

Encyclopedia of
Language and Education
Series Editor: Stephen May

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Stanton Wortham · Deoksoon Kim
Stephen May *Editors*

Discourse and Education

Third Edition

 Springer

Encyclopedia of Language and Education

Series Editor

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In this third, fully revised edition, the 10 volume *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* offers the newest developments, including an entirely new volume of research and scholarly content, essential to the field of language teaching and learning in the age of globalization. In the selection of topics and contributors, the Encyclopedia reflects the depth of disciplinary knowledge, breadth of interdisciplinary perspective, and diversity of sociogeographic experience in the language and education field. Throughout, there is an inclusion of contributions from non-English speaking and non-Western parts of the world, providing truly global coverage. Furthermore, the authors have sought to integrate these voices fully into the whole, rather than as special cases or international perspectives in separate sections. The Encyclopedia is a necessary reference set for every university and college library in the world that serves a faculty or school of education, as well as being highly relevant to the fields of applied and socio-linguistics. The publication of this work charts the further deepening and broadening of the field of language and education since the publication of the first edition of the Encyclopedia in 1997 and the second edition in 2008.

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Discourse and Education

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With 8 Figures and 5 Tables

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Editor in Chief's Introduction to the "Encyclopedia of Language and Education"

This is one of ten volumes of the *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* published by Springer. The *Encyclopedia* – now in this, its third edition – is undoubtedly the benchmark reference text in its field. It was first published in 1997 under the general editorship of the late David Corson and comprised eight volumes, each focused on a single, substantive topic in language and education. These included language policy and political issues in education; literacy; oral discourse and education; second language education, bilingual education, knowledge about language, language testing and assessment, and research methods in language and education.

In his introductory remarks, David made the case for the timeliness of an overarching, state-of-the-art review of the language and education field. He argued that the publication of the *Encyclopedia* reflected both the internationalism and interdisciplinarity of those engaged in the academic analysis of language and education, confirmed the maturity and cohesion of the field, and highlighted the significance of the questions addressed within its remit. Contributors across the first edition's eight volumes came from every continent and from over 40 countries. This perhaps explains the subsequent impact and reach of that first edition – although no one (except, perhaps, the publisher!) quite predicted its extent. The *Encyclopedia* was awarded a Choice Outstanding Academic Title Award by the American Library Association and was read widely by scholars and students alike around the globe.

In 2008, the second edition of the *Encyclopedia* was published under the general editorship of Nancy Hornberger. It grew to ten volumes as Nancy continued to build upon the reach and influence of the *Encyclopedia*. A particular priority in the second edition was the continued expansion of contributing scholars from contexts outside of English-speaking and/or developed contexts, as well as the more effective thematic integration of their regional concerns across the *Encyclopedia* as a whole. The second edition also foregrounded key developments in the language and education field over the previous decade, introducing two new volumes on language socialization and language ecology.

This third edition continues both the legacy and significance of the previous editions of the *Encyclopedia*. A further decade on, it consolidates, reflects, and expands (upon) the key issues in the field of language education. As with its predecessors, it overviews in substantive contributions of approximately 5000

words each, the historical development, current developments and challenges, and future directions, of a wide range of topics in language and education. The geographical focus and location of its authors, all chosen as experts in their respective topic areas, also continues to expand, as the *Encyclopedia* aims to provide the most representative international overview of the field to date.

To this end, some additional changes have been made. The emergence over the last decade of "superdiversity" as a topic of major concern in sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and language education is now a major thread across all volumes – exploring the implications for language and education of rapidly changing processes of migration and transmigration in this late capitalist, globalized world. This interest in superdiversity foregrounds the burgeoning and rapidly complexifying uses of language(s), along with their concomitant deconstruction and (re)modification, across the globe, particularly (but not exclusively) in large urban environments. The allied emergence of multilingualism as an essential area of study – challenging the long-held normative ascendancy of monolingualism in relation to language acquisition, use, teaching, and learning – is similarly highlighted throughout all ten volumes, as are their pedagogical consequences (most notably, perhaps, in relation to translanguaging). This "multilingual turn" is reflected, in particular, in changes in title to two existing volumes: *Bilingual and Multilingual Education* and *Language Awareness, Bilingualism and Multilingualism* (previously, *Bilingual Education* and *Language Awareness*, respectively).

As for the composition of the volumes, while ten volumes remain overall, the *Language Ecology* volume in the second edition was not included in the current edition, although many of its chapter contributions have been reincorporated and/or reworked across other volumes, particularly in light of the more recent developments in superdiversity and multilingualism, as just outlined. (And, of course, the important contribution of the *Language Ecology* volume, with Angela Creese and the late Peter Martin as principal editors, remains available as part of the second edition.) Instead, this current edition has included a new volume on *Language, Education and Technology*, with Steven Thorne as principal editor. While widely discussed across the various volumes in the second edition, the prominence and rapidity of developments over the last decade in academic discussions that address technology, new media, virtual environments, and multimodality, along with their wider social and educational implications, simply demanded a dedicated volume.

And speaking of multimodality, a new, essential feature of the current edition of the *Encyclopedia* is its multiplatform format. You can access individual chapters from any volume electronically, you can read individual volumes electronically and/or in print, and, of course, for libraries, the ten volumes of the *Encyclopedia* still constitute an indispensable overarching electronic and/or print resource.

As you might expect, bringing together ten volumes and over 325 individual chapter contributions has been a monumental task, which began for me at least in 2013 when, at Nancy Hornberger's invitation, Springer first approached me about the Editor-in-Chief role. All that has been accomplished since would simply not have occurred, however, without support from a range of key sources. First, to Nancy Hornberger, who, having somehow convinced me to take on the role, graciously

agreed to be Consulting Editor for the third edition of the *Encyclopedia*, providing advice, guidance, and review support throughout.

The international and interdisciplinary strengths of the *Encyclopedia* continue to be foregrounded in the wider topic and review expertise of its editorial advisory board, with several members having had direct associations with previous editions of the *Encyclopedia* in various capacities. My thanks to Suresh Canagarajah, William Cope, Viv Edwards, Rainer Enrique Hamel, Eli Hinkel, Francis Hult, Nkonko Kamwangamalu, Gregory Kamwendo, Claire Kramersch, Constant Leung, Li Wei, Luis Enrique Lopez, Marilyn Martin-Jones, Bonny Norton, Tope Omoniyi, Alastair Pennycook, Bernard Spolsky, Lionel Wee, and Jane Zuengler for their academic and collegial support.

The role of volume editor is, of course, a central one in shaping, updating, revising, and, in some cases, resituating specific topic areas. The third edition of the *Encyclopedia* is a mix of existing volume editors from the previous edition (Cenoz, Duff, King, Shohamy, Street, Van Deusen-Scholl), new principal volume editors (García, Kim, Lin, McCarty, Thorne, Wortham), and new coeditors (Lai, Or). As principal editor of *Language Policy and Political Issues in Education*, Teresa McCarty brings to the volume her longstanding interests in language policy, language education, and linguistic anthropology, arising from her work in Native American language education and Indigenous education internationally. For *Literacies and Language Education*, Brian Street brings a background in social and cultural anthropology, and critical literacy, drawing on his work in Britain, Iran, and around the globe. As principal editors of *Discourse and Education*, Stanton Wortham has research expertise in discourse analysis, linguistic anthropology, identity and learning, narrative self-construction and the new Latino diaspora, while Deoksoon Kim's research has focused on language learning and literacy education, and instructional technology in second language learning and teacher education. For *Second and Foreign Language Education*, Nelleke Van Deusen-Scholl has academic interests in linguistics and sociolinguistics and has worked primarily in the Netherlands and the United States. As principal editors of *Bilingual and Multilingual Education*, Ofelia García and Angel Lin bring to the volume their internationally recognized expertise in bilingual and multilingual education, including their pioneering contributions to translanguaging, along with their own work in North America and Southeast Asia. Jasone Cenoz and Durk Gorter, principal editors of *Language Awareness, Bilingualism and Multilingualism*, bring to their volume their international expertise in language awareness, bilingual and multilingual education, linguistic landscape, and translanguaging, along with their work in the Basque Country and the Netherlands. Principal editor of *Language Testing and Assessment*, Elana Shohamy, is an applied linguist with interests in critical language policy, language testing and measurement, and linguistic landscape research, with her own work focused primarily on Israel and the United States. For *Language Socialization*, Patricia Duff has interests in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics and has worked primarily in North America, East Asia, and Central Europe. For *Language, Education and Technology*, Steven Thorne's research interests include second language acquisition, new media and online gaming environments, and

theoretical and empirical investigations of language, interactivity, and development, with his work focused primarily in the United States and Europe. And for *Research Methods in Language and Education*, principal editor, Kendall King, has research interests in sociolinguistics and educational linguistics, particularly with respect to Indigenous language education, with work in Ecuador, Sweden, and the United States. Finally, as Editor-in-Chief, I bring my interdisciplinary background in the sociology of language, sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and educational linguistics, with particular interests in language policy, Indigenous language education, and bilingual education, along with my own work in New Zealand, North America, and the UK/Europe.

In addition to the above, my thanks go to Yi-Ju Lai, coeditor with Kendall King, and Iair Or, coeditor with Elana Shohamy. Also to Lincoln Dam, who as Editorial Assistant was an essential support to me as Editor-in-Chief and who worked closely with volume editors and Springer staff throughout the process to ensure both its timeliness and its smooth functioning (at least, to the degree possible, given the complexities involved in this multiyear project). And, of course, my thanks too to the approximately 400 chapter contributors, who have provided the substantive content across the ten volumes of the *Encyclopedia* and who hail from every continent in the world and from over 50 countries.

What this all indicates is that the *Encyclopedia* is, without doubt, not only a major academic endeavor, dependent on the academic expertise and goodwill of all its contributors, but also still demonstrably at the cutting edge of developments in the field of language and education. It is an essential reference for every university and college library around the world that serves a faculty or school of education and is an important allied reference for those working in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics. The *Encyclopedia* also continues to aim to speak to a prospective readership that is avowedly multinational and to do so as unambiguously as possible. Its ten volumes highlight its comprehensiveness, while the individual volumes provide the discrete, in-depth analysis necessary for exploring specific topic areas. These state-of-the-art volumes also thus offer highly authoritative course textbooks in the areas suggested by their titles.

This third edition of the *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* continues to showcase the central role of language as both vehicle and mediator of educational processes, along with the pedagogical implications therein. This is all the more important, given the rapid demographic and technological changes we face in this increasingly globalized world and, inevitably, by extension, in education. But the cutting-edge contributions within this *Encyclopedia* also, crucially, always situate these developments within their historical context, providing a necessary *diachronic* analytical framework with which to examine *critically* the language and education field. Maintaining this sense of historicity and critical reflexivity, while embracing the latest developments in our field, is indeed precisely what sets this *Encyclopedia* apart.

Volume Editors' Introduction to "Discourse and Education"

A discursive approach to language and education examines educational language use in social context. Some aspects of linguistic meaning are decontextualized, encoded in grammatical categories, but most of what we communicate to each other through language is only intelligible through knowledge of and participation in heterogeneous social contexts. Potentially relevant contexts include momentary interactional configurations, individual dispositions, local practices, and enduring patterns of social organization. When we study "discourse," we study how speakers use language to accomplish social action, presupposing and creating contextual norms, practices, and relationships as they do so.

"Education" is the process of facilitating human development through organized activities. Schooling is a historically recent, institutionalized form of education, one which has become pervasive and influential for almost all individuals and societies. Both schooling and other forms of education are mediated in significant part through discourse, because virtually all participants in educational activities communicate through language. This volume describes current research on how discursive processes of various kinds influence educational participants' experiences, trajectories, and outcomes. If we can understand how language use mobilizes social contexts and processes as it facilitates educational communication, we can better understand and improve educational practices.

The volume has three sections. "Traditions in Discourse and Education" contains chapters on several intellectual traditions in the study of discourse that have become important to educational research – including linguistic anthropology, conversation analysis, systemic functional linguistics, critical discourse analysis, and interactional sociolinguistics. Because discourse has been such a productive concept, we could have included other traditions. But space limitations and contingent factors constrained the list. The six chapters in this first section nonetheless introduce most of the concepts crucial to understanding discourse and education. The second section, "Discourse, Power and Identities," contains chapters that explore how widespread, macrosocial ideologies and structures influence and are constituted by language use in educational contexts. Many of these chapters attend to interactional processes and pedagogical goals as well, but they focus on how discourse facilitates and constrains social identities and power relations. The third section, "Discourse, Pedagogy and Learning," contains chapters that emphasize pedagogical goals,

exploring how discourse facilitates and impedes learning in various contexts and subject areas. Most of these chapters also attend to power and identity, but they focus on teaching and learning. Almost every chapter mentions all three areas – traditions in discourse and education, power and identities, and pedagogy and learning. But chapters tend to focus on one or another area.

"Discourse" has been defined in various ways, and the term indexes different scholarly traditions and commitments. The contributors to this volume represent a range of perspectives, but they generally agree on four core claims about language use in educational activities. First, we must attend to language use in practice, not merely to language as a decontextualized code or to denotational messages apart from social contexts of use. Second, in order to understand language use in practice both participants and analysts attend to various local and enduring social contexts that extend beyond the speech event itself. Third, these relevant contexts are not stable but include heterogeneous resources that change over time and across social spaces. Fourth, human learning and development are constituted through complex systems of social activity and cannot be reduced to individual, interactional, or macrosocial processes in isolation. This introduction has four main parts, each elaborating one of these core claims and describing how various chapters deploy them. Every chapter presupposes more than one of the claims, so we only mention each chapter where its contribution is particularly salient.

Chapters vary in how much they focus on one or more of the four claims. The chapters also review research done in different regions of the world and different types of educational settings. We have brought together this diverse set of review chapters for two purposes. First, we intend to illustrate how various traditions have contributed to the four core claims about discourse and education. A range of scholars, from diverse intellectual, geographical, and institutional locations, have been producing related bodies of work that share key commitments. It would be useful for participants in this sometimes disparate group to be more aware of their collective accomplishment building allied approaches to discourse and education. Second, we intend to illustrate how the core claims have been applied to various educational processes and national contexts, with interestingly varied results. Those who work in these allied traditions, and others, can use the volume to learn about relevant work that might enrich their own perspectives.

Language Use in Practice

A discursive perspective draws on systematic linguistic study of language structure and meaning, as well as cognitive and psycholinguistic accounts of language meaning. But it uses these tools, along with others, to study a more complex object: the use of language to accomplish meaningful action in social context (Duranti 1997). Marx (1867/1986) and Vygotsky (1934/1987) apply the concept "unit of analysis" to social scientific problems. In their account, an adequate approach to any phenomenon must find the right unit of analysis – one that preserves the essential features of the whole. In order to study water, a scientist must not break the substance

down below the level of an individual H₂O molecule. Water is made up of nothing but hydrogen and oxygen, but studying hydrogen and oxygen separately will not illuminate the essential properties of water. Similarly, meaningful language use requires a unit of analysis that includes aspects beyond phonology, grammar, semantics, and mental representations. All of these linguistic and psychological factors play a role in linguistic communication, but natural language use also involves social action in a context that includes other actors and socially significant regularities.

