (Lira, 1997; Capponi, 1999; Prado & Krauss, 2004); yet for others, employing psychological arguments to explain political conflict and its effects in everyday life is a strategy to depoliticise debate about the past (Reyes, 2003, 2007; Piper, 2005).

An example of how psychological explanation of conflict has been at the core of the academic debate is a book written by psychiatrist Ricardo Capponi in 1999 titled *Chile: un duelo pendiente. Perdón, reconciliación, acuerdo social* (Chile: A Pending Grief: Forgiveness, Reconciliation, Social Agreement)⁷⁵. For Capponi, the reasons

⁷⁵ Capponi's book generated an intense discussion among mental health practitioners, including psychiatrists and psychologists who had been treating relatives of the victims of military repression for many years (since the early 1970s). Other protagonists of the discussions included associations of

for past conflict belong in the psychological domain, as do the possible ways to resolve them. Capponi's focus is not on social memory processes but on national reconciliation as a spontaneous process which will begin once Chileans share a single or at least uncontested version of the recent past. In order for this to occur, the author suggests that just as individuals go through a mourning process which enables them to come to terms with their individual suffering, Chilean society must undertake such a course in order to re-establish unity in the country. In his view, reconciliation will be a "natural" consequence of a social process as long as the differences between the two polarised groups defending specific depictions of the past are at the root of the difficulties that Chilean society has faced in "coming to terms" with historical conflict. As Chilean psychoanalyst Ximena Wolff recommended, Chile needs "a large and skinny divan" (Wolff, 2001: 12, my translation) to undergo therapy which will enable society to face "the truth", no matter how painful and shameful it may be.

Beyond debate about the use of psychological notions to analyse the conflicts under study, what is relevant here is how the Chilean Memory Debate is, to some extent, built on "the quicksand of the psychological thesaurus". And considering that "the situated, occasioned, rhetorical uses of the rich common sense psychological lexicon" (Edwards & Potter 2005: 241) is part of the Discursive Psychology agenda, it is possible to appreciate the relevance and potential of this framework for studying controversies about the past in which memory categories and other psychological constructs are invoked. In fact, one may argue that Discourse Analysis also owes its beginnings to the analysis of how scientific facts are established. The early work by Gilbert and Mulkay (1984), *Opening Pandora's Box: A Sociological Analysis of Scientists' Discourse* is of pivotal importance for the constitution of the conceptual bases of Discourse Analysis as reformulated by Potter & Wetherell (1987) and

relatives of the victims and leftist political parties. Capponi's main argument was that both victims and victimisers should engage in an elaboration (or working through) process because all had suffered and consequently faced the same dilemma of not being willing to recognise the pain of the other. Capponi's suggestion for overcoming this situation is to invoke the importance of the existence of a cohort of new political and social leaders to conduct this process beyond their personal ambitions. In the author's estimation, thus far none of Chile's political leaders had successfully done this. Yet it is important to underscore that Capponi's book was published at around the same time that Augusto Pinochet was arrested in London. The attention and controversy the book generated may have had much to do with this event, which intensified the Chilean Memory Debate.

Wetherell & Potter (1992). Over the past two decades and within the scope of Discursive Psychology, other studies have enriched this particular way of doing Discourse Analysis. Most of them have revolved around controversial or dilemmatic issues for ordinary people, where it is possible to appreciate the ongoing process of thinking, persuading, explaining and talking (Antaki, 1994).

Scientific disputes (especially those in progress, also known as hot controversies) are particularly fruitful for research into how scientific knowledge is constructed, through the application of the symmetry principle. This strategy was coined by “the strong programme” in the Sociology of Scientific Knowledge (Bloor, 1976), “wherein the analyst is required to treat the conflicting claims of the disputants symmetrically or impartially” (Martin & Richards, 1995: 513). Based on these analytical principles, Ashmore, Brown and McMillan (2005) have looked at an ongoing scientific controversy known as the False and Recovered Memory Debate (FRMD). They explore the arguments used by the two sides of the “memory war” to explain the current overall result of the debate. One side is led by a group of patients and their therapists who believe that adults – particularly women – can recover significant memories of sexual molestation which occurred during early childhood, which would account for current depressions and anxieties. Thus a therapeutic (working-through) process, which includes the exercise of remembering and rewriting their personal history, would afford these patients a new and perhaps painful but honest inner life. On the other side of this debate are relatives – mostly fathers – who say such memories are false and have been implanted in their daughters’ memory by dishonest therapists. Those who blame therapists for producing “false” early childhood memories seem to be prevailing thus far; they claim that what their adversaries call “recovered memories” are in fact part of a “false memory syndrome”.

From Ashmore, Brown and McMillan (2005), it is possible to argue that what could have contributed to this result is that both sides are engaged in a dispute in which what is at stake is “the problematic nature of demonstration within the psy disciplines” (Ashmore, Brown & McMillan, 2005: 78). The point here is how psychological knowledge is legitimated as ‘scientific’ or, in other words, the determination of criteria for judging which side of the debate is more ‘scientific’ in

its research, theories and practices. The authors conclude that while the “false memory syndrome” community bases its beliefs on an experimental tradition “able to transport their produced witnesses from one to another context site of demonstration with relative ease”, those on the “recovered memory” side support their practice and theories with a clinical tradition which “has much greater difficulty in doing so and thus has to engage in a variety of compensatory demonstration strategies” (Ashmore, Brown & McMillan, 2005: 76).

Other notable examples of memory controversy case studies are Ian Hacking (1995) who examines the controversies implied by Multiple Personality Disorder, or Marita Sturken (1998) and Christina Howard (2002) who have also contributed to the understanding of FRMD. All of these authors at some point warn their readers that they are not interested in resolving the dispute or taking sides, but rather seek to examine in detail the arguments displayed in order to explain the maintenance or changes within the particular context of the given controversies. Based on these case studies, it becomes apparent that taking this symmetrical approach for the analysis of divergent or adversarial positions within a given memory dispute allow the analyst to produce alternative accounts of each controversy's dynamic, without having to take a position in favour of one side. In my own research and considering that the Chilean Memory Debate is ongoing, such an analytical approach was fundamental for carrying out the analysis. Ultimately, the set of conceptual tools provided by Discursive Psychology and Sociology of Scientific Knowledge helped the analyst produce an original understanding of the current state of this debate. This new understanding affords the possibility of explaining how two mutually exclusive versions or perspectives of the recent Chilean past can coexist even now, and hypothesises that this coexistence is dialogically sustained by the phenomenon of polarisation as a discursive accomplishment.

