

THE ACTOR BETWEEN OPPORTUNITY AND INTUITION

ALINA
SUĂRĂȘAN

UNATC "I.L. Caragiale", Bucharest, Romania
alina.suarasan@gmail.com

Abstract: Starting from the word “luck”, the article shows the multiple meanings of the term and tries to find possible answers to the question: what exactly does “being lucky” mean? The analysis proposes ideas and answers on how the actor could influence his own luck and shows how bad luck can be changed into good luck. The article proposes a science-based reconsideration of the idea of luck.

The fact that intuition exists has been scientifically proven, and the article proposes the idea that the actor might have an advantage in influencing his luck because he has at his disposal a tool trained for years in working for the stage: his own intuition. The research uses references from philosophy, psychology, films, TV series, examples of Hollywood actors considered lucky, and analysis of Chekhovian lines on luck. In conclusion, the research leads to the idea that the actor’s actions to generate his own luck could be based on the actor’s courage to listen to his intuition.

Keywords: actor, luck, intuition, actor’s luck, Chekhov, characters’ luck, being lucky.

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Introduction

What does it mean to “be lucky”? What exactly do we mean when we use the term “luck”? Luck has been the subject of much research, analysis and artistic approaches over time and seems to imply a kind of mystery. Subject for philosophers, psychologists, researchers, writers, painters and many others, the theme of luck opens a vast universe of research. Luck fascinates. Multiple explanations of the mechanism of luck provide satisfactory answers in one direction or another, but not overall. There are examples of extraordinary luck, as is the case of Australian Bill Morgan, who in 1999 won a \$18,000 car from a lottery ticket, and when he reworked the steps of the process in front of a news crew, he again won \$270,000. Moreover, before the double lottery win, the Australian was involved in a serious road accident and ended up in a coma. After 12 days in which doctors gave him little chance of surviving, Bill Morgan simply woke up from the coma in good condition. Not only was he lucky, but Bill Morgan seems to have been chased by luck.

In the opinion of American geneticist, Nobel laureate in the field of medicine research, Joseph L. Goldstein, “dumb” luck is the one in the situation when someone enters an elevator, finds a lottery ticket on the ground and earns 10 million dollars. Instead, insightful luck is the one where someone goes to a kiosk, buys a lottery ticket and earns \$10 million. It all depends on the reference to the definition of luck, argues the author. This research relates to insightful luck, as illustrated by the author, because

Blind luck is basically irrelevant to scientific discovery, but insightful luck is not. The person who purchases a lottery ticket has positioned himself or herself to win a prize. Whether or not he or she wins is a matter of mathematical probabilities (Goldstein, 2011, p. iv).

The research starts from the premise that *the luck of the actor* does not mean bad luck or chance, but is a luck generated by the actions of the actor and shows

that it can be influenced. The objectives are: to present the notion of luck and possible meanings, to indicate the actions that could generate the actor's luck, to indicate the actor's advantage in the matter of luck. In achieving its objectives, the article is based on: the analysis of the definitions and meanings of the word "luck", the deepening of the meanings of the idea, through several philosophical perspectives and elements of luck validated by research in psychology, information and ideas from documentary and fiction films, observing the circumstances of the luck of Hollywood actors, analysing dramatic texts where the word "luck" appears in the lines of some Chekhovian characters. The purpose of the research is to confirm or disprove the idea that the actor's actions, towards being "lucky", could be based on the actor's ability to courageously assume his own intuition. The proposal relates to the findings of the team of researchers from the University of New South Wales who claim to have succeeded in demonstrating, for the first time, that intuition exists:

These data suggest that we can use unconscious information in our body or brain to help guide us through life, to enable better decisions, faster decisions, and be more confident in the decisions we make [...] Another interesting finding in this study is that intuition improved over time, suggesting that the mechanisms of intuition can be improved with practice [...] This could be applied in the workplace, taking the place of existing questionnaires which really only test people's opinions about their own feelings of intuition. We do have intuition and we can measure it scientifically. (Person, 2016, cited in www.psychologicalscience.org).

A combination of factors is involved in the roulette of luck. Luck seems to imply a lot of variables, and the definition we relate to when we use the word "luck" is one of them.