The chapters in the first section of the volume review various traditions in anthropology, sociology, and linguistics that have developed this insight about the relevant unit of analysis for studying discourse. *Christie* draws on systemic functional linguistics, citing Halliday's (1978) seminal argument that language structure can only be understood if we treat language as a means for accomplishing social action – always including cognitive, relational, and textual functions. *Green and Joo* draw on interactional sociolinguistics (Gumperz 1982), an approach that combines sociolinguistics with linguistic anthropology to describe how meaningful language use depends in part on social and cultural categories from the broader context. *Kunitz and Markee* draw on ethnomethodology and conversation analysis (Garfinkel 1967; Sacks et al. 1974), traditions that have uncovered intricate social organization that speakers and hearers create as they interact with each other. *Rogers* draws on critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 2013), a tradition that combines critical social theory with close attention to how language use presupposes and reinscribes asymmetrical social relations. *Wortham and Perrino* draw on linguistic anthropology (Hymes 1974; Silverstein 1976, 2003), an approach that combines systematic semiotic analysis with attention to the social positions and ideologies inevitably mobilized in language use. These traditions differ in various ways, but they agree that any event of speaking must be understood as a complex unit that involves speakers and hearers as actors within social contexts.

Every tradition has an origin myth and an account of the predecessor that had to be overthrown. The core insight about language use in practice developed over the past half century, emerging from earlier models that treated linguistic meaning as a matter of decoding and semantic inference. According to these models – often associated with Saussurean linguistics and traditional cognitive psychology – language has one function, to communicate denotational information, and it accomplishes this function as the hearer decodes information sent by the speaker. Working against this view, Austin (1956), Jakobson (1957), Searle (1969), and others established that language in use has multiple functions, including the accomplishment of social action – and that communicating denotational information is itself a type of social action. Garfinkel (1967), Silverstein (1976), Sperber and Wilson (1986), and others established that understanding language in use requires inference. Instead of decoding a symbol that has stable meaning across contexts, participants infer from relevant context what signs mean in specific contexts of use.

This last point is often described in terms of "indexicality." Indexical signs point to potentially relevant context (Peirce 1934). Participants must first infer which potentially relevant context is in fact being presupposed by the indexicals in an

utterance and then infer from relevant context what function the utterance has (Silverstein 1992). In their chapter, *Kunitz and Markee* provide an insightful, extended account of how educational language use signals relevant context. *Valencia Giraldo* draws on Gumperz' (1982) account of contextualization cues to describe how teachers and students identify relevant contexts and make sense of classroom discourse. *Wortham and Perrino* provide a systematic overview of how educational language use becomes meaningful in practice, with the concept of indexicality central to their linguistic anthropological account.

Each of the four core claims has methodological implications, and chapters in the volume describe some of the methodological innovations and challenges that come along with recognition of that claim. For the first claim, about language use in practice, the methodological implications are clear and substantial: instead of just examining native speaker intuitions, or individual mental representations, research on educational discourse must also gather data on interactional processes as well as both local and broader social contexts. This presents obvious logistical challenges, as researchers must identify potentially relevant contexts and observe them. *Luk* describes how we cannot study language use in practice by using only external, decontextualized coding schemes. She sketches how researchers need to study dynamic, contested identities and contexts. *Reyes and Wortham* describe a new unit of analysis for studies of educational discourse: pathways of connected events, across which learning, social identification, and other social actions take shape. Instead of studying just discrete events and more enduring social patterns, they argue that one crucial type of relevant context is what Agha (2007) calls a "speech chain" – a series of events linked by a focal idea, object, or person. Adequate empirical studies of language in use must gather data from several events across relevant chains.

Local and Enduring Contexts

In order to study language use in practice, research on educational discourse must examine more than the speech event itself. It is crucial to consider the social action being accomplished in discursive events. But the meaningfulness of language use always presupposes information and activity that extends beyond the event of speaking itself (Goffman 1981). *Kunitz and Markee* discuss this issue in detail. Drawing on conversation analysis, they argue convincingly that analysts should not bring contextual information from presupposed theories into an analysis without systematic empirical evidence that the participants themselves orient to those contexts as relevant. But they also acknowledge that participants themselves always orient to some broader contexts that become crucial to the meaningfulness of language use in practice.

Over the past half century, research on educational discourse has focused on several different types of contexts that turn out to be relevant to many educational processes. The first involves macrosocial regularities, including institutions, ideologies, and identities (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Bowles and Gintis 1976; Foucault

1975). Educational discourse becomes meaningful against the background of macrosocial contexts, as participants presuppose and enact widely entrenched positions and categories. As mentioned above, the chapter by *Rogers* presents an overview of critical discourse analysis, a tradition that studies how macrosocial processes of various kinds manifest in and are accomplished through discourse. *Heller and McLaughlin* provide a comprehensive overview of how social reproduction is accomplished through language use, reviewing how discursive interaction in various educational contexts reinscribes hierarchical relationships.

Several other chapters review how educational discourse presupposes and helps accomplish macrosocial regularities. *Hjörne and Säljö* describe how educators sometimes use medical and psychiatric categories to label and marginalize students, especially those from certain social groups. *Sauntson* – in her useful chapter on the new research area of discourse, sexuality, and education – describes the use of homophobic language and bullying of gender nonnormative students in schools. She also reviews work on the naturalization of heterosexuality through educational discourse and the stigmatization of other sexual identities. *Mortimer* describes how national language policies can have coercive effects, shaping educational experiences for students and teachers. *Chimbutane* describes the use of indigenous languages in colonial and postcolonial African schools. The Portuguese colonial powers treated indigenous languages as threats, trying to eliminate them from schooling and encourage assimilation. But after independence the situation has not turned around. Despite some recent movement toward bilingual education, the hegemony of Portuguese continues.

In response to early work on the importance of macrosocial contexts in understanding educational discourse, many researchers began to emphasize how enduring regularities sometimes do not appear as expected (Erickson and Shultz 1982; Garfinkel 1967; Goffman 1981). Social regularities have to be produced in practice, and sometimes they are subverted or transformed in discursive interaction (Butler 1990). Various contributors to the volume review research that illustrates this important point. *Luk* describes how hybridity and subversion occur as student and teacher identities are produced in classroom discourse, such that social positioning does not always occur in predictable ways. *Hult* distinguishes between “policy-as-text” and “policy-as-discourse,” insightfully analyzing how language policies are enacted in practice, often in ways unexpected by policymakers. *Lytra* shows how discursive meaning can be interactionally achieved during verbal play, in which learners accomplish both social and cognitive actions while engaged in often-overlooked types of events.

After research on discursive interaction established the importance of both macrosocial processes and the unexpected transformation of these processes in local contexts, some theorists developed approaches that included both (Erickson 2004; Giddens 1984). According to such accounts, macrosocial regularities are reinscribed and sometimes transformed in everyday interaction. Educational discourse does presuppose and tend to reproduce widely distributed ideologies, habits, and practices. But regularities must be produced continuously, and sometimes local actions or projects can change them (Levinson et al. 1996). This sort of account is

sometimes called a "macro-micro dialectic" or a "dialectic between structure and agency," and it has influenced much work on discourse and education.

In her account of sexual identities in schools, for example, *Sauntson* emphasizes not only established heterosexist ideologies and structures but also the construction of sometimes fluid and contingent identities in schools. *Heller and McLaughlin* also examine creativity and resistance against macrosocial regularities, although they describe how resistance is often subverted by domination in the end. *Christie* describes how the systemic functional linguistic approach to genre distinguishes between the "context of situation" and the "context of culture" (Martin 1985), exploring interrelations between established regularities and situational contingencies. *Hjörne and Säljö* describe how categorization of students is accomplished in practice, analyzing how the interplay of discursive activity with institutionalized practices and constraints shapes learners' experiences and outcomes. *Rogers* describes how critical discourse analysis connects critical analysis of society to the production of local discursive events. She usefully sketches different kinds of approaches, some more micro, some more macro, and some balanced.

In recent years, accounts of discourse have begun to move beyond macro and micro (Wortham 2012). Holland and Lave (2001) describe the importance of contentious practice, an arena of social activity that cannot be reduced to enduring struggles or to individual actions and identities. Lemke (2000) describes the multiple timescales at which potentially relevant processes occur, arguing that cross-timescale relations cannot be presupposed but must be explored for each individual case. Agha (2007) describes how chains of linked speech events form the basic unit of language and social relations, and he demonstrates that these chains have varied historical duration and spatial extent such that they cannot be reduced to two levels like macro-micro or structure-agency. Wortham (2012; Wortham and Rhodes 2013) argues that we must go beyond macro and micro to examine heterogeneous relevant resources from multiple scales. Different configurations of resources will be relevant to understanding different focal objects, such that there can be no general theory of resources that will always be relevant to discourse and education.

Wortham and Perrino provide a general framework for understanding discourse in educational settings, one that includes language use in discursive interaction, more widespread language ideologies, and circulation across varying scales. *Mortimer* argues that work in discourse and education must move beyond "structure" and "agency" to a more complex account. She describes how contemporary work in language policy productively examines "layered" scales and their interrelations, as well as speech chains and the recontextualization of signs across linked contexts. *Reyes and Wortham* focus specifically on pathways across linked discursive events, describing how social patterns emerge and transform as signs, individuals, habits, and ideas move across chains of events. *Hult* uses Scollon and Scollon's (2004) "nexus analysis," an approach to considering heterogeneous resources from across scales that become relevant to phenomena in discourse and education.

The need to consider both local and more enduring contexts in any adequate analysis of educational discourse has clear methodological implications. Researchers must determine which of many potentially relevant types of contexts need to be

considered. This is a complex process that cannot be addressed solely through methodological techniques. It requires both theoretical assumptions to guide analysts' attention and empirical inquiry to determine which resources play a role in the focal case. Wortham and Reyes (2015) provide a systematic approach to discourse analysis that addresses this problem. *Kunitz and Markee* provide an overview, from the more micro-level perspective of conversation analysis, of how researchers can find more enduring contexts relevant to specific cases. *Green and Joo* provide a useful historical overview of ethnographic research in discourse and education, and they provide guidelines for how to use ethnographic methods to uncover relevant scales.

Heterogeneous Resources in Motion

In order to study language use in practice, one must take into account various contexts. These contexts are not discrete, bounded sets of objects and processes. Instead, the contexts relevant to meaningful discourse include heterogeneous resources that emerge over interactional and historical time. Contemporary accounts of "culture" illustrate the trend away from theories that posit bounded, homogeneous groups. Early conceptions of culture, and dominant folk conceptions today, imagine cultures and other social groups as sets of people who share a location and have practices and beliefs in common. This emphasis on commonality and homogeneity has been challenged by contemporary accounts of globalization (Appadurai 1996), with newer work attending to the movement of people, ideas, and objects across boundaries and the mixing of heterogeneous people, ideas, and practices within previously established boundaries (Hall 2002; Lukose 2009). Today, we study culture in motion (Urban 2001).

Many chapters in the volume draw on this contemporary movement toward conceptualizing social contexts as heterogeneous and changing. *Spotti and Kroon* provide a strong argument against monoglottal ideologies and a comprehensive account of how multilingualism is the norm in times of globalization and "super-diversity." *Chimbutane* agrees that multilingualism and codeswitching are standard in Africa and much of the contemporary world, describing how most educational settings involve "translanguaging" and "polylinguaging" despite ideological attempts to erase this multiplicity. Like *Chimbutane*, *Valencia Giraldo* also explores the role of globalization and resulting heterogeneity in the global South. *Kim and Vorobel* describe how discourse communities facilitate complex, hybrid identities in the contemporary world, especially as social media create broader, more diverse networks and positions.

In addition to emphasizing the motion and hybridity of culture, contemporary accounts also describe heterogeneous repertoires and networks. The contextual resources that make meaningful discourse possible are related in complex and contingent ways, provisionally organized into networks that shift across space and time (Latour 2005). The social world cannot be analyzed as a set of stable structures with predictable relationships, because relevant resources come together into

networks that differ across times and places. Rymes (2014) describes this diversity in terms of heterogeneous "communicative repertoires." From her perspective each member of a group has somewhat different habits, ideas, and capacities, and discourse involves improvisation to align divergent tendencies even for members of the "same" group. Education then becomes the expansion of heterogeneous repertoires.

Spotti and Kroon provide a comprehensive sociolinguistic account of repertoires and apply this concept to understand educational discourse in times of superdiversity. *Nielsen and Davies* make a compelling argument that gender is more "multiple and mobile" than previously thought. They describe a complex "matrix" of structures, materialities, bodies, discourses, identities, practices, desires, and power – a heterogeneous set of resources used to produce gender differently across situations. *Luk* describes how new media are allowing social identities to become more complex and heterogeneous. *Kelly* provides an account of science itself as repertoires of discursive practices, offering a useful way to reconceptualize disciplines. *Moje* describes how schools contain many ways of knowing, believing, and valuing, drawn both from home and from school. She criticizes simple accounts of "home" and "school" discourses that assume there exist just these two separate domains. Instead, she examines how multiple discourses from various domains intersect, and she studies how educators' ideologies about discourses can influence their character. She also makes the useful point that simple "hybrids" of home and school discourses may not be educationally desirable.

The heterogeneous, emergent character of the resources that make educational discourse meaningful and effective has particular methodological implications. Researchers cannot always look in the same places for crucial data, because a context central to one process might be irrelevant to another. Instead, they must follow crucial people, signs, and objects across the pathways they travel, tracing the networks of resources relevant to a focal object. *Reyes and Wortham* describe how to do this in discourse analysis, following objects across pathways of linked events. *Nielsen and Davies* describe how more comparative and longitudinal studies are needed to analyze heterogeneous, emergent phenomena. *Kim and Vorobel* describe how new media data require an interdisciplinary, hybrid methodological approach. They explore difficulties encountered when studying distributed, heterogeneous, shifting environments, and they sketch possible solutions.

Learning Embedded in Systems

Research on discourse and education is centrally concerned with how language use reproduces and creates social groups, but work in this tradition also studies learning. Many of the contributors to this volume are deeply concerned to facilitate student learning and teacher development. For example, *Chimbutane* works to improve language teaching and bilingual education, *Hardman and Hardman* work on the pedagogical promise of dialogue, *Jackson and Nieman* work to help teachers facilitate students' deeper understandings of math, *Kelly* works to improve scientific

communication, *Spotti and Kroon* are concerned to help educators see multilingualism as an educational resource, *Valencia Giraldo* works to facilitate student learning from talk and texts, *Gardner and Yaacob* work on how pretend play can facilitate early childhood cognitive and social development, *Fisher* works as a researcher and teacher educator to facilitate second language acquisition, and *Moje* works to improve literacy in science and language arts.

Because they work on discourse, on social action in context, all the contributors to this volume see learning as something more complex than what Shweder (1991) calls "the lone thinker" – the traditional cognitivist view of humans as individual central processing mechanisms that follow universal procedures to think, even though they might operate on variable cultural contents. Some chapters in the volume move beyond this to a more complex cognitivist, Piagetian view, in which knowledge is constructed by individuals as part of action, often stimulated by interactions with others (Piaget 1954). *Fisher* gives a nuanced analysis of how learner and teacher beliefs shape their behavior. She explores the central role metaphor plays for teachers who serve immigrant students and for immigrant students' second language acquisition. *Gardner and Yaacob* review Piagetian studies on the importance of peer interaction in the individual construction of knowledge through pretend play, as well as Vygotskian studies of how more experienced others can scaffold early childhood development. *Boxer and Zhu* provide a useful overview of both psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic approaches to second language acquisition, systematically laying out the different questions addressed and approaches taken, and showing the contributions made by both traditions.

Other chapters take a largely Vygotskian approach, describing how cultural tools are deployed in educational discourse to facilitate learning. *Hardman and Hardman* apply sociocultural theory to analyze classroom discussions where teachers guide students. Using the Vygotskian concept "zone of proximal development," they explore how dialogue among teachers and students can facilitate intramental functioning and individual development through scaffolding. *Moje* draws on a contemporary extension of Vygotskian research – the concept "funds of knowledge" (Gonzalez, Moll and Amanti 2005) – describing how this concept can help educators facilitate student learning in social and cultural contexts.