It is important to point out that invoking polarisation in order to explain the Chilean Memory Debate is not in itself a significant novelty because this sociological mechanism has been widely used by other scholars. The originality of this work is to account for polarisation both in terms of a discursive practice and an external explanatory resource, as it is displayed in the discourse of ordinary people as well as in academic interpretations of the lack of consensus about the content and processes

of the construction of Chile's past. The focus is on explaining controversies of the past as an effect, consequence, or symptom of sociopolitical polarisation in Chilean society. It is in this sense that polarisation is invoked by academics in "Chileans' struggles with memory" (Stern, 2004) as well as studies of the country's transition to democracy after the Pinochet regime. As Wilde (1999: 475) argues, referring to Constable & Valenzuela's *Chile Under Pinochet: A Nation of Enemies* (1991), Chilean society "remains haunted by divided memories of a recent history that includes the dictatorship and the sharp polarisation that preceded it, a period from roughly 1967 to 1990". This is an example of how the notions of memory and polarisation seems to be interconnected, such that polarisation is seen as being characteristic of both past and present times with the help of "divided memories" which "haunted" Chilean society even in the late 1990s (when Wilde's article was published). Many authors have also presented polarisation as the overriding characteristic of Chile prior to the dictatorship (1973-1990), while polarised memories and division are posited as consequences of the dictatorship⁷⁶. Within these arguments, the notions of memory and polarisation work together to create a circular discussion: Which came first, divergent memories or social and political polarisation? Rather than attempt to answer that question, it seems more fruitful to pose other more fundamental inquiries. Are memories and polarisation different "phenomena" in the Chilean post-authoritarian context? If so, how is it that the two notions have come to do the same work, or serve the same purpose?

In order to answer these questions I offer a summary of the main findings of this thesis in terms of how *polarisation as a discursive practice* is accountable for the functioning and maintenance of the Chilean Memory Debate. Then I review some key concepts of memory discourse such as trauma, forgetting, remembering and repressing from a psychoanalytical logic, to connect them with the tradition of

⁷⁶ Whereas for Drake & Jaksic (1999: 32) each time new information about human rights violations appeared in the news in Chile during the 1990s, "the abyss that divides the Left from the Right on this hard issue was remembered". In this case, what divides Chileans on the right and left (the hard issue) is something that refreshes polarisation (the abyss) from time to time. Remembering their differences in response to new information continues to make the categories of right and left relevant.

And for Hite (2006: 211), "Memory debates often appear as codes that over the years have undergone several iterations (...) in the 1990s in Chile" or "memory debates were also thickly wound up in left political-ideological positions and tensions of the Left that date back to heady political victories and bitter political defeats, intense fractionalization, and even fratricidal conflict that facilitate state repression" (see also Frühling, 1999).

studies on intergenerational transmission of “traumatic” political or social events. Having provided a very brief overview of these notions, I subsequently reflect briefly on how they are employed within the Chilean Memory Debate. Finally, in the last section of this conclusion chapter I make some methodological remarks for alternative or future research on similar topics.

7.2 Polarisation as discursive accomplishment

To explore the construction and maintenance of the Chilean Memory Debate, I offer as an alternative “the language of polarisation”, a set of discursive practices at the core of the debate. To accomplish this from a Discursive Psychology perspective and as my analysis of talk in the focus groups has showed, I suggest that the so-called “polarisation dynamic” is the effect of a set of discursive practices rather than an external social mechanism exerting influence over Chilean society.

As put forth in the introduction to this dissertation, polarisation was not a point of departure in the early stages of this research; it seemed such an obvious element of the debate that I felt that it did not require much explanation. Initially, my main concern was analysing the shared yet disputed stories recounted by Chileans about the political conflict which started in the late 1960s. In other words, my main interest was explaining the differences in the way Chileans described certain events and aspects of the political conflict.

Through the analysis of focus group discussions from a Discursive Psychology perspective, I reworked my view on the phenomenon I was examining. As I began my analysis by transcribing, listening and repeatedly reading the material, as well as translating selected excerpts into English, it became apparent that polarisation, whether explicitly used as an explanatory resource by the participants or as a discursive phenomenon, was pervasive in the data and unavoidable in terms of my research focus. Not unavoidable in the sense of predestined, but rather in the sense of how manifest and noticeable this phenomenon was in the data, such that I came across it repeatedly while attempting to organise the data according to analysable categories.

Finally, the analysis of the talk in the focus groups was organized into three analytical chapters, although many other interesting aspects of the talk were left out of this dissertation. In Chapter 4, I examine the notion of polarisation as it is used by participants, most often in terms of an explanatory resource for the debate. In the participants' talk what is remarkable is how the argument's circularity enhances the notion of polarisation: there is debate because of polarisation, a viewpoint that treats polarisation as a social dynamic or an external force influencing Chilean society, but at the same time polarisation, which is understood as extremely different perspectives regarding the past, exists because the debate continues.

Other discursive strategies help support these senses of polarisation. First, the reiterative use of Extreme Cases Formulation (Pomerantz, 1986; Edwards, 2000) in combination with metaphors of natural forces and emotional arguments contributes to providing a picture of polarisation as a quasi-natural force external to Chilean society, in relation to which human agency has little recourse. Second, I argue that political affiliation in Chile, composed of just two mutually exclusive options – the right and the left –, acts as a Membership Categorisation Device (Schegloff, 2007; Sacks, 1972a, b).

In Chapter 5, I examine a set of particular discursive strategies that participants employ in constructing temporality. These discursive procedures shed light on the dialogical feature of the debate. It is precisely the sense of opposition between the right and left membership categories which is defended and confirmed by participants' discourse through dilemmatic arguments which implicitly or explicitly make the other category relevant; this other category is understood as the other side of the debate, the one that must be undermined or eroded in order to establish the legitimacy of one's own side. Both sides cannot be equally valid in their credibility; one's side invalidity is inversely proportional to the other side's legitimacy.

