

Insufficiency

Firestorm

2019-5-1

Contents

Metaphors	3
»Unfamiliar terms«	3
The lack of explanation of terms	4
Assumed comprehension between author and recipient	4
The length of sentences, and punctuation	5
Internal impact	5
Ending	6

Note: In this article the words »insurrectionary«, »rebellious anarchist«, and »rebellious« share the same meaning.

If a new world is desired, it is troublesome to accept that written informative material is out there, which in one way or another can inspire an individual to put itself on the front lines of radical change, but never actually reaches this individual. Why not? Simple: It's impossible to understand a single thing of what is being written.

In this regard, the »theme« [of this article, ed.] is rebellious anarchism, and its explosive eagerness in terms of the written expression. The analysis of this branch of anarchism – for some people the only branch with at least some green colouring on it – it is not a question whether this branch is an autonomous ideologi. Furthermore, this analysis is not meant as a discussion of content in regards to insurrectionary ideas. The critical considerations in this article are concerned with the purely lingual design, and nothing more.

Insu-language, and the written material in which it is used, is in best case understandable in tragically broad terms, and in worst case completely incomprehensible. To illustrate what is meant by »insu-language«, in the following sections some general tendencies will be put forward, which are applied in rebellious anarchist text material (insu-texts), and which assumingly inhibit availability to a potential reader and allied.

Metaphors

Metaphors are one of those »dubble-sided« critical tendencies, in the sense that the use of metaphors generally can make a text more alive and therefore more interesting to read. Strictly fact-based, descriptive texts can seem very long-winded, which can challenge, and ultimately prevent a reader from being inspired by it; the inspiration presumably being the goal.

There's a big difference in how metaphors are used in a text. Generally insu-texts seems to be filled with these lingual instruments in a way that a given text possibly is made easier to read from the standpoint of »softening« dry facts. On the other hand, however, the metaphors applied in insu-texts often seem to be very abstract, and to be using a certain type of imagery, which thematically is very alien to a »third party«. Obviously, such an individual is not familiar with the rebellious anarchist universe of metaphorical imagery, which challenges comprehension.

»Unfamiliar terms«

The use of so-called unfamiliar terms is a gigantic challenge, and this doesn't only apply to all of the insu-texts out there. A lot of authors of radical text material seem to be making great effort so that a given text appears as articulate and »high-cultural« as humanly possible. An absurd consequence of this phenomenon is that the texts lack flow, and that many unfamiliar terms are being used entirely wrong. In such case, it can end up with a recipient – if this person has achieved a general understanding of the use and meaning of the unfamiliar word – guessing which word the author instead should have used, from the context of the text.

The overall problem, however, is that way too many unfamiliar words are used in radical texts, and unfortunately this problem is especially pressing in insu-texts. Some phenomena, concepts etc. can very well be described with a single word, but they can also be described in other ways, making them easier to understand; An effort merely has to be made. Moreover, it is often the

case that many of the terms used can be changed to more familiar word, which are more understandable. It's not, and should not be the goal of an insu-text (or its author) to broaden the lingual horizon of a reader, from the point of some bourgeois logic. That's not to say that insu-texts should set the bar so that a 1st-grader can understand them, but honestly, it would not be a lingual problem to find some middle ground. A middle ground, which makes sense for a much larger portion of the population, than is the case today.

Of course, one could argue that comprehension could be improved, for instance if a text incorporated an explanatory list of unfamiliar terms in the back, or as explanatory foot notes. But why an author should waste time and energy on that kind of extra work is certainly difficult to advocate, if most of the unfamiliar terms could be changed without disrupting the meaning of the content in a given text.

The lack of explanation of terms

In very rare cases, while reading rebellious anarchist literature, you find an explanatory list of terms at the end. In so many texts such a list should appear, for reasons beside those which have already been examined.

The use of terms, which don't have to be unfamiliar terms at all, are often used in less than traditional ways. This means that a term used has a very specific meaning, which the term itself is not revealing. This so-called relational meaning that the term suddenly incorporates, because it appears in a particular context, is not explained. In the eyes of many, in this case, it would be severely helpful if these completely ordinary terms in their context were explained, for instance through an explanatory list of words, or footnotes/endnotes.

In insu-texts, a lot of made-up words (especially concepts) also appear, and this is where a reader becomes really lost by comparison with the above mentioned. At this point, it's no longer the task of the reader to figure out the meaning of ordinary terms, but also terms which are totally unknown and in most cases can't be found in any dictionary. In a case like this, it's even more acute to supply a text, for instance with a list of terms, if an understanding of the terms used, the sentence in which they are applied, or perhaps the entire text in which they appear as central concepts is to be achieved.

Assumed comprehension between author and recipient

The point of critique is actually closely related with the previous one. Indeed, it's possible that there's a quite obvious, though still moronic reason why a typical insu-text does not contain explanations of terms etc. The thing is that the text hasn't been created with the intention of having a random recipient, on the contrary. Its lingual distinctiveness, combined with its particular imagery and overwhelming number of unfamiliar terms, gives the impression that rebellious ideas are not for everyone. This so-called assumed comprehension is a crystal clear indication of this circumstance.

