

## **Constructing distance in the world of blogs: who are the Others?**

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The new media of blog creates a new space for expressing distance. While blogs are public, they can be as private and personal as the author chooses them to be. This mixed context allows for looking at distance as the attitudes towards the Others.

The current study explores the representation of Others in the blog [becky-sharpe.livejournal.com](http://becky-sharpe.livejournal.com). The author of the blog is Bozhena Rynska, Russian journalist and top-blogger in the Russian Internet, one of the critics of Putin's regime and active participant of the events of the mass-protest events of 2011-2012. The blog does not have any declared general theme and discusses a variety of topics. The main focus of this study is the creation of the image the Others in a blog. This study uses Reisigl and Wodak (2001) and Issers (1996) as its foundation. The study has two research questions: 1) Through what means does the author represent Others? 2) How does distance of the Others from the author influence their representation in the blog?

The corpus of this study consists in the first fifty blog entries from each year the blog exists (2006 - 2011). The analysis concentrates on the use of thirteen data-driven dominants (such as Address Age, Fauna, Geographic Units, Gender, Character and Intellectual Features, Myth, Personal Names, Generalized Names, Nationality and Ethnicity, Status, Relationships, and Appearance) for the representation of two types of Others: Opponents and Supporters.

The study reveals a complex system of strategies to represent the author's distance to different types of Others. These strategies frequently overlap, which creates ambiguity through the use of same dominants for representing of both types of Others and through changing the level of transparency of borders between Supporters and Opponents. The context of each entry is often the main criterion, on which the readers of the blog can rely in order to understand the distance the author wants to represent. Therefore, in the new media of the blog the distance is defined by the context and is rarely stable.