In Chapter 6, I explore in detail how epistemological notions are used by participants in their attempts to overcome polarisation, yet most of the time, the epistemic concepts are interwoven with a pervasive notion of polarisation and ultimately reinforce it.

In summary, the core of this thesis has been to show how, from an ethnomethodological perspective (Heritage, 1987; Button, 1991), *polarisation as a discursive practice* may be seen as a “folk or ethno-method”, a method shared by members of the same culture to render intelligible a set of phenomenon. Broadly speaking, in this case what is being made understandable by polarisation as a method is a controversial past, as well as the ways in which this past can be knowable. Thus, *polarisation as a discursive practice* is responsible for divergent versions of the past: the construction of opposing membership categories and the appeal to an unavoidable, quasi-natural force that governs Chileans’ views of the past, and, in a sense, prevents them from coming to terms with that past. The assertion that polarisation is an “ethno-method” implies that it contributes to determining the parameters “for telling the truth and telling whether a truth has been told; for assessing evidence at hand; for judging the plausibility of a story and the credibility of its teller; and for assessing identities to persons, places and times” (Lynch & Bogen, 1996: 263).

I have suggested that there are two *orientations to the past*, each of which obeys the “rules” of one of the two membership categories that are seen as valid by the participants themselves for producing opinions about the past. The participants orient to these two categories – without ever referring to any other possible membership categories – in classifying themselves as well as classifying the “other”.

What is notable about the way the focus group participants display the categories is how a single categorical term (the “right” or the “left”) serves as adequate category membership reference, because of how participants exhibit their understandings of what the two categories imply. In other words, the “intelligibility of a single category” is assured. This is the first rule of MCDs: the rule of economy. The second rule, the consistency rule, implies that “When some category from some collection of categories in an MCD has been used to refer to (or identify or apperceive) some person on some occasion, then other persons in the setting may be referred to or identified or apperceived or grasped by reference to the same or other categories from the same collection” (Schegloff, 2007: 471). In this case, since the collection of categories is binary, once a participant describes him or herself as a member of either

of the two categories or describes somebody else as such, the opposing membership is simultaneously made relevant for the debate.

Thus, the notion of “category-bound activities”⁷⁷ may also help in understanding how the left and right categories are brought to the talk in different ways. In fact, the focus group participants do not preface their statements with a phrase such as “as a right-winger/left-winger”; rather, in the course of their conversations they refer to the past in certain ways that imply their membership in one of the categories. The set of rules implicit in what I have termed a *right-wing orientation to the past* and a *left-wing orientation to the past* could be considered “category-bound activities”. What is suggested here is that being a right-winger or a left-winger is a membership condition the participants acquire by talking about the past in a certain fashion; conversely, being a right-winger or a left-winger implies following certain rules in talking about the past.

However, what seems to be shared by both right-wing and left-wing orientations to the past is that only the speaker’s side can claim victims of the past. Neither seems to consider their membership category as victorious; the left’s defeat is signified by the coup and society’s polarisation, while the right’s defeat is signified by the lack of acknowledgment of their suffering during the pre-coup period and the valuable aspects of the Pinochet regime, also due to polarisation.

⁷⁷ Following Emanuel Schegolff (2007), the kinds of membership categories that can be properly considered as such share three features. First, they are “inference-rich”, that is to say, the categories store and provide access to “common-sense knowledge that ordinary people – that means ALL people in their capacity as ordinary people – have about what people are like, how they behave, etc.” (Schegolff, 2007: .469, emphasis in the original). Second, the categories are “protected against induction”, in other words, “If an ostensible member of a category appears to contravene what is ‘known’ about members of the category, the people do not revise that *knowledge* but see the person as ‘an exception’, ‘different’ or even a defective member of the category” (Schegolff, 2007: .469, emphasis in the original). And third, there are established “category-bounded activities” attached to the categories, that is to say, there are specific activities or actions which are seen as particular to a category’s members. In Schegolff’s words, “by mentioning that person’s doing is an action that is category bound, and the *doing* of a category-bound action can introduce into a scene or an occasion the relevance of the category to which that action is bound, and, with that category, the MCD which is its locus, and thereby its other categories as potential ways of grasping others in that scene” (Schegolff, 2007: 470, emphasis in the original).

From a related field of research, Paula Reavey and Steve Brown (2006) explore how memories of child sexual abuse may transform participants' understanding of agency⁷⁸ and actions, specifically through the analysis of adult's survivor identities. The authors suggest that "To be a good victim means emphasizing hyper-dichotomized versions of agency ('I did not have any') and passivity ('It was not my fault')" (Reavey & Brown, 2006: 182). Likewise, the focus group participants' discourse analysed in this research includes several uses of Extreme Case Formulations to emphasize their lack of choice in the past ("there was no other option", "the country could not take it any more", for instance), which in addition to the employment of natural phenomenon analogies for describing polarisation as a quasi-natural force, is evidence of how participants deal with issues of agency and self-image when recounting the past.

Reavey and Brown (2006) focus on how "our current experience of the past can hold the various contradictions and dilemmas in our attempt to manage present agency and selfhood" (Reavey & Brown, 2006:187). Presenting one's own group as the victimized one in the context of the Chilean Memory Debate may benefit from the implicit claim that the other is the victimiser, but it may imply certain costs. These costs include discrediting of their accounts of the past precisely because of their injured or wounded condition ("because you are a victim, your version is biased or inaccurate") which in turn, can be a powerful argument for the opposing side in undermining the other's perspective. Ultimately, there may be pity for the victims but there is no horizontal approach to their accounts of the past.