Research methods

Luck through definitions and idioms

From common expressions we know that "fortune favours the brave", but also that "luck is dumb". The ambiguity surrounding the idea of luck, indicated by the very coexistence of the two expressions, is amplified when dictionaries present over twenty definitions of the term *luck*. From expressions we know that "your luck is in your hand", luck is likely to drop, you may be lucky with *something* or *someone*, people try their luck, luck smiles back, luck can be found when you least expect it, and everyone has his luck. In Romanian, the word "noroc" (luck) is also used as a greeting. From dictionaries, we learn that luck, in a favourable sense, means "fate, path, destiny". The expression "leave (something) to luck" means "at random", without being sure of success, and the phrase "as luck may have it" implies the

idea of favour on the part of fate. From the multiple explanations of the term in the Romanian dictionary (2009), it seems to follow that the meaning varies from context to context, but the first explanation offered consists of three words “fate, path, destiny”, each separated by comma, as synonyms of the notion. In Romanian, there is also the word “nenorocire” (misfortune), which the dictionary (2009) explains as “being of the miserable, unhappiness, pain, great suffering”, but also as an incident with “disastrous effects, trouble, regrettable circumstances”. The saying “fortune favours the brave” comes from the Latin phrase “audentes fortuna iuvat”, and in translation “retains its original meaning” (Berg, 1968, p. 43). In the context of the phrase, “luck has the meaning of success, of success of the brave. So, when a suitable opportunity arises for audentes fortuna iuvat... dare!” (Berg, 1968, pp. 43-44).

In English, the dictionary presents the word “luck” as “a force that brings about luck or adversity”, but also “events or circumstances that operate for or against an individual” (Merriam-Webster). In Hebrew, luck is called “mazel”, and in the documentary *Schlimazeltov!*, the notion is presented with three different meanings: as chance, as opportunity, and as the hand of destiny. Jews are a very superstitious, the documentary comments, but they do not believe in luck. Instead, they have the belief that things have to happen in a certain way. The world can be a very confusing place, and people are looking for rational explanations. The voice of the documentary’s narrator argues that:

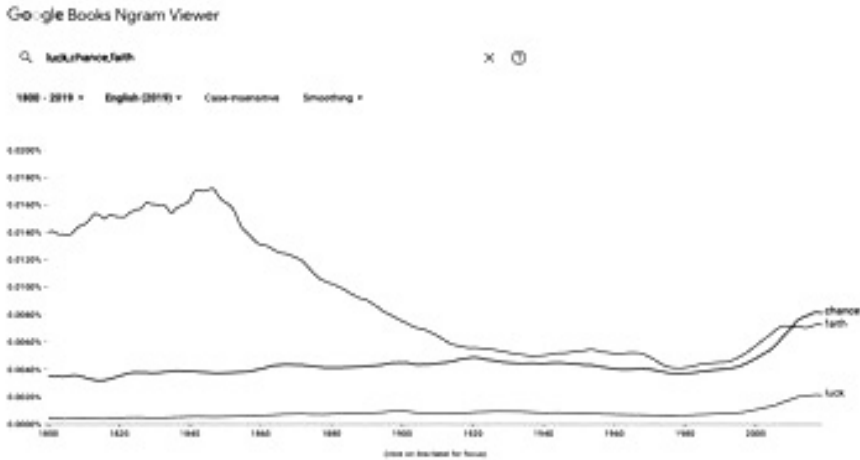
calling something *luck*, *chance* or *destiny* depends on the psychological point of view. *Luck* makes us feel a little better, you get the impression that there is a dice rolling, that it could have rolled differently and maybe it will do so in the future. *Chance* creates the impression of a universe in chaos, and *fate* creates the impression of a great villain who controls it (*Schlimazeltov!*, 2009).

So, what do we mean exactly, when we use the word “luck”? Luck – as chance, fruit of chance, luck – as a chance offered by a universe in chaos, or luck – as fate decided by an unseen force?

Observing the term using Google Ngram tool

Using the Google Ngram digital tool, which can verify the recurrence of a term in books written in English from 1800 to the present, through the Google Ngram database, the graph indicates that the term “luck” begins to appear more often in works published after 1995. Since 1995, the word “luck” appears in books more often than in any other period covered by the Google Ngram database. The increase in the frequency with which the term appears suggests an increase in the authors’ interest in the notion and implicitly of the public in the idea. If we look at the term “luck” in the sense that it designates what cannot be rationally explained,

then an interesting situation is observed: interest in the unknown seems to be growing at a similar pace to the development and improvement of technology, and “chance” and “destiny” are more popular than luck.