The most complex and adequate contemporary account of learning comes from cultural-historical activity theory (Cole 1996; Leont'ev 1978; Engeström 1999). This approach describes how learning is embedded in and constituted through systems of resources drawn from multiple scales. *Jackson and Nieman* adopt such an approach to describe the role of discourse in mathematics learning. On their account, the teaching and learning of math is a fundamentally social phenomenon, involving multimodal ways of communicating that are embedded in social practices. *Kelly* presents science itself as composed of activity systems, and he explores the "intellectual ecology" of the classroom as a space constituted by various social practices. *Kim and Vorobel* describe the technologically mediated discourse communities made possible by social media, showing how multimodal tools deployed in these communities contribute to formal and informal learning. *Lytra* describes how

learning can be facilitated through playful talk, outside of official school discourse, with resources provided by unofficial discursive practices making essential contributions.

Methodologically, this more complex account of learning requires researchers to gather data from various contexts and activities. *Kelly* describes some of the methodological challenges created when searching for relevant information in various modalities and across diverse spaces. *Boxer and Zhu* describe the methodological difficulties confronted when documenting second language acquisition amidst the complexity of heterogeneous settings that vary along multiple dimensions. *Valencia Giraldo* argues that methodological eclecticism is needed and should be valued when studying learning in contemporary environments. Researchers must draw appropriate methodological approaches from across traditions in order to gather sufficient information on the heterogeneous systems relevant to learning.

Conclusions

It can be analytically useful to separate the four core claims made by contemporary work on discourse and education, as we have done in this introduction, but in actual language use they always interrelate. In order to study the social and cognitive functions accomplished through educational discourse we must analyze **language use in practice**, and this requires attention to **local and enduring contexts** that provide **heterogeneous resources in motion**. The fourth claim, **learning embedded in systems**, might seem separate, but it is not. Discourse in educational settings simultaneously accomplishes social processes that include ideologies, social identities, power relations, and enduring struggles, while also facilitating academic and informal learning that involves argument and evidence. These social and cognitive processes may appear to be separate and "purified" (Latour 1991). But in fact, they are woven into each other (Wortham 2006). A full account of discourse and education must engage all four claims.

The field of discourse and education has an opportunity to explore further the implications of its convergence on these four claims. Work from various traditions has converged on emergent, heterogeneous, and dynamic networks of relevant resources, as researchers work toward more adequate accounts of how educational discourse accomplishes social and cognitive functions. But we do not yet know exactly how these four claims work together or whether we are still missing important insights. Further empirical work is needed to explore whether this framework illuminates discursive action in various national contexts and institutional settings. And further conceptual work is needed to clarify how these claims interrelate. Several chapters review conceptual and empirical work that is beginning to do this.

Bakhtin (1981) claims that all sociohistorical contexts have both "centripetal" and "centrifugal" forces. Centripetal forces push for systematization and centralization. Developing one account of discourse and education, like one centered on the four claims, is centripetal. This can be a useful exercise, as these claims have substantial

empirical and theoretical backing. But Bakhtin shows us that centrifugal forces are not only omnipresent but also productive. The diversity of perspectives represented in this volume reminds us that both the world and our accounts of it change across space and time. There cannot be one best account of the human world, because that world is multifaceted and emergent. We should apply our account of heterogeneous, dynamic networks to our own field of discourse and education. Conceptual resources like the four claims can be useful in many contexts, but we must remain open to a more diverse set of resources as the field moves forward.

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Part I

Traditions in Discourse and Education

Linguistic Anthropology of Education

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Abstract

This entry reviews recent research in the linguistic anthropology of education, a subfield within linguistic anthropology. Educational processes are always mediated through language, and anthropologists have for decades studied how language and culture operate in various types of educational processes. Theories and methods from linguistic anthropology have been applied to educational activities and institutions in ways that illuminate how education accomplishes both academic and social ends. This work has not only expanded our understanding of education but also provided important insights into processes of broad anthropological concern.

Keywords

Classroom discourse • Discourse analysis • Language ideologies • Linguistic anthropology • Speech event

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This chapter describes the subfield of linguistic anthropology and reviews linguistic anthropological research on education. Linguistic anthropologists study how language use presupposes and creates social relations in cultural context. Social and cultural processes, including educational ones, are mediated in significant part by language, and systematic study of language use enriches our understanding of them. Theories and methods from linguistic anthropology have been productively applied to educational processes for the past four decades (Cazden et al. 1972; Wortham and Rymes 2003). Linguistic anthropological approaches to language use have enriched our accounts of educational processes, and the reverse is also true. Educational institutions have always made important contributions to social, cultural, and linguistic processes that are of central concern to sociolinguists, anthropologists, and researchers in other disciplines, and linguistic anthropological study of education has illuminated these processes of broader concern.

Linguistic Anthropology of Education

Almost all education is mediated by language use. When educators and students speak and write, they communicate not only about the subject matter they are learning but also about their affiliations with social groups both inside and outside the speech event. These affiliations, some of which are created in educational events and institutions, can influence how students learn subject matter and shape their life trajectories. Educational researchers explore how educational language use presupposes and transforms social relations and how educational actions are influenced by ideologies about language and social personhood. Linguistic anthropologists provide theories and methods for studying these processes. This chapter focuses on events and practices in and around educational institutions, not on “informal” education – although that is a worthwhile topic in its own right. Schools contribute significantly to the creation of social relations, and it is productive to consider how language is used in educational institutions to do social work.

The Total Linguistic Fact: Form, Use, Ideology, and Domain

This chapter explores linguistic anthropological work on educational institutions and school-related practices, organized around the four aspects of what Silverstein (1985) calls the “total linguistic fact:” linguistic form, use, ideology, and domain. We use these four aspects as an organizing principle to explore linguistic anthropological work that has enriched our understanding of educational processes and to show how the linguistic anthropology of education can illuminate processes of concern to social scientists more broadly. While we explore these principles in distinct sections, in practice they cannot be separated – all language use involves forms, in use, as construed by ideologies and as part of a history of use as forms and ideologies move across events.

Linguistic anthropologists use linguists' accounts of phonological and grammatical categories, thus studying language form, but they are not primarily interested in how linguistic forms have meaning apart from contexts of use. Rather, they study how linguistic signs come to have both referential and relational meaning as they are used in social and cultural context. The meaning of any linguistic sign in use cannot be determined by decontextualized rules, whether phonological, grammatical, or cultural. No matter how robust the relevant regularities, language users often deploy signs in unpredictable yet meaningful ways. Linguistic anthropologists study how language comes to have sometimes-unexpected meanings in use. As important as local contexts are, however, the meaning of any linguistic sign cannot be understood without also attending to more widely circulating models of the social world. Linguistic anthropologists describe these models as language ideologies – models of linguistic signs and the people who characteristically use them, which others employ to understand the social relations signaled through language use. Ideologies are not evenly distributed across social space but have a domain – the set of people who recognize the indexical link between a type of sign and the relevant ideology (Agha 2007; Agha and Wortham 2005). Linguistic anthropologists study how linguistic signs and models of language and social relations move from event to event, across time and across social space, and how such movement contributes to historical change.

Form

A linguistic sign gets part of its meaning from the systematic distribution of the sign with respect to other signs. Linguists describe these distributional patterns in terms of phonological regularities and grammatical categories. “Form” refers to this fraction of meaning, which pertains independent of context. Analysis of linguistic form has helped linguistic anthropologists illuminate ways that speakers use linguistic regularities to engage in such social phenomena as the construction of identities and the production of authoritative knowledge.

Eckert (2000), for example, uses both ethnographic and quantitative sociolinguistic methods to study English language use among students in a suburban American high school. Her statistical analyses show how gender and socioeconomic class correlate with the use of phonological variants (e.g., the raising of the vowel /ay/ in words like “mine”). By tracing the intersection between gender- and class-based variants and students' peer groups, she explains how systematic differences in phonology help construct the school version of a middle-class/working-class split – the “jock”/“burnout” distinction – as well as gendered models of personhood that involve “sluttiness,” aggressive masculinity and other features. Eckert shows how individual students use these phonological variants to navigate relationships and construct identities.

Mendoza-Denton (2007) describes both linguistic and nonlinguistic signs that Latina youth gang members use to distinguish themselves from mainstream peers and from each other. She attends to systematic variation in linguistic form

(e.g., between Chicano English and Standard English varieties), together with other modalities such as paralinguistic features, dress, tattoos, and makeup, as she describes youth positioning themselves both within and against larger American society. Alim (2004) describes style shifting by African American youth as they adjust phonological variants, grammatical categories, and discourse markers according to their interlocutors' social positions. For example, he illustrates how young African Americans employ a broad range of copula absence (e.g., "she late" instead of "she is late"), a core feature of African American English, depending upon the interlocutor's race, gender, and knowledge of hip-hop culture. He explores how youth use such forms to navigate prevalent models of race and changing socioeconomic conditions in gentrifying areas of the USA. Thus, Eckert, Mendoza-Denton, and Alim extend Labov's variationist sociolinguistics, embedding his systematic study of phonological regularities and grammatical categories within ethnographies and exploring the creative positioning that youth do through language and other sign systems.

Other linguistic anthropologists have analyzed language form in order to study the production of scientific knowledge in schools. Viechnicki and Kuipers (2006) describe grammatical and discursive resources through which middle-school students and their science teachers objectify experience as scientific fact. In particular, they explore how teachers and students use tense and aspect shifts, syntactic parallelism, and nominalization to remove experiences from their immediate circumstances and recontextualize them in an epistemologically authoritative scientific framework, moving from concrete experiences to universal, experience-distant formulations.

Use

Phonological and grammatical regularities are crucial tools for linguistic anthropological analyses, but rules of grammatically correct (or culturally appropriate) usage do not fully explain how people use language to accomplish meaningful action in practice. Analyses of language use often err by attending mainly to decontextualized grammatical, pragmatic, or cultural patterns, disregarding how linguistic signs come to have sometimes-unexpected meanings in particular contexts. Silverstein (1992) provides a systematic account of how signs presuppose and create social relations in context. "Context" is indefinitely large, and language use only makes sense as participants and analysts identify certain aspects of context as relevant. Relevant context emerges as participants engage in two processes that Silverstein calls "contextualization" – through which signs come to have meaning as they index relevant aspects of the context – and "entextualization" – through which segments of interaction emerge and cohere as recognizable events. Cultural knowledge is crucial to interpreting language use, but we can interpret linguistic signs only by examining how utterances are contextualized and entextualized in practice, sometimes in non-normative ways.

Erickson and Schultz (1982) study the "organized improvisation" that occurs in conversations between academic counselors and students from nonmainstream

backgrounds. They do not argue simply that nonmainstream students and mainstream counselors experience a mismatch of styles, resulting in counselors' misjudgments about students. They show how counselors and students use various resources to create, override, resist, and defuse such mismatches. Nonmainstream students often experience disadvantage because of their nonstandard habits of speaking and because of mainstream counselors' assumptions about what they sometimes construe as deficits, but such disadvantage does not happen simply through a clash of static styles. Erickson and Schultz find that "situationally emergent identity" explains more about the outcome of a gatekeeping encounter than does demographically fixed identity, and they analyze how speakers use social and cultural resources both to reproduce and to overcome disadvantage.

Citing the shifting and globalizing contexts of English language learning in the UK, Rampton (2005) focuses on the hybrid, emergent identities created as students navigate social relations. He describes language "crossing" in urban, multiethnic groups of adolescents, as white, South Asian, and Caribbean youth mix features of Panjabi, Caribbean Creole, Stylized Asian English, and Standard English. Crossing is a discursive strategy in which diverse youth contest and create relations around race, ethnicity, and youth culture. In related work on language in use, focusing on peer-group discourse as a resource for learning English as a second language in various schools in Arizona, Farnsworth (2012) demonstrates that multiethnic groups of children interacting with peers outside the classroom (at home or at parties) acquire better proficiency in English than children exposed to learning only in front of the classroom. As students solve practical problems through chitchat, they can build linguistic resources in English through unofficial learning.

Much other work in the linguistic anthropology of education attends closely to creativity and indeterminacy in language use. He (2003), for instance, shows how Chinese heritage language teachers often use three-part "moralized directives" to control disruptive behavior, but she also analyzes how teachers and students sometimes transform these directives as they construct particular stances in context. Rymes (2010, 2014) introduces the notion of a "communicative repertoire," referring to the different ways speakers use language and paralinguistic resources to communicate with the diverse communities in which they participate. A repertoire is the set of linguistic resources that an individual controls, allowing him or her to communicate appropriately in a range of situations. Rymes applies this notion to education to describe the varieties of backgrounds and experiences that students bring into the classroom. This perspective challenges the notion of a classroom itself, as classrooms become "affinity spaces and sites of participatory culture rather than top-down authoritarian regimes of standardized knowledge" (Rymes 2014, p. 9). The goal of education, on her account, is to expand students' repertoires, allowing them to communicate appropriately in as broad a range of contexts as possible.

In order to study how social relations are established through educational language use, one must attend to the sometimes-unexpected ways that educators and students position themselves with respect to both established and emerging repertoires and models of identity. Because educational institutions are important sites for

the reproduction and transformation of social identities, this linguistic anthropological work on creative educational language use addresses broader anthropological concerns about how both established and unexpected social regularities emerge in practice.

Ideology

Two types of cultural and linguistic knowledge work together to produce meaningful language use in practice. Participants and analysts must know what linguistic and paralinguistic signs index, and they must be familiar with types of events and the types of people who characteristically use particular signs. All work on language in use attends, explicitly or tacitly, to the second type of knowledge – to more widely distributed social and cultural patterns that form the background against which both routine and innovative usage occurs. Language users rely on models that link types of linguistic forms with the types of people who stereotypically use them, even when the model is deployed in unexpected ways or transformed in practice. These models of typical language use are often called “language ideologies.” Any adequate account of language use must include language ideologies and describe how they become salient in particular situations.

Language ideology has been an important concept in the linguistic anthropology of education, because schools are important sites for establishing associations between “educated” and “uneducated,” “sophisticated” and “unsophisticated,” “official” and “vernacular” language use and types of students. Language ideologies thus help explain how schools move students toward diverse social locations, and linguistic anthropological work on these processes can illuminate on how socially stratified individuals are produced. Careful analysis of individuals’ use of linguistic resources across contexts can provide analysts, educators, and students greater awareness about the fit between language and context.

Jaffe (1999) uses the concept of language ideology to trace the policies and practices involved in the recent revitalization of Corsican, in the French-dominated school system on the island. She describes an essentialist ideology that values French as the language of logic and civilization, another essentialist ideology that values Corsican as the language of nationalism and ethnic pride, as well as a less essentialist ideology that embraces the use of multiple languages and multiple identities. Her analyses show how schools are a central site of struggle among these ideologies – with some trying to maintain the centrality of French in the curriculum, some favoring Corsican language revitalization, and others wanting some Corsican in the schools but resisting a new “standard” Corsican as the language of schooling. Jaffe (2013) has recently developed this notion further by exploring how students’ communicative competence is heavily influenced by a “polynomic principle,” in which several dialectal varieties are involved. Although teachers support the use of several Corsican varieties in the classroom, students who are not fully competent in all these varieties sometimes experience tension, disarray, and exclusion.