Since the discussion in Chile about the past itself is shaped as highly controversial and polarised, it could be suggested that the debate is no longer about the past itself – the "what happened" – but about the victims of the past – a narrowed, consequential aspect of the "what happened". And by focusing on victimisation, both sides attempt to reduce ambiguities regarding agency and choices made in the past, in favour of

⁷⁸ The particular use of the term "agency" to which the authors refer is "the position adopted by the person within a field of possible actions, emotions and experiences structured by a nexus of current relations to other people, onto which are projected shifting aspects of the totality of past experience. What matters, then, for the current sense of agency is how the past 'shows up' when it is rendered in terms of those present relations and activities, the extent to which the totality of past experience – with all of its possible contradictions and conflicts – can be provisionally 'tamed' and expressed in the present" (Reavey & Brown, 2006: 190).

producing stereotyped or rules-driven accounts of the past that follow one of the major orientations in the Chilean Memory Debate. If participants were to address themselves as “proper agents” they would have to take into account “the indeterminacy of the past” suggested in Bergsonian description of “memory as duration” (Middleton & Brown, 2005). In that context, “The exercise of agency is a break, a rendering of oneself as other than was previously understood to be the case” (Middleton. & Brown, 2005: 220). Moving from victimhood to another kind of role in the past would imply a questioning of polarisation as *the* method for making sense of the past, questioning the frameworks which are “taken for granted” in the Chilean collective memory.

7.3 Memory, Trauma and Polarisation

In order to understand the connections between memory and polarisation, it may also help to examine the contents of scholarly as well as lay discourses on memory which contribute to maintaining polarised positions in other memory controversies. For instance, Misztal considers that “Memory can also play an important role as a source of truth. This happens where political power heavily censors national history and where oppressed nations have a profound deficit of truth” (Misztal, 2003: 14). On the other hand, Sturken points out that the FRMD has remained “stuck within the paradigm of truth and falsehood despite a growing realization that the truth will not be found” (Sturken, 1998:104). She suggests resituating the FRMD by “examining the cultural defences that prevent us from thinking beyond the true/false binary of memory”, including “the equation of memory and experience and the cultural coding of forgetting as a loss or negation of experience” (Sturken, 1998:105). Based on the previous quotes, it becomes apparent that our preconceptions of memory imply given epistemological stakes in how the past becomes knowable, and about what the role of memory and other related concepts such as remembering, forgetting, trauma and repression are in the epistemic enterprise of “capturing” the truth about the past.

Scholars do not conduct studies of collective memories of just any topic or past event. The very appeal to the category of social memory could imply that researchers are dealing with controversial topics or events. In the cases in which researchers are

interested in the events themselves and these are not a matter of discussion, there is history. As Maurice Halbwachs (1950) proposed, while history is unique and universal, memory is plural and dynamic. In addition, if one explores the contents of memory studies, it is easy to see how often they revolve around issues or events which are considered "traumatic". Within this category of traumatic events there are two types which appear to be of greatest interest for the psychological investigation of memory: sexual and political traumas⁷⁹. In both cases determining *the* truth (what happened? who did what to whom and why? who is accountable for the damage?), as if to do so were possible and desirable, is understood as a precondition for justice, which is in turn presented as necessary for the reorganization of personal or social life after the traumatic experience (Booth, 1999, 2001).

Hence, memory studies as an incipient field of social research is almost inexorably linked to the notion of trauma. Yet this concept and its relationship to the notion of memory are not easy to unravel, especially because into trauma theories converge with medical and psychological discourses. As Misztal (2004: 139) points out, "trauma entered psychoanalysis and psychology via medicine, where it meant wounds, and later travelled from psychology to physiology". But the passage from physical trauma to the psychological domain is complex. Physical traumas involve an excess of mechanical energy (a hit, a fall) which produces a trauma (a wound, a broken bone) because the body is unable to absorb or cope with this energy. In the psychological realm, we may metaphorically treat given experiences as so heavily charged with emotional energy such that they break down our psychological defences and produce very intense suffering. The interesting point here, just as in physical trauma, is how the subject deals with the excess energy. As we will see, the energy logic of physical trauma is transformed into psychic energy within psychoanalytical theory, one of the most influential frameworks for the study of trauma and its consequences.

⁷⁹The literature in both cases is abundant and heterogeneous. Examples of academics' and practitioners' concerns with respect to sexual trauma and its consequences for the functioning of memory, identity and adulthood normality can be found within the False and Recovered Memory Debate already mentioned and briefly described. Investigations about the traumatic consequences of political and/or social events are easy to encounter in the post Second World War Europe or over Latin-Americans countries during the last five decades.

It is difficult to talk about trauma without making reference to Sigmund Freud's understanding of this notion, which was pivotal in his oeuvre. Interpretations of Freud's theory there are far too numerous and the final chapter of this thesis is not the place to summarise them. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that in Freudian psychoanalysis the notions of trauma, repression, forgetting and memory are linked with those of unconscious and conscious psychological life in such a way that Freudian discourse itself leads to altogether different understandings of trauma, repression, forgetting and memory. This is relevant because in commonsense language, as well as in some psychological explanations, Freud or Freudian ideas are invoked as sources of legitimacy for enhancing a given point of view; even when transformed and modified, they conserve some of their preliminary sense and logic (Moscovici, 1984) of which I offer a very brief overview.

In the early stages of his production, Freud published with Josef Breuer "Studies on Hysteria" (1895). This was a polemical book at that time, which presented several cases of women suffering from what the authors called "hysterical symptoms", none of which was known to have an organic or physiological cause. The doctors began reconstructing these patients' personal histories in search of clues to understanding their strange symptomatology. Finally, the authors suggested that the aetiology of these hysteria symptoms' was not organic but psychological and that the mechanism responsible for that process was trauma. The process of trauma was composed of two events connected through the capacity to remember (voluntarily or involuntarily): a first event experienced in early childhood and a second one experienced during adolescence which breaks the psychological defences established around the first event, liberating psychological energy and producing the hysteria symptoms. In general, both events were sexual in nature, such that the first event was inadmissible for the subject during his or her early stages of psychological development and thus he or she encapsulated it. Later, Freud expands his theory of repression (Freud, 1915), affirming that those recollections had been repressed and for repression to properly work, as Billig (1999) suggests, one has to forget that it has taken place. In other words, what has been repressed has been forgotten and the act of repressing itself has to be forgotten.

Briefly, according to Freud an event *becomes* traumatic (the early childhood event) in relation to another event (the one experienced in adolescence). That is to say, there is an historical and temporal dimension implied in Freud's early notion of trauma in which memory plays a central role. Without memory or the opportunity to connect both events, there is no trauma. The reverse can also be argued: without trauma, there is no memory, since memory is made up of traumatic content, left (or forgotten) in the memory reservoir until a new event makes previous events relevant. From these initial reflections, certain questions arise. For instance, was the first event really forgotten? Is forgetting equivalent to making unconscious and remembering equivalent to making the unconscious conscious?