Luck in relation to the idea of control: How do we judge luck?

The idea that we are not responsible for what we cannot control, or the Control Principle, finds its argument in philosophy. Kant argues that an important aspect of morality is immune to luck, but:

as Williams (1981) and Thomas Nagel (1979) showed in their now classic pair of articles, it appears that our everyday judgments and practices commit us to the existence of moral luck [...] the two articles together articulated in a new and powerful way a challenge for anyone wishing to defend the Kantian idea that an important aspect of morality is immune from luck, or independent of what is outside of our control. (Nelkin, 2004).

Bernard Williams is the author of the phrase “moral luck” and argues that when he introduced the notion he expected to suggest an oxymoron. Moral luck is defined by Nagel as: “if an important aspect of what one does depends on factors that are not related to him, yet we continue to treat him in this regard as an object of moral judgment, it can be called moral luck” (1979, cited in Nelkin, 2004).

The concept of moral luck signals the existence of a moral dilemma that emerges from our actions and decisions: we consider ourselves morally responsible only for the actions we can control, but we judge others for facts that are beyond their control. We do not want to hold someone accountable for what is not in his control, an idea illustrated by the example offered by Nelkin (2004) of the woman

we are willing to forgive when she tramples on our feet, if we find out that she has been pushed. The fact that she was pushed and is therefore the victim of an action that was not in her control eases the task of forgiveness. But the Control Principle, which we relate to when we make moral judgments, seems to be violated when, for example, we blame more those who commit crimes than those who succeed only attempted murder, although the victim's rescue came from the fact that he/she stumbled and got out of the bullet's range (Nelkin, 2004). But "in order to engage in the debate as found in Kant and Nagel and many others, moral luck must be understood as in contrast to control" (Nelkin, 2004).

Nagel observes four types of luck: resultant, circumstantial, constitutive, and causal. The *resultant* luck is the luck that results from a situation—in the example provided by Williams, a painter chooses the life of an artist over family life. Williams argues that we will judge the painter's work according to the results: the success or failure of the painter. *Circumstantial* luck is luck resulting from the force of circumstances. The example by Nelkin (2004) is that of a Nazi collaborator whom we will judge even if his participation in the atrocities was outside his decision, his control. *Constitutive* luck is the luck of the sum of a person's traits. Biology, close friends, environmental influences make up who we are, but they are not under our control. We will judge one's cowardice, Nelkin argues, starting from Nagel's classification, based on these data over which there is no control. This kind of luck, Nelkin argues, "undermines the principle of control." And *causal* luck is luck in "how one is determined by antecedent circumstances" (Nagel, 1979, in Nelkin, 2004). Causal luck reflects the question of free will, and some authors, such as Lotus (2001) cited in Nelkin (2004), argue that it is a redundant category, being in fact covered by the combination of the constitutive and the circumstantial luck.

In the light of the ideas collected from philosophy, the question arises for the theme of the research: in which of the four categories could the luck of an actor fall in order to be noticed from hundreds or even thousands of other actors? How do we judge the luck of the actor? Examples of the circumstances in which unknown actors were noticed, situations that actors describe as pivotal moments from the beginning of their careers, could provide more information needed to formulate a response.

In Los Angeles, 160,000 actors are registered in the records of the SAG-AFRA actors' union, according to an online article titled 'Don't build your dreams on the promise of luck' (2016). It is estimated that between 5-10% of the 160,000 actors in Los Angeles actually work. The actor is asked rhetorically how lucky he thinks he has to be to work, given the large number of actors available in Los Angeles? The "lucky" circumstances by which several Hollywood actors