Bucholtz (2001) and Kiesling (2001) use the concept of language ideology to explore peer relations and ethnic stereotypes among white Americans. Bucholtz (2001) shows how many white high school students adopt aspects of Black English Vernacular (BEV) and thereby mark themselves as “cool.” She describes how “nerds” reject coolness and mark this rejection by refusing to adopt any features of BEV. Nerds even use what Bucholtz calls “superstandard” English, which includes careful attention to schooled articulation, grammar, and lexis even when most people speak less formally. More recently, Bucholtz (2011) has explored ideologies about race talk and whiteness in narratives produced by students at a school in California. She describes how white youths’ ideologies of reverse discrimination could restructure the official racial ideology at this school, one supposedly based on respect for multicultural diversity. Kiesling (2001) describes the speech of white middle-class fraternity brothers, exploring how racially linked features of their speech serve interactional functions and reproduce social hierarchies. He shows how fraternity members assert intellectual or economic superiority over each other by marking interlocutors as metaphorically “black.” He also shows how they assert physical prowess over each other by speaking like black men and inhabiting a stereotype of physical masculinity. In her work on racialized language, Chun (2011) explores students’ sociocultural practice of reading race, the explicit labeling of people using racial terminology, in a multiethnic high school in Texas. She shows how students produce commentaries linked to ideologies of “racial authenticity.” Chun demonstrates the importance of schools as sites where racialized language is not a static concept but instead a negotiated and dynamic process.

Stocker (2003) and Berkley (2001) apply the concept of language ideology to educational situations outside of Europe and North America. Stocker (2003) describes a monolingual Spanish-speaking group in Costa Rica that is believed to speak a stigmatized dialect – despite the fact that their speech is not linguistically distinguishable from their neighbors’ – because they live on an artificially bounded “reservation” and are perceived as “indigenous.” She shows how high school language instruction reinforces this ideology. Berkley (2001) describes adult Mayan speakers at school learning to write “authentic” local stories in their language. He shows how this brings two ideologies into conflict – an ideology of literacy as cognitive skill that emphasizes the authority of the young female teacher, and a traditional ideology that presents older men as empowered to tell stories on behalf of others.

Heller (1999) and Blommaert (2014) describe language planning and education within multilingual nation states. They analyze how state and institutional language policies differentially position diverse populations. Heller (1999) studies how French Canadians’ arguments for ethnic and linguistic legitimacy have shifted over the past few decades. Before globalization, French Canadians proclaimed the authenticity of their culture and asserted their rights as a minority group in Canada. In recent years, however, they emphasize the benefit of French as an international language. This shift in models of “Frenchness” has changed the value of various French Canadians, with bilinguals now valued more than monolinguals and Standard French valued more than vernaculars. Heller explores how a French language

high school in Anglophone Ontario handles the resulting tensions between standard and vernacular French and between French and English. Blommaert (2014) describes how the Tanzanian state has used language planning for nation building, trying to make a common nation out of a multilingual society by establishing Swahili as the primary language of government and education. In the process, language planners both deliberately and inadvertently created “symbolic hierarchies,” making some types of speakers sound more authoritative.

Domain

Work on language ideology shows how language in use both shapes and is shaped by more enduring social relations. We must not, however, cast this as a simple two-part process – sometimes called the “micro-macro dialectic” – in which events create structures and structures are created in events. Agha (2007) provides a useful alternative conceptualization. He argues that all language ideologies, all models that link linguistic features with typifications of people and events, have a domain. They are recognized only by a subset of any linguistic community, and this subset changes as signs and models move across space and time. There is no one “macro” set of models or ideologies, universal to a group. Instead, there are models that move across domains ranging from pairs, to local groups, all the way up to global language communities. In analyzing language and social life, we must describe various relevant resources – models drawn from different spatial and temporal scales – that facilitate a phenomenon of interest, and we must describe how models move across events (Agha 2007; Wortham 2012). Instead of focusing only on speech events, or simply connecting micro-level events to macro-level structures, we must investigate the many scales of social organization relevant to understanding language in use. We must also follow the chains or trajectories across which individuals, signs, and ideologies move.

Wortham and Rhodes (2013) move beyond the misleading “macro-micro” dichotomy to examine how social identities are constituted across pathways of events. They analyze how the social identification of a Mexican immigrant to the USA is constituted as people use resources from various temporal and spatial scales. In their study of “untracking” as an educational reform, Mehan et al. (1996) go beyond a simple combination of local events and “macro” patterns. They explore various realms that influence “at-risk” students’ school success. Mehan and his colleagues describe how resources from many spatial and temporal scales facilitate or impede students’ academic success. Similarly, Barton and Hamilton (2005) attend to various “middle” scales that exist between micro and macro, exploring the multiple, changing groups relevant to language and social identities and following the trajectories that individuals and texts take across contexts.

Collins (2012) uses the concept of sociolinguistic scales to analyze language pluralism and identity conflicts among Latino migrant schoolchildren in upstate New York. He describes multilingual repertoires in classroom settings, the acceptance and rejection of bilingual or multilingual students, as well as their inclusion

and exclusion in classroom interactions. In his research on diasporic Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in India, Lempert (2012, p. 138) approaches scale as an “emergent dimension of sociospatial practice in educational institutions” rather than relying on preexisting scalar distinctions like macro and micro. He analyzes how the dynamics of scalar practice facilitate the construction of “educated persons” in these monasteries. Reyes (2013) analyzes the use of corporate names as personal nicknames in a multiracial Asian American supplementary school. She traces the creation and stability of nicknames across “emblematic” scales: short scales, such as quick interactional moments; intermediate scales, such as a semester; and longer scales, such as a decade across which corporate brands and social stereotypes can emerge.

Wortham (2006) describes months-long trajectories across which students’ identities emerge in one ninth-grade urban classroom. He traces the development of local models for the several student types one might be in this classroom, showing how distinctive gendered models emerge. These local models both draw on and transform more widely circulating ones, and they are used in sometimes-unexpected ways in particular classroom events. The analysis follows two students across the academic year, showing how their identities emerge as speakers transform widely circulating models of race and gender into local models of appropriate and inappropriate studenthood and as teachers and students contest these identities in particular interactions. Similarly, Bartlett (2007) follows one immigrant student’s trajectory across several classroom contexts and over many months, exploring how she positions herself with respect to local models of school success. Bartlett describes how the student’s local identity stabilized, as she kept herself from being acquired by the deficit model often applied to language minority students and instead became “successful” in the school’s terms.

Systematic work on what Agha (2007) calls domain, and on the trajectories across which signs and ideologies move, has emerged only recently. In contrast, research on form, use, and ideology – aspects of the total linguistic fact that allow us to treat the speech event as the focal unit of analysis – has been occurring for decades. It has become clear, however, that we cannot fully understand how language constitutes social relations unless we move beyond the lone speech event and attend to domains and trajectories. Even the most sophisticated analyses of linguistic forms, in use, with respect to ideologies, fail to capture how ways of speaking, models of language and social life, and individual identities emerge across events. New linguistic anthropological work on domains and trajectories in educational institutions will show how schools play important roles in the emergence of social relations across various timescales.

Conclusions

Linguistic anthropologists study linguistic forms, in use, as construed by ideologies, as those forms and language ideologies move across speech events. Linguistic anthropological research on education illuminates educational processes and shows how language and education contribute to processes of broad anthropological

concern. Educational language use produces social groups, sanctions official identities, differentially values those groups and identities, and sometimes creates hybrid identities and unexpected social types. Linguistic anthropological accounts of how these processes occur can enrich both educational and anthropological research.

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Understanding the Fuzzy Borders of Context in Conversation Analysis and Ethnography

Silvia Kunitz and Numa Markee

Abstract

Context is one of the most difficult and contentious issues in the disciplines that study language and social interaction. While, from a historical point of view, it is possible to situate ethnographic and conversation analytic ideas about context in the different intellectual traditions of anthropology and ethnomethodological sociology, the originally sharp contrasts between these disciplines' analytic treatments of context have become increasingly more nuanced. Furthermore, a compelling argument can be made within conversation analysis that the traditionally rather narrow conceptualization of context that is often used in analyses of ordinary conversation often needs to be expanded in institutional contexts of talk. In this chapter, we trace early developments in work on context and review major contributions to this important topic within the study of language and social interaction. Next we sketch out current work in progress, identify key problems and difficulties, and finally identify future directions for language educators and applied linguists to explore as we seek to understand this singularly difficult construct that underlies so many of our disciplinary endeavors.

Keywords

Context • Conversation analysis • Ethnography • Multimodality

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Introduction

Context is one of the most contentious issues in the disciplines that study language and social interaction, including sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, ethnography of communication, (critical) discourse analysis, ethnomethodology (EM), and conversation analysis (CA), to name the most obvious. Not only is there no widely accepted definition of context but other equally controversial constructs – for example, culture and intentionality – often bleed into already heated discussions of context. And while, from a historical point of view, it is possible to situate ethnographic and conversation analytic ideas about context in the different intellectual traditions of anthropology and ethnomethodological sociology, the originally sharp contrasts between ethnographic and conversation analytic treatments of context have become increasingly dissolved into a more nuanced palette of infinite shades of gray as CA has influenced anthropology and has, in turn, itself been influenced by anthropology (Clemente 2013). Furthermore, a compelling argument can be made within CA that the traditionally narrow conceptualization of context that is often used in analyses of ordinary conversation (the mundane chitchat that occurs among friends or acquaintances) often needs to be expanded in institutional contexts of talk such as doctor-patient communication, classroom talk, or courtroom talk.

In this chapter, we trace early developments in work on context and review major contributions to this important topic within the study of language and social interaction. Next we sketch out current work in progress, identify key problems and difficulties, and finally outline future directions for language educators and applied linguists to explore as we seek to understand this singularly difficult construct that underlies so many of our disciplinary endeavors.

Early Developments

In the modern era, two publications in particular are foundational to any discussion of context. These are Gumperz and Hymes (1972) and Hymes (1974), who laid the foundations for an ethnographic understanding of context. More specifically, the SPEAKING model developed by Hymes (1974) integrates eight components of speech events that collectively amount to a description of the ethnographic context

of communication.¹ These components include both etic (i.e., researcher-relevant) and emic (i.e., participant-relevant) information about the *setting* and *scene*, *participants*, *ends*, *act* sequence, *key*, *instrumentalities*, *norms*, and *genre* of (primarily) a spoken language.

Specifically, *setting* and *scene* are related though nonetheless distinct constructs: *setting* is an etic specification of the time and place within which a speech event occurs, while *scene* is a cultural definition of a particular social event or occasion. *Participants* include all the people who are directly or indirectly involved in a speech event. *Ends* have to do with the goals and outcomes of a given speech event. More specifically, goals concern participants' interpretations of what a particular actor intends to mean, while outcomes have to do with whether participants' behaviors, beliefs, attitudes or knowledge undergo some sort of change. *Act sequences* entail how individual speech acts (such as advising, complaining, or inviting) are put together into longer stretches of talk known as speech events. Examples of speech events include telephone calls, political speeches, or doctor's appointments, in which a naturally bounded piece of oral discourse is normatively organized in such a way that it "hangs together" in empirically observable ways. *Key* is concerned with matters of tone, manner, or indeed the spirit in through which some particular speech act is accomplished. Classic examples of this notion include participants' use and recognition of sarcasm, wit, or irony. *Instrumentality* specifies the channels of communication (e.g., spoken versus written language) that are used during the accomplishment of speech events in a broad range of language varieties. *Norms* stipulate the underlying practices that enable talk to happen in an orderly fashion. So, for example, the underlying machineries of turn taking, repair, and sequence organization (see discussion in Sidnell and Stivers 2013) are emically normative in that conversationalists observably orient to them as they take turns, fix problems, and organize long stretches of talk in real time with remarkable precision. Finally, the last component in Hymes' model is *genre*. In the technical sense of this word, genres are things like menus, stories, or jokes, i.e., more or less extended pieces of discourse that have particular formal characteristics that enable us to recognize whatever is being accomplished as a particular kind of talk (or writing). So, for example, all jokes have punch lines, which are the most important formal characteristic that makes jokes designedly, and recognizably, funny.

Major Contributions

Hymes' ethnographic SPEAKING model (suitably updated in some respects) undoubtedly still represents the dominant view of context today, particularly in applied linguistics and education (see Markee 2015, for discussion). However, there is no widely accepted definition of what context is (Goodwin and Duranti 1992).

¹For a lengthier discussion of Hymes' ideas on context, and a good review of European ideas on this construct from a critical discourse analysis perspective, see Young (2009).

The best that we can do, it seems, is to think about context in terms of a figure-ground relationship that distinguishes between what is focal and what is peripheral to understanding a particular piece of talk. But even this modest formulation of context does not tell us how to develop a principled methodology for deciding which particular aspect(s) of context may legitimately be used to interpret what happens at a particular moment in a particular conversation. This statement of the problem owes much to the work of Garfinkel (1967) (see also Markee 2011 for how this issue has been taken up in CA work within applied linguistics) in EM and Schegloff (1987, 1991, 1997) in CA on how context should be understood.

Very briefly, CA is the most important offshoot of EM, an innovative form of sociology that emerged in the 1960s which was concerned with developing a theory of social action that was grounded in participants' commonsense understandings of their own everyday lives. While EM and CA have diverged rather significantly in recent years (see the 2008 special issue of the *Journal of Pragmatics* on EM and CA treatments of context), the radically emic perspective that was pioneered by Harold Garfinkel is still a distinctive aspect of CA work.

How so? We have already seen that ethnographic notions of context are quite broad. In contrast, the CA view of context is very narrow. Specifically, on Schegloff's purist view, talk-in-interaction is simultaneously (and without contradiction) *context-free* and *context dependent*. It is context-free in that the underlying machineries of turn taking, repair, sequence organization, etc. observably operate independently of a priori *exogenous* (talk external) factors such as the age, sex, or identities of participants (to name just a few of the ethnographic variables that are often claimed to structure talk). At the same time, talk is highly context dependent in that the meaning of a particular turn (i.e., the social action being performed in that turn) crucially depends on what is said in the *previous* and the *following* turns. So, from this *endogenous* (talk internal) perspective, participants display to each other (and therefore also to analysts) how they use this highly dynamic, emerging, and locally managed version of context to make sense of each others' talk on a moment-by-moment basis. In other words, in CA, context is not something that exists a priori, outside talk itself. It is, rather, a quintessentially co-constructed phenomenon that reflexively shapes and is shaped by social action.

Now, this is not to say that exogenous features of context are *never* admissible in CA. When analyzing institutional talk in particular, researchers who are not members of the specific institution they are studying may need background information about how that institution works *before* they can understand the specifically institutional characteristics of the talk that occurs in that institutional setting. So, for example, Heritage and Sefi (1992) usefully begin their CA account of advice giving by British nurses who are visiting new mothers in their homes by providing background information about how this activity is part of a service that is routinely provided through the UK's National Health Service.

Now, in the analysis of ordinary conversation, the Schegloffian version of CA is much stricter in terms of invoking exogenous context, but there are nonetheless some limited exceptions even within this purist approach to CA. If, for example, participants observably orient to a particular feature of exogenous context (such as

ethnic identity) in their own talk, then we have a well-grounded warrant as analysts to invoke that feature in our technical analyses of what the participants are doing *in* and through *their* talk because *the participants themselves have talked this matter into relevance*. That is, in purist CA's radically emic approach to data analysis, researchers can invoke an exogenous contextual feature if and only if participants orient to the relevance of such feature, thereby making it procedurally consequential for their actions. In conclusion, purist CA respecifies the notion of context as the endogenous sequential environment of a turn at talk and as "publicly displayed orientations to social structure" (Kasper 2006, p. 305).