Another aspect of Freud's contribution which is relevant is the notion of war neurosis (Freud, 1919), which he coined after the First World War. Previously, Freudian oeuvre had revolved around the "pleasure principle", which states that human behaviour (including symptoms, dreams and remembering) are ruled by the search for pleasure and avoidance of pain. However, former soldiers returning home from the war transgressed this principle by displaying compulsory and repetitive dreams and memories of distressing war images. Although envisioning such war images is not a pleasant experience, the patients described them as involuntary and uncontrollable. Therefore, for Freud's psychoanalytical theory to function, something was left unattended. Why were certain men obsessed with unpleasant memories? Freud's explanation came in 1920 in his famous text "Beyond the Pleasure Principle", when he introduced the notion of "death drive" as opposed to "life drive" to account for those cases in which humans attempt against themselves, war being the best example of how men and women engage in such practices. Thereafter, bizarre or uncommon behaviour among former soldiers (such as full amnesia or unwillingness to talk about war experiences or compulsory and repetitive remembering and dreams) were understood as consequences of traumatic events. Violence perpetrated against other human beings signified a source of conflict for the subject, torn between his previous self-image (the peace-keeping soldier) and his new self-image (the warrior soldier). The confrontation with the "death drive" is what finally transforms a given event into a traumatic one, yet this is only understood later once the symptoms appear. Therefore, the notion of trauma in Freudian terms

only makes sense in retrospective; it is from the present that the past is conceived as traumatic.

An important problem in Freudian discourse, one might argue, is the relationship between trauma and forgetting, since his theory of repression (for a complete and original review of Freudian repression, see Billig, 1999), produces different ways of understanding forgetting as well. This poses another question: to what extent are victims' testimonies credible? How should their versions of the past be treated in the epistemological enterprise of capturing the truth of the past?

As has been pointed out, a traumatic event may produce involuntary symptoms in the future which can overwhelm patients, making the past ever-present and preventing one from moving past the traumatic experience. Such memories are "particularly vivid, intrusive, uncontrollable, persistent and somatic" (Misztal, 2004: 142). Because of the traumatic experience, individuals tend to fixate on memories which are experienced as completely as if they were the original events, accompanied by a sense of certainty that is reinforced through repetitive and compulsory recollections.

On the other hand, trauma may also trigger the repressive process and push traumatic content into the unconscious, producing complete amnesia about the past. Would it be correct or adequate to talk about forgetting in these cases? What is the difference between cases in which a patient is overwhelmed by vivid memories and a patient who has completely erased a traumatic past from his or her memory? Are these psychic processes or accounts complementary or mutually exclusive?

Thus far I have provided a very brief overview of Freudian concepts of trauma, repression, forgetting and memory. All of these concepts make up what could be called the language of memory discourse in terms of both lay and scholarly contexts. I will come back to how the language of memory is displayed within the Chilean Memory Debate, but first I would like to make a few comments regarding how psychoanalytical logic and concepts have been very influential in understanding political or social traumas and their transmission to new generations.

These psychoanalytical concepts of trauma, memory, forgetting and repression were originally produced by Freud in order to conceptualise the psychological individual apparatus before the Second World War. Yet, as already mentioned, the First World War was in some respect what inspired Freud to rethink his theory. According to Misztal (2004), it was only after the Second World War and the Holocaust that victims of violent political conflicts or wars were given public recognition and space to express their suffering. Prior to that, memories of traumatic political and social experiences were limited to the private realm and usually a single and hegemonic official version of events was disseminated, encountering no resistance or counter/memories. But as Misztal (2004:142) puts it, "With a general recognition of the emotional and social value of memories of the Holocaust and Nazi atrocities, a public space for trauma was created". The study of Holocaust memories by scholars in the humanities and social sciences introduced these disciplines to psychoanalytical theory and "its effort to confront and 'work through' the memories of catastrophe and trauma" (Misztal, 2004: 143). Therefore, the links between political trauma, its victims and survivors, and psychoanalytical explanations have a long shared history.

This history has also nourished a sort of crusade about the "duty to remember", or "to not forget the atrocities" so that – supposedly – "they will never happen again"; nevertheless, wars and human right violations continue to occur around the world. One result of this sense of "duty" is a new topic in memory studies: the intergenerational transmission of traumatic political memories (a few examples are Adelman, 1995; Robben, 2005; Krause, 2005; Schuman & Rodgers, 2004; Tschuggnall & Welzer, 2002; Lev-Wiesel, 2007).

For the German nation the Nazi regime was a traumatic period, one of suffering and shame, which was largely silenced beginning after the end of the Second World War. Nevertheless, in comparison, the military dictatorship in Argentina (1976-1983) has not been silenced the way the Holocaust was (Robben, 2005). But in both cases, transmission of accounts of what happened and why to younger generations has been a compelling research topic. According to Tschuggnall and Welzer (2002), new generations play an important role in reconstructing the past, in terms of questioning omissions or hegemonic versions, introducing new elements to official narratives or transforming them. Tschuggnall and Welzer's research explores how children and

grandchildren reconstruct the Third Reich compared to how their parents and grandparents do so, , separately and together⁸⁰. Based on the notion of narrative, the authors explain that they are interested not just in how older generations reconstruct their past through storytelling, but in “the dialogical enterprise (...) involving different ‘positionings’ in relation to one another”, that is to say, between older and “younger generations taking up and by doing so reinterpreting the stories they have come across in family context” (Tschuggnall & Welzer, 2002: 132). Taking Bartlett (1932) and Halbwachs (1950) into consideration, the researchers conclude that new generations transform narratives of the past to make them more adequate to the family context. This is similar to Halbwachs’ suggestion that group identities are maintained by members sharing their views of the past, defending a positive group image (in this cas, the family). As a result, memories of the Third Reich in family contexts often appear overly simplistic and more positive among younger family members. Paez, Basabe and Gonzales (1997) explain this phenomenon in terms of a positive bias driven by the normative nature of collective memory per Halbwachs, which allows for comprehension of why forgetting and omission (of negative or contested content) would be an expected response to traumatic social events.