were noticed before becoming famous, offer some insight: Keira Knightley, the daughter of an award-winning playwright, has been appearing in commercials since the age of 3, and in 1999 she is offered the role of Sabe in *Star Wars - Episode I: The Phantom Menace*. A casting agent notices Charlize Theron when the actress gets a nervous breakdown in a bank because her money was not released from her account, obtained from a modelling job in another city. Harrison Ford takes a job as a carpenter, and a young director, George Lucas, meets him when he needs a craftsman to build some wardrobes for him. Mel Gibson drives a friend to an audition after a night of drunkenness in which he was involved in a fight, and the director notices the bruises on Gibson's face and calls him to the next audition because he "needs weirdos." When he returns, the wounds are healed, but he gets the lead role in *Mad Max* (1979) because he "had a very beautiful face" (Martisiute, 2017). Johnny Depp has a story similar to Mel Gibson's: he accompanies a friend to the casting of a horror film, is noticed by the director and invited to audition for *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984). A modelling agent notices 14-year-old Jennifer Lawrence on a street while visiting New York with her mother. Her mother chooses to give the phone number to the agent. John Wayne took a job at Fox Studios as an extra and befriended John Ford who offered him his first role. Marilyn Monroe was photographed in the ammunition factory where she worked by a photographer from YANK magazine, the magazine dedicated to raising the morale of soldiers.

Several observations emerge from the analysis of the examples presented: from all these circumstances there is a lack of the component for which, subsequently, the actors have come to be recognised. In all circumstances, the actors were noticed in contexts that are not directly related to the art of the actor. No actor, from the above cases, at the *lucky* moment, had an acting job. It seems that luck, in these cases, has invited itself into ordinary life situations. In all the cases indicated there appears to be a combination of resultant, circumstantial and constitutive luck. Resultant – because we judge luck now, after success has been achieved; circumstantial – by the force of circumstances, all the actors were in a suitable place at the right time; constitutive – the physical attributes of the actors, which are not in the control of the actor, according to Nagel's categories, but which have captured the attention of the viewer.

From the reflection of the categories in the above examples of life, luck seems not to have been influenced by the actors. However, it cannot be said that anyone who is in the right place at the right time to get in touch with an agent or director will be noticed and will become famous. It is obvious that for the success of the actor the presence of several elements is necessary, but experience shows that the actor lucky enough to be noticed is only part of the problem of achieving

success – or the reason why the actor might be interested in luck. But the idea of the right man in the right place seems to be an essence of the mysterious and fascinating vibration of luck.

In the meta-analysis titled ‘The Psychology and Philosophy of Luck’ (Pritchard and Smith, 2004), the authors argue that according to Nagel, the idea of luck was viewed through the connection with the idea of control – something good happens to someone outside of his/her control (Statman, 1991, in Pritchard and Smith, 2004)—and point out that the idea of control is quite problematic. Recalling the example of Latus (2000) that the sun rises outside one’s control, the authors ask themselves “What if we really want to say that we were lucky that the sun rose this morning?” (Pritchard and Smith, 2004, p. 5). It is obvious that in the attempt to define the notion of luck, terms such as accidental, chance, absence of control are involved, but philosophical literature does not offer more insight, Pritchard and Smith believe (2004). There is a tendency to define luck as accidental, “luck overlaps with accident and chance” (Harper, 1996, in Pritchard and Smith, 2004), and in another attempt of a definition, “luck” and “accident” are terms used as synonyms (Morillo, 1984, in Pritchard and Smith, 2004). The notion of luck is connected by accidental, but also by chance, believes Harper (1996). American philosopher Nicholas Rescher describes the notion in the same way (1995), but “it’s far from clear how it relates” (Pritchard and Smith, 2004, p. 5).

Luck – internal or external cause?

From a psychological perspective, in ‘The Psychology and Philosophy of Luck’ (Pritchard and Smith, 2004), the authors consider that the term is approached by the path of causal explanations: why does something happen. Heider’s 1958 opinion argues that one’s success is more likely to be attributed to luck if factors such as ability or effort are reduced. In another formulation, Heider’s idea is that success that is not perceived as having an internal cause, is attributed to an external cause. Cohen notes in the 1960s that the idea of luck means the same thing to everyone, anywhere, but it’s not a simple idea. The author also notes that each language captures specific nuances of the term that do not contain the same meaning. Luck and chance are different notions. Fischhoff notes in 1976 that it is unclear whether chance and luck are synonymous. For this author, luck seems to be an attribute of the person, while chance has to do with the environment. However, the notion of luck begins to be connected by a regularity, a person who is lucky, has luck several times. The connection of luck frequency arises from the observation of gambling. People look at the causes of luck and chance differently, according to Keren and Wagenaar’s opinions in 1985. According to the study of the same authors, gamblers attribute to luck 45% of