Honestly, looking with optimistic eyes, it's hard to fathom why this is the case. What in the hell is the meaning of expecting so rigidly that one's recipient unconditionally and unproblematically understands what is written, when heavy effort seems to be made to achieve the exact opposite?

It may be that as an author you don't expect other people than allies/comrades wishing to read what you're writing. But, it doesn't matter one fucking bit, if your comrades think that you are so down with writing that insu-thing. The purpose of writing insu-texts is for fuck sake not to preach to the choir. Instead, the purpose is to break the existing boundaries, so that rebellious ideas can reach beyond that tiny crowd of individuals, who has already crasped the meaning of it all, and thereby also understood what needs to be done (in relation to these ideas).

People need to be given an honest chance of understanding just what the fuck is going on, or else there will be a considerably reduced possibility of anyone taking in these ideas »rebelliously«, from the reading of insu-texts.

The length of sentences, and punctuation

This is yet another point of criticism that doesn't only concern insu-texts. So many we are, who can't help make the long (and awesome, we think!) sentences. Incidentally, I am one of those boneheads in that department, and again and again I get help to put this unfortunate propensity behind me.)To that end, this text has been mended considerably!)

Undoubtedly, there's *something* about long sentences, particularly when buying onto the explanation for creating such a sentence that it cannot be constructed in any other way. That it simply cannot be improved. Wrong, of course it can. There's always something you can do to improve it. Divide it up, put in a full stop, alternatively a semicolon. Short sentences are nice to read from time to time. The full stop is a friend, not an enemy! A main clause, followed by five subordinate clauses is just not constructive. As a reader, you quickly lose track, and again, combined with all the previous lingual problems concerning insu-texts, comprehension is put under pressure, like, for real.

Internal impact

Insurrectionary creators of texts embrace specific terms, symbolism etc. to such a degree that it can hardly be a coincidence. The more you read this kind of radical text material, the more you become aware how it's all constructed from very narrow compositional frames. It points in the direction of a structural problem, which immediately makes things a whole lot more complicated. Hopefully, in many cases, it's merely a question of authors of insu-texts bringing forth some perspective and using it. Thus, making them capable of writing (and editing) a text with the purpose of creating a wide appeal. These authors must be capable of this, without having their text material look like all the other insu-texts that are available on radical platforms, international homepages, radical book cafés and on the distro-tables at the radical book fairs.

If this is not the case, and many of the authors are unknown to the fact that they subconsciously are reproducing an elitist and exclusive lingual culture (within the same language, for instance Norwegian or Albanian), where it's practically impossible for a large portion of the world population to follow, then other measures must be set in motion. Then, a fundamental confrontation must happen against the way rebellious ideas are being formulated, and this will be a very long and intricate process. Let's not hope that things are that bad, but even if they are, it would be a great leap in the right direction, if a contructive solution to the problems illuminated in this text are found. And fast.

In relation to this, of course there's the challenge in regards to »the supremacy of the great languages«. The fact that a lot of rebellious text material are published in languages such as German, French, Italian and English quickly becomes a comprehension-related mess, especially when dealing with such narrowly widespread set of (written) ideas as the rebellious anarchist ones. A mess, because it's going to be the »great languages« and their particular ways of formulating rebellious ideas, that are being translated the most. This is connected to the fact that these languages all have a crucial internal impact, meaning that French insu-texts are leaning towards other French insu-texts, etc. To that end, the purely lingual design within one of these »great languages« becomes a factor in the general creation of insu-texts. Outside the reasons mentioned above, this is unfortunately because of the fact that translations often is a question of conveying the specific lingual design of a text, instead of its meaning. Alas, insurrectionary ideas are not saved from this erroneous notion.

Ending

Those of us who for better or worse (mostly worse) are familiar with the world of academia, we know what insu-texts remind us of. It reeks of elitism, exclusive clubs, of prestige and collegial pads on the back. The many fabulous ideas that are embedded rebellious anarchism are suffering due to this praxis. Insu-language limits its own comprehension, and it becomes a shoestring tackle concerning the spreading of ideas of freedom and equality.

The tendencies mentioned above point to a very gloomy and reactionary place, but it's not too late to shake them off, and most of them can be done with quite easily. It's all about getting to it, and the sooner the better. The rebellious anarchist ideas are for everybody, and for that reason, it's crucial that a ground breaking effort is made to create a lingual culture that fosters understanding and accessibility, and inhibits distance based on inequality and exclusivity.

Lastly, it needs to be underlined that many of the above mentioned points of critique are not only limited to »rebellious anarchist« text material. It's an overall tendency, which more or less is manifested in pamphlets, books, flyers and articles that deal with revolutionary, nihilist, anticivilisationist, or antiauthoritarian, ideological, anti-ideological, political, anti-political philosophies, -isms, dispositions, etc.

The Anarchist Library (Mirror)
Anti-Copyright



Firestorm
Insufficiency
2019-5-1

usa.anarchistlibraries.net