Clearly, ethnographic and CA versions of context are quite different, and this fundamental difference has led to a heated debate, which is unlikely to be settled anytime soon. A key actor in this debate has been the anthropologist Michael Moerman, who in two seminal publications has highlighted both the tremendous methodological power of CA methods and also, arguably, their fundamental weakness. Moerman (1977) is a brilliant cross-linguistic replication of Schegloff et al. (1977) work on the preference organization of repair in English using Tai materials. Specifically, Moerman demonstrates that, despite their great typological differences, English and Tai speakers' repair practices are in fact identical. In addition, this paper is also a compelling call by a highly respected anthropologist directed at disciplinary colleagues to appropriate CA methods in their ethnographies of cultures that are very different from those of the English-speaking world. Finally, this paper was hugely influential in terms of launching a comparative, cross-linguistic research agenda designed to investigate the possibility that CA's initially English-based findings about how speakers achieve a broad range of social actions might actually have *universal* implications for how people conduct their daily lives in and through language (see Sidnell 2009).

However, just as importantly, Moerman's (1988) book *Talking Culture* simultaneously celebrates CA's methodological rigor but also castigates it for its excessively technical specification of context, and especially for its narrow conceptualization of culture, which of course is what anthropology is all about. For this reason, Moerman advocates a methodological synthesis of CA and cultural anthropology that would result in a "culturally contexted conversation analysis" of data. In this approach, CA's methods (focusing on the loci of actions) are supplemented with insights drawn from ethnography (focusing on the material conditions and on the meanings of the actions being performed). On Moerman's reading, it is the combination of CA with ethnography that allows researchers to fully understand the multilayered richness of peoples' everyday lives. This book was so important that it led to a 1990/1991 special issue of the journal *Research on Language and Social Interaction* that was devoted to assessing the influence of Moerman's book on both CA and anthropology.

In many ways, the debate sparked by Moerman's book continues unabated today. However, it seems that, at least in the analysis of institutional talk, some consensus has been achieved on the necessary use of ethnographic information in workplace studies based on video data. According to Mondada (2013), this line of research has demonstrated how ethnographic fieldwork can be done within an EM/CA

perspective. Specifically, in settings that are unfamiliar to analysts, ethnographic observations can constitute a form of proto-analysis that allows the identification of “relevant activities in situ” (p. 4). In addition, such information may also be consequential for the most effective positioning of recording equipment.

Work in Progress

Now, what are the analytical and methodological implications of the debate over context for the analysis of educational settings? We illustrate the issue with some data. Excerpt 1 comes from the institutional setting of planning sessions, where college level students of Italian as a foreign language plan for a group presentation on Italian dining habits; the students also agree to serve some food at the end of the presentation.

The fragment picks up the talk as John² suggests that they do not cook all the courses of an Italian meal.

Excerpt 1

1 JOHN: >this way we don't have to cook.=
 2 =i think there is< like [nine?
 3 [((looks at Mary))
 4 (0.4)
 5 [((Mary nods))
 6 JOHN: [((looks at Lucy))
 7 [°different [like° (0.8)
 8 [((Lucy starts looking up))
 9 [types of=
 10 [((looks at Mary))
 11 MARY: =okay.
 12 (0.7)
 13 LUCY: (but/about)
 14 JOHN: stages of the meal?
 15 MARY: °mh mh.°
 16 JOHN: so: if you wanna [start out,]
 17 LUCY: [°it's a] lo:t:°
 18 JOHN: s:- (.) YEAH. >i don't [think] we wanna< (0.2)
 19 LUCY? [()]
 20 JOHN: [cook ni:ne.]=
 21 MARY: [(right.)]=

²All the participants' names are pseudonyms to protect the students' identities.

22 [((Lucy starts flipping pages of her notebook))
 23 JOHN: [(>it takes forever.<)]

... ((14 lines omitted))

37 LUCY: i'm sure i wrote it do:wn. (i think so.)
 38 (0.2)
 39 MARY: ↑i think ↑i did too actually.
 40 [(1.5)
 41 [((Mary opens her notebook, Lucy flips pages))
 42 MARY: or at least maybe some of them;
 43 (0.5)
 44 JOHN: what are you guys looking for?
 45 (0.5)
 46 MARY: uh:m. i think i remember talking, (.) like briefly
 47 about this.
 48 (0.5)
 49 LUCY: someone (0.3) di:d like (1.3)
 50 rec[ently?]
 51 MARY: [alright.] i have (0.4)
 52 [((reading))
 53 [ci sono molte porta°ti°. (.) uhm (0.2)
 [there are many cour°ses°. (.) uhm (0.2)
 54 per esempio, (0.6)
 for example, (0.6)
 55 antipasto, (0.3) primo, (0.2)
 appetizer, (0.3) first course, (0.2)
 56 [((all the coparticipants look at Mary's notebook))
 57 [secondo, (0.3)
 [second course, (0.3)
 58 formaggio, (0.2) frutto, (0.3) dolce.
 cheese, (0.2) fruit, (0.3) dessert.
 59 (0.6) u:hm (.) caffè: (0.3)
 (0.6) u:hm (.) coffee: (0.3)
 60 and=uh (.) [(and- (.) ammazzaca]ffé.
 [li]quor.
 61 LUCY: [°after the meal?°]
 62 (0.2)
 63 MARY: yeah.

The delivery of *i think there is like nine?* (line 2) displays John's uncertainty over the number of courses: through upward intonation and gaze direction (toward Mary, line 3), he solicits Mary's help. However, Mary does not immediately provide a relevant response (line 4). Right before Mary starts nodding (line 5), John turns to look at Lucy (line 6) and continues with the delivery of his turn. At this point, Lucy starts looking up (line 8); by diverting her gaze from the coparticipants, Lucy

displays that she is thinking (Goodwin and Goodwin 1986). Note that, so far, neither Mary nor Lucy has confirmed that the actual number of courses is nine. However, John orients to nine as the actual number as he says *>i don't think we wanna <(0.2) cook ni:ne* (lines 18 and 20). Lucy then starts flipping through the pages of her notebook. Once John and Mary have agreed on the fact that they could make a dessert for the presentation (lines omitted), Lucy says: *i'm sure i wrote it do:wn. (i think so.)* (line 37). Mary immediately aligns with Lucy by saying *↑i think ↑i did too actually* (line 39); she then opens her notebook, starts flipping through its pages (line 41) and adds: *or at least maybe some of them;* (line 42). Mary's actions display understanding of Lucy's actions, while John requests a clarification (*what are you guys looking for*, line 44). Mary then reports that she remembers *talkin, (.) like briefly about this* (lines 46–47), while Lucy refers to someone who *di:d like (1.3) recently?* (lines 49–50). The two women's actions become clear once Mary reads aloud what she has found in her notes: the list of the courses in an Italian meal. By appealing to the authority of Mary's notes, the matter is finally settled: all the courses are listed; there are eight of them.

In summary, the analysis has shown how the participants orient to their learning experience (and specifically to the content covered in the classroom) through their own embodied actions: the mere action of flipping through the pages of a notebook constitutes a search for some relevant content that, as becomes apparent through the participants' talk, was covered by someone at an earlier time. The exogenous context of prior classroom interaction is thus made observably relevant by the participants themselves in and through their talk; from a strict CA perspective, it is therefore legitimate to invoke this information in the analysis of these data.

Problems and Difficulties

The analysis we have just offered differs markedly from analyses developed by researchers who work within, for example, an ethnographically based practice theory framework. For instance, Young (2014) assumes *on the basis of a priori theory* that the sociohistorical background of teachers and learners *must* have an impact on classroom interaction, which leads him to argue that it is necessary for classroom researchers to go “beyond the transcript” if we are ever to capture the full complexity of classroom talk.

Now, we are sympathetic to Young's aim of capturing the immense richness of classroom talk. We are also willing to concede that (1) CA typically avoids going beyond the data represented in the transcript as a matter of methodological principle and, (2) for many people, this stance represents an unnecessarily narrow perspective on context. However, we must point out that practice theory inevitably runs into major methodological problems because it has no clear guidelines for selecting which specific aspects of a potentially huge list of contextual factors are truly relevant to a particular piece of talk, which makes the risk of false-positives quite high.

As suggested in the introduction, given the interpenetration between the two disciplines, it would be simplistic to cast the debate over context as a straightforward ethnography versus CA debate. Furthermore, the originally highly polemical nature of the debate has given way to a more nuanced search for common ground. For present purposes, therefore, we will concentrate on discussing the limits of so-called “sequential” purism (McHoul et al. 2008, p. 43) within CA. Ultimately, the issue raised in this article boils down to this question: can sequential purism actually be that pure? As Arminen (2000) and Maynard (2003) have pointed out, analysts working on ordinary conversation routinely draw on their everyday, commonsense (i.e., *members’*) knowledge of their own language communities. That is, some degree of ethnographic understanding is always used, whether tacitly or overtly. Specifically, Arminen (2000) argues that part of the analysts’ “context-sensitive knowledge” (p. 436) relies on two sources of information: (1) prior instances of talk and (2) the background knowledge and beliefs that may inform the participants’ actions. These sources of contextual knowledge may allow analysts to understand what is made relevant by the participants in their sense-making and action-designing practices in a way that a sequential analysis alone may not be able to reveal. That is, analysts may need talk-extrinsic knowledge to understand the “internal to the setting relevancies” (Schegloff 1987, p. 219) to which the participants orient. However, accomplishing the task of *empirically demonstrating* the relevance of such ethnographic knowledge to the participants and its procedural consequentiality for their actions is often an extremely difficult thing to do well.

In conclusion, we contend that, particularly in the context of institutional talk, some level of ethnographic information might indeed be necessary to answer the *why that now* question that lies at the heart of any CA analysis. Analysts, however, are always presented with the challenge of making sense of such information *in the participants’ own terms*, given their demonstrably observable actions, leaving aside both intention-based accounts of such actions and etic (i.e., researcher-relevant) interpretations. Thus, achieving a balance between the risk of a superficial, insufficiently informed analysis (Arminen 2000) and the risk of over-interpreting data is not an easy task. Perhaps the most principled way of engaging with this problem within CA is for analysts to exhaust all of the possibilities of sequential purism before any recourse is made to ethnographic data, *if such data turn out to be necessary*. But this is an empirical, not a theoretical, issue, which must always be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Future Directions

We now delineate some future research directions that might be of interest for language educators and applied linguists. First of all, we wish to illustrate the challenge posed by new types of data, such as recordings of videoconferencing encounters, an emerging object of investigation (see Heath and Luff 1992; Licoppe and Morel 2012). With these data, it is particularly difficult to identify the resources to which participants orient within the ecology of their interactional setting. To

illustrate the problem, let us consider two frame grabs from a videoconferencing class between a hearing teacher, Vera, and a hearing-impaired student, Milena.

Figure 1 shows what appears on Vera’s screen: a file with Milena’s homework (on the left), video images of Milena (in the bigger frame) and Vera (top right), the chat exchange (center right), and the white box where Vera types (bottom right). The question is: what are the resources that the two participants share? They can both see each other and read the chat. However, they have access only to the final written product the coparticipant is typing. Moreover, a coparticipant might be attending to features that are not visible to the other (e.g., windows or files open on one’s screen, artifacts in the surrounding environment, etc.); similarly, not all the gestures fall (entirely) within the camera’s frame. If we add to this Milena’s hearing impairment, it becomes apparent that determining with certainty what is actually available to both participants might be quite difficult.

But there is also another issue. Since, for practical reasons, the data were recorded in the teacher’s location, we have full access to Vera’s screen (Fig. 1), to her gestures and gaze direction, and to the richness of the multimodal ecology surrounding her (Fig. 2). As conversation analysts, however, our use of this information must be limited to what Vera visibly orients to. Moreover, in analyzing Milena’s responses to Vera’s actions, we must take into account how much of this information is actually available to Milena.

On the other hand, our access to Milena’s resources is limited to what Vera can see and hear of her coparticipant. In other words, we can look at the student from the teacher’s standpoint, but we cannot look at the teacher from the student’s perspective in the same way. With videoconferencing data, then, the borders of context become even fuzzier as it becomes more difficult to distinguish between the resources to

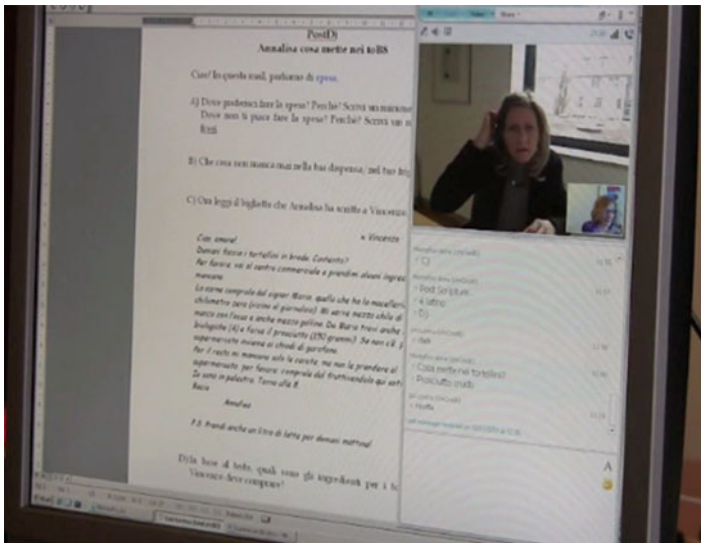


Fig. 1 The teacher’s screen

Fig. 2 The teacher's desk

which we have access as analysts and the resources that are mutually available to the participants.

Now, videoconferencing data constitute primary data (i.e., recordings of naturally occurring interactions), which are the analytical target in CA. What would happen if conversation analysts were to use secondary data, such as self-report data? There are two ways of doing this: (a) performing CA analyses of oral data like interviews (i.e., treating secondary data as primary data) and (b) integrating CA analyses of recordings with various types of secondary data. In the first case, conversation analysts focus on how interviews are achieved as co-constructed social activities, where identities and accounts of participants' experiences (i.e., the participants' background) emerge as contingent products of the relational character of the telling (Kasper 2013). In other words, contextual features invoked by participants are examined for their emergent nature within the interactional sequential context. In this relatively new line of research, CA could also benefit from the insights of discursive psychology (Edwards and Potter 1992), another offshoot of EM.

Alternatively, future research could integrate CA analyses of primary data with secondary data collected with a variety of research tools, such as interviews, questionnaires, self-evaluations, etc. Such an approach could allow researchers to investigate, for example, the interplay between classroom practices and teachers' and students' beliefs and evaluations. An attempt in this direction is represented by a panel held at the 2015 conference on Thinking, Doing, Learning. This panel brings together researchers in CA and sociocultural theory (Lantolf 2011) who engage with materials from the same dataset, consisting of video-recordings of classroom instruction, questionnaires, and interviews. The panel aims to show how differently researchers approach the data, in terms of the questions they ask and of the type of evidence they invoke. Furthermore, the panel intends to explore if and how the findings of different research methodologies, with very different characterizations and use of the notion of context, can be integrated in order to achieve a better understanding of classroom interaction within the field of second language studies.

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Genres and Institutions: Functional Perspectives on Educational Discourse

Frances Christie

Abstract

A genre is itself an institution, for it is a socially sanctioned means of constructing and negotiating meanings, functioning to mediate the operation of other social institutions, taking its place in the complex interconnecting series of activities and events that constitute social life. Hence, while it is certainly possible to write of genres *and* institutions, like those of schooling, of the marketplace, or of family life, to mention a few, they are best understood as themselves institutional in character and part of the fabric of social life. The notion of genres is old, although scholarly interest in it for the purposes of educational linguistics dates from the late 1970s and 1980s. All traditions of the relevant research acknowledge that genres are found in both speech and writing. However, in practice, it is written genres and their role in literacy pedagogy which have generated the greatest body of research and debate. This paper reviews aspects of the development of genre theory, with particular relevance to educational discourse.

