for the most part inexcusably overlooked the fact that not all "utterances," in Walter Benn

Michaels' and Stephen Knapp's sense of the word,[3] are *monolingual*; as I hope to make

clear, the fact that *multilingual* utterances can and do exist (and will surely increase in

number and importance with the ongoing march of globalism[4]), with all the theoretical

and (neo)pragmatic consequences they imply (some of which I will point to here), cannot

help but compel us to reconsider the receive

linguist's last great work, *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, entitled "Be-

ing and Language."[8] The former text consists of Heidegger's record[9] of a conversation

so, the Japanese word "sushi" has entered the English lexicon. To be more precise, it is the sound of the *word* or *sign* "sushi" that has been appropriated by the English language, not its Japanese typographical manifestation; in this appropriation, it has become subject to the linguistic rules of grammar of the English language-system, forfeiting the linguistic rules of grammar belonging to its former semiotic and linguistic master, Japanese. Hence, Bakhtin's heteroglossia refers, when used accurately, not to an inter-semiosis of English and Japanese, which I call multilingualism, but to a re-semiosis of a discrete sign in one semiotic system into a similar and equally discrete sign in another semiotic system. Furthermore, as I see it, typographical manifestations of heteroglossia can and should be considered instances of multilingualism, as opposed to monolingualism, because, though the language rules of *grammar* have changed in an appropriative *spoken* speech-act, the *scripted* speech-act, if kept in the original, is still subject to the materiel-linguistic rules of its originary language-system.

And so, a prime example of monolingualism becomes this very essay, written in English for readers of English. But how, then, does this text "

Japanese masks, sustaining a surface of monolingual linguistic stability, called

heteroglossia, while a quiet but violent multilingual revolution, more than just a species

of what Derrida would call a deconstruction, is taking place just below that surface. In the

dialogue, the Japanese interlocutor is referring specifically to Western aesthetics within

the Japanese language-system; a reverse case to be found in the same text is a Japanese

word, Iki,[12] often returned to in the text, that is scripted in German, and thus can be taken

as yet another heteroglossic monolingualism that gives the illusion of linguistic stability.

"Yet," as the German Interrogator goes on, "a far greater danger threatens." This

"danger" is to be understood as the second sense Heidegger attributes to the monolingual

illusion of linguistic stability. Put as simply as possible, it refers to the attempt—always

in vain—to put the face of an Other language on as a mask. As Heidegger writes,

> *Interrogator*: The danger of our dialogues was hidden in language itself, not in
> *what* we discussed, nor in the *way in which* we tried to do so
> (original italics, 5).

"Language" here is pointedly singular; it refers to a monolingualism that does not take

place in the *content* of the utterance, nor in the *form* of the utterance (i.e. they can be

heteroglossic), but rather one that takes place in the "spirit" of a given language, in what

is most essential to it, what we have been metaphorically calling its face. As Interrogator

goes on, "The language of the dialogue constantly destroys the possibility of saying what

the dialogue was about." Read from our point of view, this sentence can be rendered thus:

the language's face, by virtue of its monstrously monolingual configuration, destroys the

possibility of wearing the face of an Other language as a mask.

It is thus that Heidegger affirms the existence of the monolingual illusion of

linguistic stability by qualifying it—I think for good reason—as a danger.

Multilingualism **highlights** *the inherent instability of language*

As we have already acknowledged, the signs of a given semiotic system are *arbitrarily chosen*, if, by "arbitrarily," we understand a violent struggle of wills to power, configured as wills to (monolingual) representation. The post-structuralists have shed much light on this subject; from Bakhtin's centrifugal and centripetal forces to Foucault's "subversive element," they have enlightened the matter of how, to put it in Pierre Bourdieu's terms, symbolic capital does or does not change hands—monolingual symbolic capital, that is. What gives force to these arguments is their common presumption—I believe accurate— that, in the terms we have used thus far, the reality behind the illusion of linguistic stability, the face without a mask, deceives us and betrays itself by wearing monolingual masks.

It is, I believe, this reality that multilingualism exposes; it is the face unmasked. Heidegger discusses the capacity for multilingualism to highlight the inherent instability of meaning most fully in the section of his last writings, entitled "Be-ing and Logos." The section begins with seven propositions, the third of which concerns us most, and reads as follows:

> Be-ing and the origin of language. Language [as] the resonance that belongs to enowning, in which resonance enowning gifts itself as enstrifing of the strife into the strife itself (earth-world) (the consequence: using up and mere usage of language. (350)

what I mean when I propose that "multilingualism highlights the inherent instability of language."

Firstly, *strife*, for Heidegger, refers to the same thing we encountered as the common ground for most post-structuralists; it is the reality behind the monolingual illusion of linguistic stability, the face unmasked. Thus, when Heidegger describes *resonance*—a term I will turn to shortly—as (foregoing enowning) an "enstrifing of the strife into the strife itself," he is discussing the ceaseless struggle of wills to power that have as their consequences the signs we cannot help but use; he is discussing the face of a language and not one of its masks.

In order to understand what Heidegger means by the word *resonance*, I will make reference to one word and one word only that Heidegger uses in this section, an Ancient Greek word given in Greek type: (logos). The term is too rich for me to devote a worthy amount of space here, and so I will treat one aspect—an important one—of Heidegger's use of it: the fact that it is scripted in Ancient Greek. To be brief, as I see it, what this dongu]TJT TDh"25,H-L3 Tf.8()4(-0.0008 Tw[(illm)-1(")5(mof)3.8(lif.8()lTw[(whn6(-L3 xe)4.6

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thanks to its interlingual interplay, remain meaningful even if disembodied, de-historicised and taken out of its social context.

As Klossowski would have us say, it is as if inertia itself were inverted into the *obstinacy* of words, as if the illusory stability of monolingual utterances were replaced, qua representational overcoming, by a multilingual utterance that in highlighting linguistic instability would be equivalent to an *obstinate gesture*, recuperating the (in)communicable, dispersed under multilingualism's appearance of incoherence.[14] In this manner, we have come to recapitulate for ourselves, and with Heidegger's help, the three propositions that are leading us to a *theory of multilingualism*:

1. Monolingualism *sustains* the illusion of linguistic stability.

2. Multilingualism *highlights* the inherent instability of language.

3. Multilingualism *overcomes* the inherent instability of language.

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and linguistic sense of the word) use of the writing medium broadly understood." As I see them, all scripted multilingual utterances are by definition self-conscious, insofar as, having more than one semiotic system at her/his disposal, a writer must *decide*