success, to skill 37% of success, and to chance 18% of success. The conclusions of these authors indicate the idea that “luck” refers to the person, and “chance” refers to the event or outcome. Very important is also the fact that chance is seen as the same for everyone, while luck depends on the person—from the conclusions of the same research. However, the authors of the meta-analysis on luck note an ambiguity in establishing the difference between luck and chance. The distinction between terms depends on the distinction between the characteristic features of each notion. The authors find that the method of comparison in recent psychological studies is more sophisticated and recall that Heider indicated that the idea of luck can be reached by comparison with what might have happened, worse than it has already happened (as in the example of a road accident in which someone is injured but does not die). The 1992 study by Janoff-Balman notes that victims of a trauma consider themselves lucky, looking at where they might have ended up. *What could happen*—can be a benchmark for the idea of luck. There is a need for the nuances of luck to be detailed—argue the authors of the meta-analysis.

Random luck or extraordinary range of opportunities?

The initial advantage designates the situation in which someone starts from a better position than someone else. For example, in the case of hockey players selected in Canada’s professional league based on age, those born at the beginning of the year had an initial advantage. Being born at the beginning of the year, they had an advance of several months in which they developed physically more than those born in the second part of the year. Only the year of birth was taken into account in the selection of players, not the month. As a result, those born in January were more likely to be selected than those born in July, a situation maintained until a researcher noted and investigated the problem. The sum of the initial advantages or cumulative advantage was named by the American sociologist Robert Merton, the Matthew Effect. The Matthew Effect was named after the biblical character, who says: “*Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from the.*” (Bible; Matthew 25-29). In other words, he who has, will receive more, and he who does not, will pay more. Talent and hard work can contribute to the success of an actor, but they seem not to be enough, “our hero is born in modest circumstances and fights to impose himself by his own talent and virtue. [...] This kind of personal explanation does not work. People don’t rise from nothing” (Gladwell, 2009, p. 24). Malcolm Gladwell looks at success through the filter of cultural legacies that a person has benefited from and emphasizes the importance of the verb *to seem*. The author argues that it may *seem* that people succeed by their own strength, but in fact they are the beneficiaries of hidden advantages. It’s about extraordinary opportunities and the “dowry”

received from parents and other sponsors, Gladwell argues. Where and when we were born and raised determines the success we have: “what really sets these exceptionals apart is not their extraordinary talent, but the extraordinary range of opportunities with which they intersected” (Gladwell, 2009, p. 57).

If we look at someone’s luck through the filter of the accumulative advantage they have benefited from, then the luck or bad luck of some Chekhovian characters seems to open up in a different light. For example, the lack of initial advantage in Sonya’s case, or the misfortune of not being beautiful, in her own words: “How terrible it is to know that you are not beautiful. And I know it, I know it!” (*Uncle Vanya*, act II, p. 137); the lack of initial advantage in the form of lack of family support: Arkadina says of Nina, “An unlucky girl! They say that her mother left the whole of an immense fortune to her husband, and now the child is penniless because the father has already willed everything away to his second wife. It is pitiful” (*The Seagull*, Act I, pp. 28-29).

Serebryakov seems to be the beneficiary of the cumulative advantage, Voynitsky says about Serebryakov to Astrov, “He is everlastingly whining about his hard lot, though, as a matter of fact, he is extraordinarily lucky. Only think what luck he’s had! He’s the son of a common deacon and has attained the professor’s chair” (*Uncle Vanya*, act I, p. 107).

Konstantin’s bad luck seems explained by unfavourable circumstances and the lack of advantages of any kind, as it seems to result when he says,

But who am I? Personally, I am nothing, nobody. I pulled through my third year at college by the skin of my teeth, as they say. I have neither money nor brains, and on my passport you may read that I am simply a citizen of Kiev. (*The Seagull*, Act I, p. 14).