Keywords

Appraisal • Book Recount genres • Context of culture • Context of situation • Curriculum design • Discourse community • English for specific purposes (ESP) • ESP specialists • Literacy pedagogy • Macro-genre • Model of genre, register and language • Multiliteracies • New London Group • New Rhetoricians • Scaffolding Literacy in Tertiary and Academic Environments (SLATE) Project • Subject specific literacies

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Early Developments

Traditions of genre study go back to Aristotle and they have remained influential over the centuries, particularly in literary scholarship. Bawarshi and Reiff (2010, pp. 13–28) outline “Neoclassical, Structuralist, Romantic and Post-Romantic, Reader Response and Cultural Studies approaches,” some of them still part of literary critique. Other traditions, linguistic, applied linguistic, and rhetorical, have emerged over the last 40 years, all actively engaged, less with the demands of literary scholarship and rather more with the demands of understanding written language in its multiplicity of functions in all areas of life, including schooling. Scholarly interest in genre in recent years has led to a number of international conferences. One, “Rethinking Genre,” held at Carleton in 1992, led to two publications (Freedman and Medway 1994a, b). Later conferences and symposia were held in North America, Europe, and Brazil, including one in Santa Catarina (Bazerman et al. 2009). Another conference, “Rethinking Genre 20 Years Later,” was held in Carleton in 2012 (Artemeva and Freedman 2015).

The term “genre” appeared in educational discussions in the 1980s in at least three areas (Hyon 1996): the systemic functional linguistic (SFL) tradition originally associated with Halliday (1974), sometimes referred to as the “Sydney School”; English for Specific Purposes, following Swales (e.g., 1990); and the New Rhetorical studies (e.g., Miller 1984/1994) (sometimes called “New Genre Studies” or “North American Genre studies”).

For Halliday the study of language was necessarily social, because language is comprehensible only in terms of its uses and functions in social process, and he was to mount an ambitious account of the nature of language as a social semiotic, powerfully involved in the construction of social experience. He examined the ways language changes according to “different situation types,” and he and his colleagues adopted the term *register* (Halliday et al. 1964, pp. 87–98): the meanings realized in language were shaped in terms of the context, where the “field of activity” (or topic in writing), the “mode” (or medium and channel of communication), and the “style of discourse” (later the “tenor,” Halliday and Hasan 1985) were all involved.

While genre in SFL theory was emerging, Swales and others (e.g., Bhatia 1983) were developing their approaches to genres as part of an interest in English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Swales’ interest was primarily in research articles and academic essays, important especially for the audience of tertiary students for

whom English was a second language. Like Halliday, Swales has a strong sense of social purpose and context in addressing text types, though his account doesn't adopt an all-embracing theory of language and social experience like Halliday's. In his first comprehensive discussion of genres, Swales stated that his approach was eclectic, informed by a number of traditions of scholarship, not all linguistic (Swales 1990, p. 13).

"New Rhetoric" arose in North America, among scholars who worked in composition studies for mother tongue students. A paper by Miller (1984) was influential, arguing the importance of seeing genre as "social action." She resisted tendencies to classify genres in any definitive way, on the grounds that they are unstable, though like the other genre theorists, she noted that genres were both spoken and written, both prestigious (the "eulogy" or "the apologia") and non-prestigious (the "user manual" or the "ransom note"), and that they were all worth studying for their role in facilitating social action (ibid, p. 155). Having a professional interest in understanding the written discourses his students needed to write, Bazerman (1988) traced the history of experimental articles and reports; he argued the importance of the "communal wisdom of a discipline" (ibid, p. 23), where that is expressed in characteristic texts which "shape" the knowledge of the discipline. Freedman and Medway described their papers from the Carleton conference as representing "a newly emerging field of scholarship in North America: genre studies" (1996a, p. 1). Rejecting the SFL-based work of the "Sydney School," they wrote an emergent American tradition that was dynamic and responsive to social process and change. Devitt (1993) also argued the emergence of "new conceptions of genre": they must be understood in dynamic terms, while notions of situation and social context were of paramount importance, shaping any instance of a genre.

Major Contributions

Initial formulations of register in the SF tradition often conflated the terms "register" and "genre" (e.g., Halliday and Hasan 1985). However, Martin and his colleagues offered an alternative formulation in which register and genre were said to operate on different planes of experience (Martin 1985), the former shaping the language choices in a text with respect to the immediate "context of situation" and the latter with respect to the broader "context of culture" (terms taken from Malinowski and also used by Halliday). A genre was described as a "staged, goal-oriented social process." In educational research and theory, Martin's model of register and genre has proved the more influential, though Halliday and Hasan have never accepted Martin's formulation (Hasan 1995). They have both, however, conceded its strengths (Halliday 1996; Hasan 1996).

The decision to propose register and genre as functioning on two planes of experience arose from Martin's early work with Rothery investigating young children's writing development, while others (e.g., Macken-Horarik 2002) later

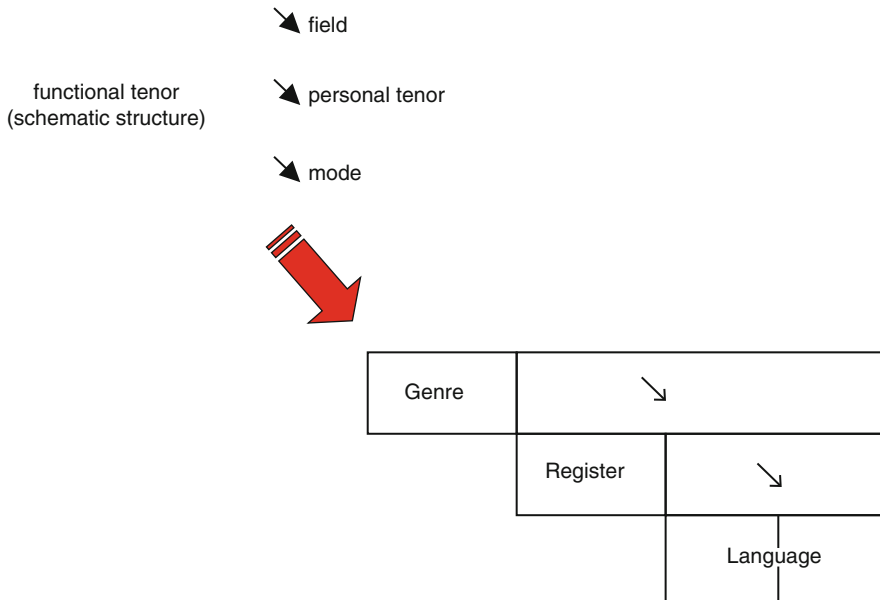


Fig. 1 A stratified model of context (From J. R. Martin. One of three traditions: genre, functional linguistics, and the “Sydney School”)

addressed secondary school writing, and others still, patterns of talk in casual conversation (Egins and Slade 1997), and patterns of classroom talk (Christie 2002). Martin and Rose (2006) and Rose and Martin (2012) offer recent SF accounts of genre.

Figure 1 sets out the model of genre, register, and language proposed by Martin and others. The model emerged from the observation that, when writing, children might select from the same field (e.g., a class visit to the zoo) and select the same mode (written) and the same tenor (that of child to teacher) but nonetheless select different genres (e.g., narrative, recount, or observation). The choice for text type came from the broader context of culture, while the register choices (field, tenor, and mode) related to the immediate context of situation. Hence, a genre and its “elements of schematic structure” were realized through choices of register, and these were in turn realized in choices in the language system.

Swales’ account of genre (1990) was developed around three key concepts: “discourse community, genre and language-learning task” (ibid, p. 1); he proposed that a genre is a “communicative event,” having “communicative purposes,” and being characterized by patterns of “structure, style, content and intended audience” (ibid, p. 59). Swales and others have examined academic, research, and professional writing, such as introductions to research articles and introductions and discussion sections of dissertations and legislative documents (Bhatia 1993), to name a few. This work has tended to focus on the overall text structures of the genres concerned, and while some grammatical features are often selected for close analysis, such

studies do not offer the detailed linguistic analyses that have been a feature of SF genre work. Even though Swales has termed his work “eclectic,” the influence of his training in discourse analysis and applied linguistics is evident, with a particular focus on the “discourse communities” served by the genres involved, as well as their purpose and goals. For Swales, as for Bhatia (2004) a genre has a structure identifiable for its stages, though these are to be flexibly understood. A genre is recognized because of its relevance in social process, and it should be taught with a strong sense of social purpose. In this, he holds much in common with the SF genre theorists. However, Swales does not offer the detailed linguistic analyses associated with SFL work. Paltridge (2013) discusses genre work in the ESP tradition after Swales.

While Swales and others have been termed eclectic, the New Rhetoricians are marked by an even greater eclecticism. Freedman and Medway (1994a, p. 1) said the field drew on the rhetorician Burke, notions of “social constructionism” following the philosopher Rorty or the anthropologist Geertz, “speech act theory” following Austin, Bakhtin’s notions of “utterance” as the fundamental unit analysis, and Swales’ notion of “discourse communities.” What characterized the New Rhetoricians most fundamentally was their association with the tradition of composition or rhetoric in North America for mother tongue students. It is perhaps not surprising that the New Rhetoricians, unlike those in the ESP tradition, were less inclined to foreground the language learning needs of students: mother tongue students bring to their composition activities a stronger sense of the discourse communities within which they work than do second language students of English, as well as a reasonably well-developed grasp of the language, at least for the purposes of talk, though not always for the purposes of writing. This was one reason the New Rhetoricians rejected the emphasis on “explicating textual features” found in SFL genre work.

Nonetheless, SFL theorists have criticized New Rhetoricians for their tendency to discuss genres without providing examples or to discuss those instances they do provide in very general terms (Christie 1996; Martin 2014). There are of course some notable exceptions, such as Bazerman’s (1988) study, providing a very telling account of the emergence of scientific written language.

Since the emergence of New Rhetoric from American composition studies, scholarly interest in genres has developed in many parts of the non-English speaking world. Bazerman et al. (2009) bring together representative papers from the conference in Santa Catarina mentioned earlier. The editors state that “genre is a useful concept to begin to understand the specialized communicative needs . . . beyond the traditional bounds of literacy education” [ibid, p. x], and the volume addresses a range of topics. Swales (2009, pp. 3–16), for example, proposes that since the early formulation of the three models of genre, “the genre movement [has] coalesced somewhat, with the result that the divisions among the three traditions have become much less sharp – even if they have not entirely disappeared” (ibid, p. 4). Trends in thinking about genre have consolidated to some extent, he argues, and scholars have accepted “a balance between constraint and choice” in identifying and teaching genres, the need to recognize local “contextual coloring” in selections of exemplary genres, an awareness that genres evolve, and, hence, a sense that there is a need for a “nuanced approach” to their teaching (ibid, p. 5). Prior (2009, pp. 17–34) proposes

the notion of “mediated multimodal genre systems,” where this implies that genres function in multimodal “chains of discourse”: they may be oral, embodied, and visual, and they can operate in “a set of differently configured multimedia genres (which) are linked together in locally situated ways” (ibid, p. 28). Coutinho and Miranda (2009, pp. 35–55) address the theoretical issue of how to describe a particular text as an instance of a genre. Citing Brockart and Bakhtin, among others, they argue that while genres are abstract entities, it is possible to identify “empirical texts that constitute always a sample of a determined genre” (ibid, p. 50), and they propose as a guide the notion of a *genre marker*. Finally, among the theoretical papers, Rauen (2009, pp. 56–76) discusses “the query letter genre,” as part of an argument that “genre structures provide a discursive context that cognitively focuses the attention of writer and reader” (ibid, p. 56).

Other papers in the volume address matters of identity, cognitive development, the media, and the law, for example. A significant proportion of the papers reveal that New Rhetoric is no longer the province of English-speaking mother tongue specialists. Moreover, the traditions of scholarship on which the assembled writers draw are various, and many writers are avowedly eclectic. Thus, Motta-Roth (2009, pp. 317–336) draws on Halliday, Martin, and Swales in outlining a writing program for postgraduate students in Brazil. An “academic writing cycle” involves students in three sets of activities, all designed to build an awareness and understanding of different academic genres. Devitt (2000, pp. 337–351) argues the dangers and limitations of explicit teaching of genres and refers to the possible tendency to induce limited critical awareness in students. Her proposed teaching method takes students through several stages as they complete a series of assignments to develop an awareness of different genres. Overall, students become aware of the purposes of different types of genres, as well as their constraints, and emerge with “expanded genre awareness” (ibid, p. 349).

Work in Progress

Recent research has drawn from the interest in multiliteracies, a term coined by the New London Group (1996), who argued that historically “mere literacy” had always focused on language only, often conceived as “a stable system.” The reality was that modern literacy involves many other meaning systems apart from language. In so far as the Group has a grammar, it derives from Halliday’s functional grammar, though genre is conceived rather differently from either Halliday or Martin. Bateman (2008) offers a discussion of genres and multimodality using SFL theory, while Halliday’s theory is central to O’Halloran’s work in mathematical discourse (O’Halloran 2015) in which she shows how teachers and students use language, images, and mathematical symbolism to construct mathematical knowledge.

Unsworth (2006; Barton and Unsworth 2014) explores multiliterate genres and pedagogies for teaching them, while he and his colleagues (Painter et al. 2013) have developed a methodology for the analysis of images and texts in children’s picture storybooks. Beyond this, O’Halloran and her team have developed digital approaches

and technologies for close multimodal analysis of linguistic, visual, and audio resources in images, documents, and videos (O'Halloran et al. 2012) and mathematically modeling and visualizing multimodal data (O'Halloran and Tan in press for 2015).

Another recent research concerns evaluative language in genres. The object is to explore how an authorial stance is taken up by writers. Many writing programs tend to focus on content or field or on the overall organization of the text – its mode. But interpersonal dimensions also contribute to the meanings, and the language resources involved are referred to as those of *appraisal* (Martin and White 2005). Hood (2010) uses an SFL model of genre and appraisal theory to discuss the academic research article as a *macro-genre*, which is composed of several linked segments, each with its own schematic structure. She studies in particular the introduction, where the writer must establish a position: it must provide both an “objective” statement of the issues/ideas/knowledge involved and an expression of a “subjective” stance toward these. In this sense the writer establishes a *warrant* for the argument proposed; appraisal provides the tools for its analysis.

While Hood writes of work for tertiary students, others provide evidence of ways to use appraisal in genre-based programs for school students. Thus, Schleppegrell et al. (2014) report a study investigating young learners learning to write *book recount genres*; simple appraisal terms were introduced to the children as an aspect of developing a sense of the stages of the genres they read and wrote, as well as their meanings. Discussion of the language used to express attitude facilitated the children's interpretation. Harman and Simmons (2014) report a program using appraisal theory to guide reading and writing of literary genres among AP students at the senior level in an American high school: guided discussion of selected passages of the class novel led to critique, discussion, and analysis.

Pedagogy remains an ongoing area of research interest, and the SFL genre model has been influential in discussions in both curriculum design and literacy pedagogy (e.g., de Silva Joyce and Feez 2012). Where many of the earlier discussions were developed in Australia (see Rose and Martin 2012), a recent development has been the emergence of genre-based curriculum research in the USA – a country in which functional linguistic theories have not been widely used. Recent publications include one by Brisk (2014) and another edited by de Oliveira and Iddings (2014). Both make extensive use of SFL and genre theory, and they are of interest because, as Schleppegrell et al. (in de Oliveira and Iddings 2014, p. 26) state, the earlier work on genre had been drawn from Australian classrooms: it is necessary to adjust the theory in the American school context, where different classrooms and curricula goals impact on how genre is understood and taught.