However, given the research on memories of traumatic events and their intergenerational transmission, what seem to be omitted, forgotten, distorted or transformed are precisely the negative aspects. But in order to argue that some version of the past has been transformed or altered it is necessary to compare at least two versions. In transmission between generations, versions of the past recounted by members of the older generation is the one passed on, while the versions given by members of younger generations are seen as weaker. Thus, witnesses’ versions may acquire a special epistemic status⁸¹.

⁸⁰ In their study, Tschuggnall & Welzer (2002) first interviewed the family’s members separately, for instance grandfather apart from daughter and/or apart from granddaughter asking them to share whatever they knew about their families during the Third Reich. Then interviewer and all the interviewees by each family were invited to the same meeting. This strategy seems interesting yet is already designed for the search of similarities and confrontations between the family members.

⁸¹ It is important to point out that in this research about the Chilean Memory Debate, even though two generations were invited to talk about the past, this strategy was conceived not in the sense of making of this a study about intergenerational transmission of the past. As it is explained in section 4.2.3 “Focus Groups Design and Composition: Age and Political Affiliation”, having together people representing two different age categories was a manner of attempting to warrant diver perspectives of the past to arise in the talk.

In analysing the Chilean Memory Debate, it is clear that some aspects of psychoanalytical discourse are part of the explanatory resources which focus group participants display as part of their understanding of the debate itself. It is especially interesting how the notion of trauma and its "psychological" consequences are managed by participants in a way that often seems paradoxical or contradictory. As I have shown, this is because psychoanalytical discourse itself affords this double possibility.

When participants state that the victims of the traumatic past are on their side, they use the notion of trauma in their favour, arguing that their experience is so significant that it is impossible to forget it. In their arguments, the participants display emotions (pain, anger, anxiety, anguish and the like) as indicators of this situation. The victims' memories seem incontestable. Yet the notion of trauma may also be used to discredit the memories of members of the opposing side. Victims' memories may be seen as distortions of the past due precisely to the traumatic character of those memories. Thus, victims' memories are not viewed as reliable and the victims themselves acquire a sort of "respectable liar" status, in the sense that they implicitly revise the past as a result of their traumatic experiences, and the psychic energy which is released (pain, anxiety, anguish, etc.) renders them unable to remember properly. Therefore, utilizing the notion of trauma introduces once again the logic of truth and falseness within memory discourse. In the end, we come back to an important question within the Chilean Memory Debate with respect to how victims' and/or witnesses' versions of the past should be treated in the epistemological enterprise of capturing the truth of the past, particularly when there is agreement that both in the past *and* the present, Chilean society has been characterised by a high degree of polarisation between two antagonistic groups. What I would like to point out is that the language of memory, with special emphasis on trauma's conceptions, does not contribute to the depolarisation of the debate. Instead, both repertoires, that of memory and that of polarisation, are interconnected in a unique way, helping to maintain the debate and make it intelligible.

7.4 Implications for future research

Having summarised the main conclusions of my research on the Chilean Memory Debate, highlighting the discursive mechanisms that account for its functioning and maintenance, in this section I present some remarks on the methodological strategy I utilized in this investigation and propose some alternatives and possible ways to complement this study.

I believe the methodological design employed in this research was adequate for the purpose of undertaking a Discourse Analysis of how the recent sociopolitical past in Chile is remembered and constructed, although other interesting methodological strategies were eliminated during the process of investigation, due mainly to their feasibility. The phenomenon I was interested in, as I have explained in the introduction, was the role of psychological notions in disputes about the recent political past and about how this past is knowable. I intuitively felt that lay memory discourses, that is to say, the way ordinary people understand memory and other related psychological notions, had largely been overlooked in the literature, which could provide interesting clues about the level of intensity and certainty with which Chileans tend to engage in discussions about the past.

The question was, then, how to obtain pertinent data to conduct the analysis. I could have worked with existing texts, such as newspapers, political speeches, official documents, history textbooks and the like. Or I could have analysed “naturally occurring talk”, that is to say, talk produced “in activities that exist independently of the researcher’s intervention” (Silverman, 2001:159) in which the sociopolitical past was a topic. But this was precisely the problem: beyond certain institutional and highly stereotyped contexts such as courts, associations of relatives of human rights abuses, left-wing groups or right-wing political associations linked to Pinochet, it was very difficult to predict when, in ordinary contexts, the topic of past political controversy would arise. In my experience, the topic at times arises when one is with friends and/or relatives, but asking for permission to record such talk would be seen as intrusive. On the other hand, I was not interested in institutional talk or in those discourses defended mostly by the protagonists of the debate – the relatives, the

armed forces, political parties, etc. – discourses that might be easily accessible through written texts. I preferred to explore what and how ordinary people think, and in that regard the talk in the focus groups was pertinent, as I have argued in section 3.4.1 The Data Collection Strategy: Focus Groups.

Once I decided that focus group talk was the kind of data I needed, a second challenge was how to organise the groups, including deciding who should be invited and how they should be grouped together. I am still wondering about which other forms of organising focus groups might be interesting enough for research on memory controversies related to the recent past in Chile other than using the two major political categories – right and left – because these two identity categories play an extremely important role in the construction of the disputes as – I hope – this thesis has convincingly shown. Nevertheless, I am aware of the circularity of the argument, both in terms of forming focus groups by taking into account polarised positions, and in concluding that polarisation is the central phenomenon at stake. However, it could have been the case that *polarisation as a discursive practice* was not as visible for its analysis as responsible for the memory controversies. What this research has contributed is the understanding that Chilean memory controversies are due to polarised positions which employ several precise, discursive manoeuvres to present one side as correct while discrediting the other. This exercise has been facilitated by analysing each side's arguments in light of the symmetry principle (which I referred to at the beginning of this final chapter), in order to explain how truths and falsehoods of the past are established and defended.

Finally, I would like to point out that it has never been my interest to provide arguments for either the polarisation or the depolarisation of the Chilean Memory Debate. I expect this work not to be read in this sense, neither in the logic of defending the victims of either side or attacking victimisers. What I do hope is that this research will generate discussion on both sides of the debate.