The right man at the right time and in the right place to capitalize on the opportunity, or luck of Pishcik: “A most unexpected thing happened. Some Englishmen came along and found some white clay on my land (...) I’ve leased off the land with the clay to them”, (*The Cherry Orchard*, Act IV, p. 64). Lopakhin seems to note the absence of the elements necessary for the emergence of luck, Lopakhin: “Yes, today is not my lucky day” (*The Cherry Orchard*, Act I, p. 16). But the initial advantage can also be cancelled by his own actions, as Voynitsky realizes: “I have ruined my life! I am not without talent, I am not stupid and I have initiative... If I had led a normal existence, maybe a Schopenhauer, or a Dostoevsky, would have come out of me...” (*Uncle Vanya*, act III, p. 163).

“Lucky” attitude and perseverance

Through an ad published in the newspaper, American psychologist Richard Wiseman invited people who consider themselves very lucky or extremely

unlucky to participate in a study, which would be carried out over 10 years. The conclusions show that people's thoughts and behaviours are the sources of their luck or misfortune. The author argues that lucky people relate to 4 principles: they are skilled at creating and noticing opportunities, they make happy decisions based on intuition, they have positive expectations and have a resistance attitude, thanks to which they manage to turn misfortune into luck. Furthermore:

Unlucky people miss chance opportunities because they are too focused on looking for something else. They go to parties intent on finding their perfect partner and so miss opportunities to make good friends [...] Lucky people are more relaxed and open, and therefore see what is there rather than just what they are looking for (Wiseman, 2003, 4).

Chekhov seems to explore the importance of attitude in the destinies of his characters. Yepikhodov notes the negative experience of the past, when he says that "Some misfortune happens to me every day. But I don't complain; I'm used to it, and I can smile." (*The Cherry Orchard*, Act I, p. 5). Yepikhodov does not expect to be different in the future, he got used to it, he does not complain, and even smiles. An example of a character who notices opportunities but doesn't use them is Gayev, who says,

I've several remedies, very many, and that really means I've none at all. It would be nice to inherit a fortune from somebody, it would be nice to marry our Anya to a rich man, it would be nice to go to Yaroslav and try my luck with my aunt the Countess. (*The Cherry Orchard*, Act I, p. 20).

When he states that he essentially has no means, one might interpret that the character does not want to use the opportunities for subjective reasons. Instead, he seems to be waiting for a solution to come from the outside. Gayev claims that the aunt, although she is rich, does not like them. He could go and try his luck, but something from the outside stops him—the aunt's antipathy. Likewise, he believes that for Anya the solution is to marry a rich man—someone from the outside who appears and offers the solution. It looks like Gayev is waiting for luck.

An example of a negative attitude seems to be that of Yelena Andreyevna, who says, "Oh, to be free as a bird, to fly away from all your sleepy faces [...] But I am a coward, I am afraid; my conscience torments me." (*Uncle Vanya*, act III, p. 148), a reply that could support the idea of Yelena Andreyevna's negative attitude, because, although she wants and could follow her desires, the character does not try to act, motivating by lack of courage and shyness. Janis Joplin's statement could be a response to Yelena Andreyevna's attitude:

You're only as much as you settle for. If they settle for being somebody's dishwasher that's their own fucking problem. If you don't settle for that and you keep fighting it, you know, you'll end up anything you want to be (1970).

The importance of the positive attitude in the matter of luck also seems to result from the documentary *14 Peaks: Nothing Is Impossible* (2021) which presents the real story of a climber who tried and succeeded what seemed impossible. Nirmal Purja aims to reach the peaks of the 14 highest mountains in the world, at an altitude of over 8,000 meters, in 7 months. This has been achieved in the past, but over the course of 16 years. The international mountaineering community did not give him a chance. When Nirmal Purja arrives in front of Mount K2 he finds in the camp at the base several professional climbers who had tried, unsuccessfully, to climb the mountain those days, but the weather conditions refused any attempt. Nirmal Purja not only does not accept reality, but he does not even wait for the weather to change. For Purja, there is no option in which he will not be able to climb K2. The other climbers are restrained in the face of the determined attitude to go further, regardless of the weather conditions. Nirmal Purja and his team set off to climb K2. From what happens next, one could conclude that the positive attitude can even change the weather. Despite the objective reality, not only does Purja manage the ascent, but the weather changes during the ascent, and after Purja's success, several climbers at the base also manage to reach the top of the dreaded K2. The positive attitude in this case seems to illustrate the famous expression – *mind over matter* – and shows that the positive attitude can inspire, being simultaneously contagious. For Nirmal Purja, the positive attitude seems to have been in relation to the clarity of the overall objective. The postponement, another attempt to climb the mountain, in other weather conditions, would have meant a delay of months and would have compromised the very idea of the project: to climb 14 mountains in 7 months. In this case, it seems that the positive attitude was the only solution, and the exact objective created favourable conditions in which the positive attitude flourished. Which for Konstantin seems not to happen. Trigorin tells Arkadina of Konstantin, “He doesn’t seem able to make a success, he can’t somehow strike the right note. There is an odd vagueness about his writings that sometimes verges on delirium. He has never created a single living character.” (*The Seagull*, Act IV, p. 86). By comparing the two situations, for Konstantin, if we believe Trigorin, the lack of precision and perhaps of a clear objective prevents him from having an attitude that ultimately leads to luck – the luck of finding his true tone.