Related research concerns teaching the genres of “subject-specific literacies” (Unsworth 2002). Brisk (2014) and de Olivier and Jennings (2014) take up issues of “subject-specific literacies,” though the term “content learning” is often used in the USA. The first SFL discussions of genres and their fields focused on descriptions at the primary level, leading to descriptions at the secondary level (e.g., Macken-Horarik 2002); later volumes explored genre and disciplinary knowledge structure drawing on Bernsteinian sociology and SFL (Christie and Martin 2007; Christie and Maton 2011; Christie 2012). Coffin and Donohue (2014) have investigated academic

writing at university level, and a joint study between the University of Sydney and the City University of Hong Kong (Mahboob 2011) developed programs to support undergraduate students learning to write in several disciplines. It was known as the *Scaffolding Literacy in Tertiary and Academic Environments (SLATE) Project* (Dreyfus et al. 2015).

Another recent research has addressed overall writing development K to 12, using SFL genre theory and functional grammar. Loban (1976), using a structuralist approach, produced a longitudinal study of language development, which focused mainly on oral language, though samples of written texts were collected after grade 3. Later studies (e.g., Perera 1984) studied children's writing growth from ages 8 to 12, while Myhill (2009) has studied writing in the secondary years. Christie and Derewianka (2008; Christie 2010, 2011) studied writing development across school years K to 12 and across three subjects (English, science, and history). They propose a developmental trajectory, tracing emergent control of writing in all areas of the grammar, providing linguistic markers of developmental growth. They show how meanings change with emergent control of the grammar of written, rather than spoken, language. An important developmental phase occurs in late childhood to early adolescence, when children enter secondary school. Written language becomes denser and more abstract, to handle the new areas of knowledge of the older years, and this is the point where many children fall behind. Brisk and de Rosa (2014) use SFL theory to study aspects of the developmental writing trajectory, focusing on the emergence of "complex sentence structures" and building on Christie and Derewianka, among others.

Some Issues that Emerge from the Review of the Genre Traditions

This paper began by defining a genre as "a socially sanctioned means of constructing and negotiating meanings." Genre scholars in all three traditions would agree with this, despite the issues over which they disagree. I shall identify some of the issues in disagreement, commenting on ways they might be addressed and/or resolved:

- "Process v product": critics of SFL work claim too much attention is given to "product," at the expense of "process." The SF theorists disagree, arguing the pedagogy they propose has phases devoted to the "process" of writing, involving consultation between teachers and students. However, the primary interest here lies in the wider theoretical sense in which genres are understood. If they are recognized as *social institutions*, they must be understood in both "process" and "product" terms, though this apparent dichotomy is itself unfortunate. Any social institution or practice – especially one realized in the wonderfully plastic resource of language – will be *dynamic*, offering the necessary *stability* and the necessary *flexibility* that social life requires.
- Definitive v general descriptions: for many theorists – especially the New Rhetoricians – the notions of definitive text structures and of "taxonomic" accounts of genres are unacceptable. ESP specialists accept the notion of genre types and of

stages within them, recognizing some similarities between genres. They do not, however, offer the detailed linguistic accounts of genres that characterize SFL work. This is an argument about the object of the research. For the SF theorist, pursuing an account of the construction of social life, a comprehensive model of genre types is a necessary part of building that account, though this is always unfinished. In the SF tradition, the exercise will inform pedagogical practices, providing data for teaching and for pedagogy generally. However, its primary motivation is to build a social semiotic account of language, where genres have an essential role. For the ESP specialist, the object is to develop useful descriptions of genres, mainly for pedagogical purposes, and the descriptions will be pursued to fulfill that object. For the New Rhetoricians detailed description has limited use, while it risks constraining learners.

- Static v dynamic descriptions: this refers to matters of “prescriptivism” and the criticism that genres are conceived as “static” in the SF tradition. The difficulty is that since SF linguists – unlike New Rhetoricians – seek to provide careful grammatical descriptions of genres, they inevitably make explicit a great deal of their linguistic and educational program, thereby laying themselves open to the charge of “prescribing” what children should write. To offer explicit accounts is not to prescribe, though critics often misunderstand this (Hasan 1996, p. 403).
- Empowerment v conformity: SF theorists argue that teaching genres empowers students. The object is to make the text type and its social purposes available to students, and this will entail explicit teaching. Hence, a genre will be introduced, its elements of structure explained, and its social purposes explored. For many critics, this does not empower, because the attention paid to the genre and its grammar takes over, inducing conformity in students, not independence. This is an issue of how the text type is taught and the extent to which reflection and critique are encouraged. In principle, an understanding of the genre and its overall structure should enlighten and empower, not least because it draws attention to the socially constructed nature of much experience.

It is clear that there is overlap in these areas of disagreement. In my view, the arguments are about the same important concern: namely, how we explain the nature of social life and relationship, recognizing that genres – like other social behaviors – serve to structure and constrain experience, while they also facilitate independent and autonomous action.

Future Directions

Some topics for future research have already been touched upon:

- Multiliterate genres in the multimodal world of the future: here there are many challenges, not only in identifying new text types but in addressing issues of how to characterize the various modes of meaning making and how to teach about them.

- “Subject-specific literacies”: further work is needed on the “subject-specific literacies” of the various subjects in the school and university curricula.
- Notions of knowledge construction: this work draws on the recent partnership between genre theorists and sociologists in researching understandings about knowledge (e.g., Maton et al. 2014).
- School subject English: for the purposes of teaching school subject English, we need to build a more coherent model of the knowledge base about language for teaching and learning English. Important work has been undertaken on genres and their linguistic realization for primary, secondary, and tertiary contexts. Yet we lack theoretically well-motivated accounts of ways knowledge about language should be introduced into the overall curriculum, allowing for sequence and development in learning. Subject English is in need of a theory of knowledge (Macken-Horarik et al. 2015).

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Critical Discourse Analysis in Education

Rebecca Rogers

Abstract

CDA has evolved into a robust set of theoretical and methodological frameworks for studying language and power. Educational researchers have steadily turned to CDA. This chapter provides a consolidated overview of the state of CDA in education by drawing on a literature review that surveys 30 years of scholarship. It presents three interrelated qualities of research design that continue to be salient for literacy researchers using CDA: reflexivity, social action, and context. Each of these areas are discussed with examples of current empirical research. The conclusion reflects on the contributions CDA studies in educational research have made to the field's understanding of texts, talk, and social environments that comprise learning environments. It also provides suggestions for future scholarship.

Keywords

Critical discourse studies • Powerful literacy practices • Semiotics • Social action • Critical literacy

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Introduction: Critical Discourse Analysis in Educational Research

Education researchers from around the globe have turned to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a way to describe, interpret, and explain important educational problems. CDA is an interdisciplinary set of theoretical and analytic tools applied to the study of the relationships between texts (spoken, written, multimodal, digital), discourse practices (communicative events), and social practices (society-wide processes) (Blommaert 2004; Collins and Blot 2003; Fairclough 1993; Locke 2004; Martín Rojo 2010). Luke (2002) defines CDA as a “a principled and transparent shunting back and forth between the microanalysis of texts using various tools of linguistic, semiotic, and literary analysis of social formations, institutions, and power relations that these texts index and construct” (p. 100). Critical Discourse Analysis focuses on how language as a cultural tool mediates relationships of power and privilege in social interactions, institutions, and bodies of knowledge.

Early Developments and Intellectual Roots

Critical discourse studies stem from overlapping intellectual traditions, each emphasizing the linguistic turn in the social sciences (Hart and Cap 2014; Wodak and Meyer 2011). CDA is a strand of Critical Discourse Studies. It is a problem-oriented and transdisciplinary theory and method that draws from different schools of thought including dialectical-relational, sociocognitive, corpus linguistics, discourse historical, critical metaphor, Foucauldian, ethnographic, narrative-based, and interventionist. In the early 1990s, a group of European scholars with diverse backgrounds (Fairclough, Kress, van Dijk, van Leeuwen, and Wodak) spent two days at a symposium in Amsterdam discussing theories and methods specific to CDA. There are a number of landmark volumes that reflect the developing European tradition of CDA: *Discourse & Social Change* (Fairclough 1993); *Discourse as Social Interaction* (van Dijk 1997); *Discourse and Discrimination* (Smitherman and van Dijk 1988); *The Discursive Construction of National Identity* (Wodak et al. 1999); *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006); *Speech, Music, and Sound* (van Leeuwen 1999); *Discourse in Late Modernity* (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999); and *Multimodal Discourse* (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001).

James Paul Gee (2011) makes a distinction between the capitalized term “Critical Discourse Analysis” (which the abbreviation CDA represents) and “critical discourse analysis” in lowercase letters. He argues that CDA refers to the brand of

analysis that has been informed by the European tradition. Lowercase “critical discourse analysis” includes a “wider array of approaches” (p. 20) – Gee’s (Gee 1996; Gee 1999) own form of analysis falls into this latter category. It grows out of a rich vein of US-based work in linguistic anthropology, including the work of scholars such as Gumperz (1982), Hymes (1972), and Michaels (1981). Such scholars have conducted critically oriented forms of sociolinguistics, ethnography, and discourse analysis but do not specifically call their work CDA. Gee (2011) points out that what critical approaches to language have in common is that they “treat social practices, not just in terms of social relationships, but also in terms of their implications for things like status, solidarity, the distribution of social goods and power” (p. 28). Because language is a social practice and because not all social practices are created and treated equally, all those who accept this premise will be committed to analyses that are inherently critical.

Regardless of the tradition there are commonalities among approaches. First, all approaches are informed by critical theory. As an intellectual tradition, critical theory includes perspectives from critical race theory, poststructuralism, postmodernism, neocolonial studies, and queer theory, among others. Critical theories are concerned with issues of power and justice and the ways that the political economy and ideologies about race, class, gender, religion, education, and sexual orientation construct, reproduce, or transform social systems. Critical researchers are intent on discovering the specifics of domination or liberation through discourse and power, in all of its various forms.

A second shared assumption within the CDA tradition is that discourse is defined as language use as a form of social practice. Moreover, discourse moves back and forth between reflecting and constructing the social world. Seen in this way, language cannot be considered neutral, because it is caught up in political, social, racial, economic, religious, and cultural formations (see Blommaert 2004; Fairclough and Wodak 1997; Pini 2009 for the common tenets of discourse).

A third shared assumption is that CDA is a socially committed scientific paradigm that addresses social problems through a range of methodological approaches with the ultimate aim of raising awareness of the ways in which language mediates asymmetrical relations of power. Generally speaking, analyses aim to describe, interpret, and explain the relationships between texts, social practices, and society-wide processes. However, each discourse analyst approaches research in different ways, some foregrounding microlevel issues (e.g., appraisal) and others focusing on macrolevel issues (e.g., language ideologies). Some analysts draw on extensive fieldwork and are immersed in a context while other researchers examine the artifacts generated by other people.

There are also differences among approaches that pivot around four central constructs: context, reflexivity, reconstructive-deconstructive stance, and social action. These issues repeatedly emerge in the scholarship in CDA as points of dialogue and critique (Hart and Cap 2014). These interrelated and overlapping qualities of study design continue to be of interest (implicitly and explicitly) to literacy researchers and will be explored in depth in the following sections.

Major Contributions: A Follow-Up Literature Review

Over the past thirty years, educational researchers have steadily turned to Critical Discourse Analysis. In 2005, Rogers et al. published a review of the literature drawing from five databases in the social sciences from the years 1983 to 2003. The search term used was “critical discourse analysis.” To reevaluate the state of CDA in educational research from 2004 to 2012, Rogers and Schaenen (2014) conducted a follow-up review following the same search procedures. The review identified 257 CDA studies in education, marking six times as many studies from the earlier review. To review the scholarship, we developed an analytic review template, a system for documenting and describing the themes and qualities in the database.

We also developed schemata to analyze areas particularly salient to CDA researchers: reflexivity, social action, and context. The schemata characterized how researchers were treating reflexivity (low, medium, or high), context (narrowly microlinguistic, midrange, microlinguistic/macrosocial) and calls for social action (minimal, midrange, and action embedded with the research design).

Literacy education was the largest subdiscipline in the review (76 studies/257 studies), representing 30% of all studies in education. Indeed, most remarkable was the accelerated rate of literacy researchers using CDA – 18 articles between 1983 and 2003 versus 76 articles from 2004 to 2012. In what follows, I describe how the field has evolved in the past eight years, specifically in the area of literacy education, and compare the findings of this literature review with the one published in 2005, reflecting on thirty years of scholarship.

The Current State of CDA in Literacy Research

There were a total of 76 articles that took up literacy education from 2004 to 2012. With the exception of six, all of the CDA represented empirical inquiry. Two position papers (Cots 2006; Lewis 2006), three theoretical (Henderson 2005; Janks 2005a, b) and two literature reviews (Compton-Lilly et al. 2012; Huckin et al. 2012) develop ideas around CDA as a stance, method, and approach.

The majority of literacy researchers examined written documents (58%). This is a reversal of focus from the earlier review. In 2005 we noted that literacy researchers were overturning the written language bias with a focus on interactions (62%). In the current review, digitally mediated, real-time interactions, an ever-growing, fruitful, and significant domain for future work in CDA, were only represented in two of the studies we found (Chen 2006; Schieble 2012).

Given the current and future consideration of multimodality in literacy studies, we were curious to see how multimodality has been taken up in literacy research that makes use of CDA. We noted that only 29% (20/69) of the empirical articles included multimodal analysis of the data. Some of these analyses briefly attended to multimodality, integrating a description of body positioning of teachers in a professional development session. Other articles included a more in depth treatment of multimodality. Young (2009), for example, provided a visual analysis of *The*

Brownies' Book, demonstrating how the graphic images and layout work together to frame the main ideas in the text. Marshall and Toohey (2010) offered a visual critical discourse analysis of two multimedia intergenerational stories. Only six developed a multimodal transcript (Crumpler et al. 2011; Glaser and van Pletzen 2012; Rogers and Mosley 2008; Schaenen 2010; Ullman 2012; Wohlwend 2012) suggesting a closer attention to multimodality.

A preponderance of the studies, roughly 70%, were conducted by a single researcher ($N = 48$). A team of researchers conducted the CDA on the rest of the data sets. Four articles included teachers and researchers collaborating (Crumpler et al. 2011; Gebhard et al. 2008; Michael-Luna 2008; Rogers and Mosley 2006). Interestingly, there is an increase in teacher-researchers using CDA to study classroom practices. Indeed, from 1980 to 2003, there was only one example of teacher research across the entire education database (Young 2000). However, between 2004 and 2012, 14% (10 of the 69) articles featured teachers researching their own practice.

Turning to the geographical locale of the studies, 84% of the studies took up work in the USA, Australia, the United Kingdom, or Canada. Seven of the 69 studies, or 10%, focused on talk and texts in contexts located in Asia. There were only two articles focused on South Africa and just one in South America. While CDA is being conducted around the globe, most of the published work stems from Anglophonic settings. This is, in part, reflective of the geopolitics of databases. It is also a result of scholars referring to their critical approach to discourse analysis as something other than CDA (e.g., critical approaches to discourse analysis, critically oriented discourse analysis, critical analysis).

Looking at the distribution of educational levels among the studies examined, there are two areas of emphasis between 2004 and 2012. Studies done among participants working at the elementary level ($N = 19$) and in higher education ($N = 25$) far outnumber the studies conducted among other age groups. This indicates a shift since the 2005 review, when the primary emphasis lay in middle and high school. Indeed, in the earlier review only three studies were situated at the elementary level (Rogers et al. 2005). Given the ongoing concern with high school dropout rates in the USA, the continued low levels of student achievement on standardized tests in Communication Arts, and the powerful light CDA can shed on classroom discourse, teacher practice, and evidence learning, it is remarkable that there were only five studies conducted in secondary classrooms. Equally interesting is the growth of CDA studies in teacher education. University researchers are finding studies with in-service and pre-service teachers a useful place to use CDA (e.g., Assaf and Dooley 2010; Cahnmann et al. 2005; Haddix 2010; Rogers and Mosley 2013).