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Appendix A: Conversation Analysis Transcription Notation

Gail Jefferson, 2004

The transcriptions produced in Spanish include the following CA conventions:

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| (1.2) | pauses in seconds |
| (.) | very short pause to be measured |
| [] | overlapping |
| HELP | louder than preceding talk |
| °softer° | softer than preceding talk |
| <u>emphasis</u> | emphasis |
| ((knocking the table)) | notes of the analyst; additional comments |
| heh | laughs |
| (sound like) | best guess inaudible () |
| () | inaudible |
| >faster< | faster than preceding talk |
| <slower> | slower than preceding talk |
| £with pleasure£ | smiling voice |
| ↑↓ | intonations |
| par:k | elongation of prior sound |
| soun- | cut off of preceding sound |
| = | immediate without time left in between turns |
| ? | question intonation (very few cases) |
| .hh | inspirations |

While the transcriptions/translations produced in English include:

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| (1.2) | pauses in seconds |
| (.) | very short pause to be measured |
| [] | overlapping |
| HELP | louder than preceding talk |
| °softer° | softer than preceding talk |
| <u>emphasis</u> | emphasis (the whole word) |
| ((knocking the table)) | notes of the analyst; additional comments |
| heh | laughs |
| (sound like) | best guess inaudible () |
| () | inaudible |
| >faster< | faster than preceding talk |
| <slower> | slower than preceding talk |
| £with pleasure£ | smiling voice |
| soun- | cut off of preceding sound |
| = | immediate without time left in between turns |
| ? | question intonation (very few cases) |
| .hh | inspirations |
| <i>huevon</i> | words in italic are reserved for Spanish Chilean untranslatable words |

Appendix B: Date, Length and Composition of the Focus Groups

Table B1 L1: First Focus Group composed only of left-wing participants

| Meeting Date | Duration (hh:mm) | Invented Names | Activity / Profession | Gender | Age 2005 | Year of birth | Age 1973 | Age 1990 |
|---------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|--------|----------|---------------|----------|-----------|
| 23 March 2005 | 1:36 | Dora | Paediatrician | Female | late-50s | late 1950s | late-20s | early-40s |
| | | Gastón | Public Administration | Male | 48 | 1957 | 16 | 33 |
| | | Catalina | Journalist | Female | 24 | 1981 | not born | 9 |
| | | Nancy | Nursery student | Female | 19 | 1986 | not born | 4 |
| | | Ramiro | Psychology student | Male | 23 | 1982 | not born | 8 |

Table B2 L2: Second Focus Group composed only of left-wing participants

| Meeting Date | Duration (hh:mm) | Invented Names | Activity / Profession | Gender | Age 2006 | Year of birth | Age 1973 | Age 1990 |
|--------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------------|--------|-----------|---------------|----------|----------|
| 13 July 2006 | 1:33 | Pamela | School teacher | Female | 52 | 1954 | 19 | 36 |
| | | Graciela | Retired - Social Worker | Female | early-70s | mid 1970s | late-40s | late-50s |
| | | Fernando | Sociologist | Male | 61 | 1945 | 28 | 45 |
| | | Paula | Psychology student | Female | 22 | 1984 | not born | 6 |
| | | Ema | Psychologist | Female | 31 | 1975 | not born | 15 |
| | | Raul | Economist | Male | 35 | 1972 | not born | 17 |
| | | Vicente | Sociologist | Male | 32 | 1974 | not born | 16 |

Table B3 L3: Third Focus Group composed only of left-wing participants

| Meeting Date | Duration (hh:mm) | Invented Names | Activity / Profession | Gender | Age 2006 | Year of birth | Age 1973 | Age 1990 |
|--------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|--------|----------|---------------|----------|----------|
| 18 July 2006 | 1:31 | Raquel | Economist | Female | 48 | 1958 | 15 | 32 |
| | | Diana | Social worker | Female | 60 | 1946 | 27 | 44 |
| | | Priscila | Social worker | Female | 58 | 1948 | 25 | 42 |
| | | Américo | University Mathematic Lecturer | Male | 51 | 1955 | 18 | 35 |
| | | Jairo | University Spanish Lecturer | Male | 54 | 1952 | 21 | 38 |
| | | Francisca | Drama student | Female | 19 | 1987 | not born | 3 |
| | | Pascuala | Psychology student | Female | 19 | 1987 | not born | 3 |
| | | Pedro | Psychology student | Male | 23 | 1983 | not born | 7 |
| | | Aldo | Medicine student | Male | 22 | 1984 | not born | 6 |

Table B4 R1: First Focus Group composed only of right-wing participants

| Meeting Date | Duration (hh:mm) | Invented Names | Activity / Profession | Gender | Age 2005 | Year of birth | Age 1973 | Age 1990 |
|---------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|--------|----------|---------------|----------|-----------|
| 18 March 2005 | 1:34 | Marcela | Engineer | Female | 51 | 1954 | 19 | 36 |
| | | Paulina | Agronomist | Female | late-50s | late 1950s | late-20s | early-40s |
| | | José | Salesman | Male | 45 | 1960 | 13 | 30 |
| | | Eliana | Psychology student | Female | 23 | 1982 | not born | 8 |
| | | Juan | Economy student | Male | 20 | 1985 | not born | 5 |
| | | Rodrigo | Economy student | Male | 19 | 1986 | not born | 4 |
| | | Darío | Psychology student | Male | 24 | 1981 | not born | 9 |

Table B5 R2: Second Focus Group composed only of right-wing participants

| Meeting Date | Duration (hh:mm) | Invented Names | Activity / Profession | Gender | Age 2006 | Year of birth | Age 1973 | Age 1990 |
|---------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|--------|----------|---------------|----------|-----------|
| 11th May 2006 | 1:44 | Patricia | School teacher | Female | late 60s | late 1940s | mid-30s | early-50s |
| | | Andrés | Retired - Agronomist | Male | late 60s | late 1940s | mid-30s | early-50s |
| | | Mario | Psychologist | Male | 38 | 1968 | 5 | 22 |