In 2012, a group of Italian researchers replicated, in a study, a real-life model, starting from a finding: those who are lucky enough to find parking spaces close to the institution where they work are always the same people, and the employees who almost never find a parking space are the ones who usually do not “have luck”. The conclusion of the Italian group was that those “lucky” to find a parking space were those who were always looking. It was the unlucky drivers who,

when they first searched and did not find, gave up looking along the way because they later related to the initial negative experience. The “unlucky ones” weren’t looking thinking they wouldn’t find it anyway. As a result, those who searched were more likely to find because the others were not looking at all. The renunciation is motivated by one of Chekhov’s characters through the argument of insufficient time, when Dorn says, «I am fifty years old. It’s too late to change my life” (*The Seagull*, Act II, p. 40).

Results

The theme of luck is a vast theme. This research relates only to a few of the existing scientific approaches and investigations on the subject, and the references used have been selected in relation to the general purpose: to refute or confirm the idea that the actor can influence his luck by assuming his intuitions. In the research methods we used the comparison of scientific perspectives with ideas revealed by the analysis of dramatic texts. However, it should be borne in mind that in the analysis of the dramatic text, two tricks were used: we started from the presumption that the characters, when talking about luck, tell the truth, and we selected only those examples where the word “luck” actually appears, leaving aside the cases in which the word *luck* is not directly used. Moreover, it is possible that the selected examples are only part of the lines of Chekhov’s characters where the word “luck” appears. Taking into account the mentioned details, a first result is that the explanations of the notion of “luck”, presented in dictionaries, partially capture the meanings of the word. When we use the word «luck» we can refer to multiple meanings, among which: *chance, future, fate, destiny*. It depends on how we relate to the definition. The interest in the ideas of *luck, chance* and *destiny* seems to be experiencing a simultaneous ascent with the development of technology.

Luck was observed as insightful luck, not random or dumb luck. Through action, the actor positions himself to gain something. From a philosophical perspective, the concept of moral luck indicated that we are willing to judge others by reference to the principle of control, but the concept is not stable in all contexts of moral judgment. The idea of luck is viewed in relation to the idea of control: something good happens to someone outside of his control. Defining the notion of luck contains terms such as accidental, chance, lack of control, and it is not a simple idea, some authors believe. From a psychological point of view, the term is approached on the path of causal explanations: *Why does something happen*. When success is not perceived as having an internal cause, it is attributed to an external cause. Each language captures specific nuances of the term. Some opinions indicate *luck* and *chance* as different notions. Some authors attribute luck to the person, and the chance is viewed in relation to the environment or refers to

the event or outcome. Research shows that people relate to the notion of *chance* as being the same for everyone, while *luck* depends on each person. From research in the field of psychology it also follows that a person who is lucky, is lucky several times. The idea of luck is connected to comparison. People compare the situation *to what could have happened worse than that* and come to the conclusion that *they were lucky*. The initial advantage shows that a person can be considered lucky, when in fact he is the beneficiary of a hidden advantage or a sum of advantages—the Matthew Effect. “People don’t rise from nothing,” Gladwell argues, people deemed extraordinary have access to an extraordinary range of opportunities. Unlike the unlucky, lucky people are skilled at creating and noticing opportunities, making happy decisions based on intuition, having positive expectations and having a resistance attitude, thanks to which they manage to turn bad luck into luck, believes Wiseman (2003, p. 3). Luck seems to be maintained through positive attitude and self-actions.

Conclusions

In chess, for each colour, there are 20 possibilities at the first move, on the second move there are 400 possibilities, and on the sixth move, the possibilities exceed 100 million. Each choice opens up a huge number of other possible options, and the result cannot be predicted. In a television series, the main character says that it is not necessary to know all the possible results, but that “you just have to be able to anticipate your opponent” (*Mr. Robot*, s. 2, ep. 4, min. 52). If in chess the best solution is impossible to calculate, then what can be done in the matter of luck? As in the series, the question for the actor could be: what to do when the opponent is yourself? What to do when your own decisions open up a lot of other possible options and everything seems to influence luck? The phrase “you make your own luck” seems to illustrate the essence of this idea. If we look at luck as an exterior element, the pressure of responsibility for our own luck decreases. *We are not responsible for what we cannot control* – proposes the Control Principle. But luck regarded as possible to be influenced by one’s own actions offers solutions in the face of the roulette of destiny. *The man who can influence his luck through action and attitude* – it is more than a seductive idea: it indicates concrete solutions validated by science.

For the actor, relating to the idea of luck as a set of actions he can do, seems to be a more tender positioning than that of luck as a gift, favour of fate. Instead of waiting for fate to decide his luck, the actor can choose to act towards his luck. In achieving success, the actor could use the vehicle of luck if he sees it as accessible through his own actions.

Looking at luck in this way, the solution could lie in the details that can be known and can be controlled, but because there is no guarantee of the result,

are ignored. Someone decides that today they should not look for a parking space because they did not find one yesterday or two days ago. Relating to a negative experience narrows your chances. Not only is it useless, but it is harmful. Therefore, when the opponent is yourself, an action in support of potentiating your own chances would be to relate to the present. In the matter of luck, it seems that negative experience does not matter. It's about opening up to the opportunities that might arise. The positive attitude, the resistance, the willingness to try every time as if it's the first time – seem to be defining elements for generating luck – regardless of the exact meaning to which everyone chooses to relate. In generating his luck, the actor could be the beneficiary of a hidden advantage: his own intuition, trained through work for the stage and on stage. The actor constantly makes new decisions under the pressure of the present moment, using his intuition because the number of rehearsals never gives the guarantee of the result on stage. The actor's training and willingness to be vulnerable to the unknown could be his hidden advantages, also useful in generating his own luck. The actor has the advantage of an intuition trained for years. He is constantly working with information attributed to his intuition, the existence of which has been scientifically proven.

If luck can be influenced by the open attitude in the face of the unknown, by resilience, by the willingness to continuously try, by the ability to not give up – by one's own actions, then intuition, or the magical guide within the actor, could regulate the right extent of the actor's actions in the matter of luck. It seems reasonable to assume that there are cases when intuition might point to just actions, towards the generation of luck, but the mind in constant need of rational explanations might object.

If luck could be generated strictly on the basis of rational decisions, then winning the lottery would depend on mathematical calculations. The question of the luck of the actor is not whether luck arises or not, whether it can influence him or not, but whether the actor is willing to listen to his intuition and have the courage of the actions suggested by the intuition. The willingness to listen to the unknown, through the voice of intuition, could decide the luck of the actor. If “fortune favours the brave” and “you make your own luck”, then it could be interpreted that the measure of personal luck could be decided by the quality of one's own actions, and the quality of one's own actions could be regulated by assuming your own intuition – *making your own luck* – and courage – *the audacity* – to follow them to the end.

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Alina Suărășan is a graduate of the “I.L. Caragiale” National University of Theatre and Film in Bucharest, the Art of the Actor department (MA in 2014, BA in 2012). In 2022 she defended her doctoral thesis titled: “The Work of the Actor with Himself and On the Role. Working Instruments”, the theme of the research being the self-awareness of the actor. In 2019 she was invited, in residence, to the Urban Nation Museum in Berlin, where she realized the “My Berlin” project. In 2017, she won the contest organized by the Theatre of Playwrights of Bucharest with the play *Margo*. She currently works as a screenwriter, playwright and copywriter (www.alisu.ro).