Table B6 R3: Third Focus Group composed only of younger right-wing participants

| Meeting Date | Duration (hh:mm) | Invented Names | Activity / Profession | Gender | Age 2006 | Year of birth | Age 1973 | Age 1990 |
|---------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|--------|----------|---------------|----------|----------|
| 25th May 2006 | 1:23 | Sonia | Employee | Female | 30 | 1976 | not born | 14 |
| | | Rocío | Journalist | Female | 30 | 1976 | not born | 14 |
| | | Gabriela | Lawyer | Female | 28 | 1978 | not born | 12 |
| | | Daniel | Journalist | Male | 29 | 1977 | not born | 13 |
| | | Anibal | Lawyer | Male | 27 | 1979 | not born | 11 |

Table B7 M1: First Focus Group composed only of equal proportion of left-wing and right-wing participants

| Meeting Date | Duration (hh:mm) | Invented Names | Activity / Profession | Political affiliation | Gender | Age 2005 | Year of birth | Age 1973 | Age 1990 |
|--------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|--------|----------|---------------|----------|-----------|
| 9 June 2005 | 1:33 | María | Social worker | Left | Female | 50 | 1955 | 18 | 35 |
| | | Camila | Accountant | Right | Female | 45 | 1960 | 13 | 30 |
| | | Federico | Architect | Left | Male | mid-50s | early 1950s | mid-20s | early-40s |
| | | Jerónimo | Engineer | Right | Male | 50 | 1955 | 18 | 35 |
| | | Lucía | Pre-school teacher student | Left | Female | 24 | 1981 | not born | 9 |
| | | Nuria | Veterinarian student | Right | Female | 23 | 1982 | not born | 8 |
| | | Julio | Business Administration student | Right | Male | 18 | 1987 | not born | 3 |
| | | Alberto | Agronomist student | Left | Male | 24 | 1981 | not born | 9 |
| | | Alonso | Psychologist | Left | Male | 33 | 1972 | not born | 18 |

Table B8 M2: Second Focus Group composed only of equal proportion of left-wing and right-wing participants

| Meeting Date | Duration (hh:mm) | Invented Names | Activity / Profession | Political affiliation | Gender | Age 2006 | Year of birth | Age 1973 | Age 1990 |
|---------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------|----------|---------------|----------|----------|
| 3 August 2006 | 1:57 | Nubia | Retired - Social Worker | Right | Female | 68 | 1938 | 35 | 52 |
| | | Angela | University English Lecturer | Left | Female | 65 | 1941 | 32 | 49 |
| | | Manuel | Retired - Salesman | Right | Male | 57 | 1949 | 24 | 41 |
| | | Humberto | Lawyer | Left | Male | 57 | 1949 | 24 | 41 |
| | | Isolda | Law student | Left | Female | 23 | 1983 | not born | 7 |
| | | Claudia | Anthropologist | Left | Female | 28 | 1978 | not born | 12 |
| | | Javier | Law student | Right | Male | 24 | 1982 | not born | 8 |

Appendix C: Sequential Order of Extracts (by Analytical Chapters)

| Chapter | Extract Number | Focus Group | Start | End |
|---------|----------------|-------------|-------|-------|
| 4 | 1 | R1 | 14:05 | 15:43 |
| 4 | 2 | L1 | 73:50 | 74:25 |
| 4 | 3 | L2 | 35:20 | 38:40 |
| 4 | 4 | M2 | 26:32 | 27:45 |
| 4 | 5 | R2 | 43:27 | 45:14 |
| 4 | 6 | M1 | 45:46 | 46:19 |
| 5 | 7 | R1 | 23:45 | 24:36 |
| 5 | 8 | R1 | 26:40 | 28:10 |
| 5 | 9 | M1 | 51:57 | 53:26 |
| 5 | 10 | L2 | 26:33 | 28:51 |
| 5 | 11 | R2 | 30:39 | 34:13 |
| 5 | 12 | R2 | 40:49 | 42:29 |
| 6 | 13 | L1 | 17:00 | 21:50 |
| 6 | 14 | R2 | 13:22 | 16:32 |
| 6 | 15 | R1 | 20:58 | 22:25 |
| 6 | 16 | R1 | 30:17 | 31:16 |
| 6 | 17 | M1 | 10:59 | 11:37 |
| 6 | 18 | M1 | 13:55 | 14:51 |
| 6 | 19 | R2 | 45:14 | 46:14 |

Appendix D: Sequential Order of Extracts (by each Focus Group)

Table D1: Order of Extracts L1

| Chapter | Extract Number | Focus Group | Start | End |
|---------|----------------|-------------|-------|-------|
| 6 | 13 | L1 | 17:00 | 21:50 |
| 4 | 2 | L1 | 73:50 | 74:25 |

Table D2: Order of Extracts L2

| Chapter | Extract Number | Focus Group | Start | End |
|---------|----------------|-------------|-------|-------|
| 5 | 10 | L2 | 26:33 | 28:51 |
| 4 | 3 | L2 | 35:20 | 38:40 |

Table D3: Order of Extracts R1

| Chapter | Extract Number | Focus Group | Start | End |
|---------|----------------|-------------|-------|-------|
| 4 | 1 | R1 | 14:05 | 15:43 |
| 6 | 15 | R1 | 20:58 | 22:25 |
| 5 | 7 | R1 | 23:45 | 24:36 |
| 5 | 8 | R1 | 26:40 | 28:10 |
| 6 | 16 | R1 | 30:17 | 31:16 |

Table D4: Order of Extracts R2

| Chapter | Extract Number | Focus Group | Start | End |
|---------|----------------|-------------|-------|-------|
| 6 | 14 | R2 | 13:22 | 16:32 |
| 5 | 11 | R2 | 30:39 | 34:13 |
| 5 | 12 | R2 | 40:49 | 42:29 |
| 4 | 5 | R2 | 43:27 | 45:14 |
| 6 | 19 | R2 | 45:14 | 46:14 |

Table D5: Order of Extracts M1

| Chapter | Extract Number | Focus Group | Start | End |
|---------|----------------|-------------|-------|-------|
| 6 | 17 | M1 | 10:59 | 11:37 |
| 6 | 18 | M1 | 13:55 | 14:51 |
| 4 | 6 | M1 | 45:46 | 46:19 |
| 5 | 9 | M1 | 51:57 | 53:26 |

Table D6: Order of Extracts M2

| Chapter | Extract Number | Focus Group | Start | End |
|---------|----------------|-------------|-------|-------|
| 4 | 4 | M2 | 26:32 | 27:45 |