There were seven distinct sociopolitical topics represented in the literacy articles from 2004 to 2012. Nineteen of the articles (28%) fell within the category of "Cultural & Linguistic Diversity, Students' Identities, Discourses & Learning" (e.g., Chen 2006; Fernsten 2005). Thirteen others focused on the same topic but from the angle of teacher learning (Davison 2006; van Rensburg 2007). Across the two reviews, there has been a fairly consistent focus on cultural and linguistic

diversity. Fourteen of the articles fell into the category of “Racism, Ethnicity and Diversity” (Michael-Luna 2008; Mosley and Rogers 2011) representing a more concentrated focus than in the earlier study where there was just one study in the 2005 review. There was a surge of interest in “Gender and Sexualities” with nine of the articles focusing on this topic, compared to just two in the earlier review (e.g., Martínez-Roldán 2005; Richardson 2007). Eight of the articles focused on “Testing, Standards and Commercialization of education” (e.g., Prins and Toso 2008; Tuten 2007). Four of the articles focused on “Social Class” (e.g., Anderson 2008; Dutro 2010) and two articles focused on “Families and Empowerment” (e.g., Rocha-Schmidt 2010). Clearly, educational researchers are finding CDA to be a responsive theoretical and methodological tool for examining a variety of social issues.

Work in Progress

Three interrelated qualities of research design continue to be salient for literacy researchers: reflexivity, social action, and context. Researchers make decisions regarding reflexivity (researcher self-positioning), social action (the degree of political commitment), and context (the linguistic boundaries of the inquiry). These are evolving constructs and the following section provides examples of current research in each of the areas. Rogers and Schaenen (2014) developed schemata to describe the characteristics of studies with regard to each of these areas.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity remains an important element of research design for the CDA researcher. Illuminating researcher identity – whether ethnicity, first language, age, gender, social class, educational level, or racial aspects of identity (among other qualities) – can both open up space for increased critical interpretation of data and deepen the reflexive component of inquiry. In the 2005 review, Rogers et al. noted “there was alarmingly little reflexivity in the articles we reviewed” (p. 386). There was an increased level of reflexivity in the current review. Authors of 60% of the studies included information about themselves, acknowledged their positionality, and at least partially, turned the analytic framework on themselves. We judged these studies to exhibit a medium or high level of reflexivity. Studies with low levels of reflexivity did not include any information about the researcher or analyze the influence of their interpretive stance.

Low Reflexivity

It is observed that 28/69 of the studies fell on the nonreflexive end of the spectrum. For example, throughout his close critical readings of the metaphors concerning bilingual education in public documents, Johnson (2005) was an unexamined outsider. Marshall and Toohey (2010) and Anderson (2008) did not include any

identifying information about themselves as researchers given that they all carried out long-term studies where they positioned themselves as participant-observers.

Medium Reflexivity

Also 35/69 of the studies included a detailed description of their positioning as researchers but did not subject their interactions to a CDA. For example, Goulah (2011) examined how a transformative world language learning approach supported students' development of environmentally based spirituality and their representation of understandings in their Japanese writing. Despite using a teacher-research framework with interactional data, reflexivity was limited to the use of first person voice in his description of the data collection and analysis. Goulah did not include his interactions or involvement in the data analysis or findings.

High Reflexivity

Six of the studies exhibited high reflexivity. In her teacher action research study of fourth grade students' understanding of the concept of genre, Schaenen (2010) embedded reflexivity in her research questions: "How have my students made meaning of the concept of genre? How is the concept of genre constructed? How does the feedback they receive from their teacher and classmates affect classroom discourse, as that discourse relates to the concept of genre?" (p. 30). Characteristic of the researchers who scored highest in reflexivity, Schaenen positioned herself alongside her participants at every stage in the article – the framing, data collection, analysis, and findings. She subjected her own interactions to the same analysis that she used with participants.

Social Action

Critical discourse analysts are interested in what people *do* with words, texts, and images and what these semiotic systems *do* to them. In every facet of the research process, authors make choices about their stance toward the social problem (e.g., racism, neoliberalism, disability) under study. Analysts express their concern in their identification of societal issues, silences, and networks of practice that impact people's lives. Authors identify differently with social action across the life of a project. How social action is enacted is both a theoretical and empirical question.

In the current literature review, we found that 70% of the literacy articles either call for social or political action (48%) or embed it within their research design (22%). Thirty percent of the articles limited their discussion to recommendations for educational change, what we refer to as minimal calls for social action (Rogers and Schaenen 2014). Illustrative studies of the range of stances toward social action are presented below.

Minimal Stance Toward Social Action

Davison (2006) focused on a partnership model between ESL and content area teachers in an English-medium school in Asia and asked how to judge when

collaborative teaching is effective. Using systemic functional linguistics to analyze the questionnaires and interview data, Davison built a framework to describe five stages of collaboration and the distinct discourse practices that accompany each stage. He extended existing research by moving beyond a content analysis of the collaborations but did not suggest any social action as a result of the research or embedded in the research itself. In the conclusions, Davison (2006) wrote, “one of the implications for professional development is that collaborating teachers may benefit from more action-oriented teacher research with built in opportunities for critical reflection and discussion of different views and perceptions of the nature of learning and teaching” (p. 472). The action dimension of their study remains within traditional calls for future research and pedagogical changes.

Moderate Stance Toward Social Action

Studies with moderate calls for social action call for societal or institutional change as a result of their study or engage in social action as a result of their findings and report on this action in the article. Graff’s (2010) study focused on teachers’ learning and development in a multicultural literacy course focused on immigrant experiences in the United States. As an example of critical pedagogy, the course was intentionally designed to recognize and dismiss the dominant narratives of immigration and create counternarratives. Further, rather than locate xenophobia and racism in teachers’ discourse as they made sense out of the variety of immigrant experiences, she focuses on the teachers’ conceptual shifts, drawing on Gee and Fairclough’s versions of CDA. Graff also reported on the social action that came about from this course. Some of the teachers created units for their classroom related to the complexity of immigrant experiences and designed social justice professional development for other teachers.

Action Embedded Within Study Design

Souto-Manning (2006) intentionally used her analysis to better understand and intervene in the deficit discourses about bilingual education that a colleague constructed. She merged critical narrative analysis and autoethnography to analyze micro- and macrotrends surrounding bilingual education. She began with a conversation that she had with a colleague – a special education teacher – in the hospital after her son was born. The teacher tells her that she shouldn’t speak to him in Portuguese because he will wind up in special education. Throughout the article, Souto-Manning disentangled the discourses of bilingual education and special education, looking critically at policies, her reflective journals, and a follow-up interview with the teacher who made these claims. She analyzed the interview and she demonstrated how difficult it was for her as an educator, advocate of bilingual education and mother of a bilingual child, to argue effectively for the benefits of bilingual education. In this case, the act(ion) of returning to the teacher to probe her thinking about bilingual education was part of the research design.

Context

Research in literacy education resists the critique that CDA tends to focus narrowly on micro-discourse stripped of context or, conversely, studies society-wide discourses without attention to the linguistic construction of these processes. Nineteen percent (13 of the 69 studies) focused solely on microtextual analysis without attending to larger societal or institutional settings. Thirty-eight percent (26 of 69) reflected a medium level of context in which the researcher paid some attention to the linguistic properties of texts or interactions and situated the analysis to some degree within a social and cultural framework. Forty-three percent (30 of 69) of the studies displayed an expanded treatment of context, explicitly shuttling between linguistic interactions and social processes. What follows are representative studies from each of the ranges.

Minimal Context

Kumagai's (2007) study of literacy events took place in a year-long Japanese foreign language classroom. Her critical discourse analysis of classroom interactions was limited to the grammar of the interaction, without extending the interpretation to social processes.

Medium Context

A teacher of writing at the university, Christiansen (2004) examined his interactions with students and their writing to see how these conferences affected their development of academic literacies. His theoretical framework acknowledged the importance of CDA shuttling between word, text, institutional, and societal levels of analysis. His rendering of CDA attended to some of the linguistic dimensions of the interaction and a concentrated critique of his identity as a representative of this university, without a theorization of the larger social and historical frames that construct and reflect the writing conference.

High Context

Anderson (2008) analyzed the persuasive letters of two groups of students in contrasting socioeconomic fourth grade classrooms. She mapped discursive structures from the students' writing onto social class positions. She argued that differences in letters are the product of the intersection of tasks, genre, and local settings as well as identity, social class, and agency. When given the opportunity to write persuasively and draw on local resources and arguments, students wrote persuasively.

Future Directions

CDA is an evolving framework and has proven to be responsive to the changing world of educational practice and policy. This chapter has provided a snapshot of current empirical research and has also attempted to deepen discussions of key

elements of research design. There are several future directions for CDA researchers within education. First, informal learning sites, family and community literacies, grassroots literacies, advocacy, and community organizing – are areas all ripe for future study. Future research might also focus on practices that people deem “powerful literacies” and examine what makes them so. Second, the expansion of digital discourses opens up possibilities for expanding our understanding of communication and providing us with new ways of looking at educational discourses. Future CDA research should examine communication in digitally mediated learning environments and the proliferation of virtual communities of learning. Discourses are produced with/on Wikis, Smartboards, iPads, tablets, and multiplayer gaming systems. Memes are made, shared, appreciated, and left behind seemingly at the speed of light. Education practitioners are themselves learning to understand interpersonal educational language practices in multimodal shapes and forms: the complex and highly personal interplay of hardware and software blurs the lines between and among media, message, identity, learning, and participation in a social world. Education researchers who draw upon CDA are in the perfect position to help show the larger community, including policymakers, what’s going on with this kind of learning. How do we access these sites, or bring multiple analytic frameworks to bear on the discourses, all while continuing to enhance our understanding of the connections between discourse and social change? Conceptual work is needed as well as the development of analytic and transcriptual conventions that attend to the multimodality of interactions in digitally mediated environments. Third, there is also need for a widened use of CDA frameworks and more conceptual pieces. One area in particular needs conceptual development and that is the synergy and dissonance between the three sets of most commonly used CDA theories and methods (James Gee, Norman Fairclough and Gunther Kress). There are also a number of CDA frameworks that have not been fully used in educational research.

In this chapter, I set forth schemata for three areas of CDA research design: reflexivity, context, and social action. The purpose was not to evaluate or “rate” the studies but to fine-tune the field’s understanding of these important categories. With regard to reflexivity, educational researchers do not just study social practices but, in part, construct them through the analytic lenses they bring to bear in their analysis. The field is in need of additional conceptual work on the purposes and goals of reflexivity within educational research. While the majority of studies report on or call for social action in their study, there were few studies that embed social action in the research design. Scollon (2010) argues that PCDA (public consultative discourse analysis) might be used to influence ongoing practices instead of studying artifacts of the past. Educational researchers might focus on reports of interventionist CDA and better theorizations of social action. Finally, the question of context remains an ongoing question for educational researchers using CDA. Researchers could do a better job of making transparent the linguistic boundaries of their analysis and what is gained and lost with each frame.

In conclusion, CDA conducted within educational contexts has led to new and exciting insights both in terms of the shape of text, talk, and social practices that

comprise learning environments as well as continuing to contribute to the shaping of the boundaries of Critical Discourse Studies.

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

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Cross-References

- ▶ [Genres and Institutions: Functional Perspectives on Educational Discourse](#)
- ▶ [Language Choice and Symbolic Domination](#)

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Classroom Interaction, Situated Learning

Judith L. Green and Jenna Joo

Abstract

This article traces two phases of development in classroom interaction analysis research over the past nine decades, from the early roots (1930–1960s) to the developments from the 1970s to the present. The article presents telling cases that are designed to make visible how different logics of inquiry guiding particular lines of inquiry have led to different understandings of the complex relationships of classroom interactions and the situated nature of learning(s). The telling cases identify lines of inquiry that framed the field of the study of teaching, present contrastive analyses of instruments for observing classroom interactions, and provide descriptions of paradigms that move from the study of teaching to the study of the situated nature of the discursive construction of teaching-learning relationships. By presenting these telling cases, we make visible how the different lines of inquiry conceptualized the relationship of classroom interactions to the situated nature of learning.

Keywords

Classroom interactions • Situated learning • Observational systems • Discourse analysis • Linguistic difference/deficit hypotheses • Interaction analysis • Teaching-learning relationships

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Introduction

In 1961, philosophers B.O. Smith and Robert Ennis called for researchers to rethink fundamental concepts in education. Over the next six decades, two fundamental concepts in education became the center of (re)conceptualizations, as different lines of inquiry focusing on *classroom interaction* and the *situated nature of learning* were developed, drawing on particular theoretical advances in related disciplines – e.g., anthropology, applied linguistics, psychology (e.g., ecological, educational, and social), sociolinguistics, and sociology.

Given the scope and complexity of current lines of inquiry investigating the point of intersection of these two concepts, we present two contrasting programs of research as *telling cases* (Mitchell 1984). Each telling case is designed to trace parallel, yet differing, developments within each program of research between 1960 and 2015. Additionally, we trace the early roots of interaction analysis research (1930s–1960s) to provide an anchor for understanding how these fundamental concepts were (re)formulated in these two developing programs. In this chapter, therefore, we make visible how logics of inquiry guiding particular lines of inquiry have led to different understandings of the complex relationships of classroom interactions to the situated nature of learning(s).

Developments in Program 1, *The study of teaching* (Dunkin and Biddle 1974; Shulman 1986), focus on research on pedagogical and instructional actions and behaviors of teachers to construct theories of teaching and/or instruction that would support, and/or assess, teachers' work with students. In contrast, developments in Program 2, *Classrooms as communicative systems* (Cazden 1986, 1972), provide an alternative conceptualization of these fundamental concepts and their relationship to learning. This program provides conceptual arguments about how learning in classrooms is socially and discursively constructed and interactionally accomplished by participants in and through the language in use (discourse) by teachers and students in, and across, times, content areas, configurations of actors, and events in classrooms. As part of these telling cases, we draw on major syntheses and contrastive analyses of the logics of inquiry guiding these programs to identify critical issues raised about the conduct of research within these programs as well as how the goals and conceptual differences lead to contrasting understandings of these complex and interdependent processes.

Telling Case 1: Program 1 The Study of Teaching (1930s–1980s)

Three historical lines of inquiry developed by the 1970s led to a field, which today is referred to as *the study of teaching*: interaction analysis, contrastive analysis of instruments for observing classroom interactions, and paradigms for the study of teaching. By tracing developments within and across these lines of inquiry, we make visible how each approach defined the complex relationship of these two fundamental concepts.

Line of Inquiry 1: Roots of Classroom Interaction Analysis Research

In a seminal volume exploring *Interaction Analysis: Theory, Research, and Applications*, Amidon and Hough (1967) captured the earliest roots of interaction analysis research (1930s–1960s). This volume brought together a theoretically diverse group of researchers grounded in social and ecological psychology, who entered classrooms to explore what teachers were interactionally accomplishing with students. One primary outcome of this body of work was the development of ways of observing and identifying the complex outcomes of interactional processes that teachers drew on, and constructed, as they engaged students in developing both academic and social understandings of the curriculum: democratic versus authoritarian patterns of interaction, direct and indirect instruction, and shifting instructional processes across phases in group problem-solving. As indicated in these different directions, although each of the authors focused on observing classroom interactions, just what behaviors (actions/interactions) were observed depended on the particular goals and theoretical grounding of the researcher.

The challenges that this phase of development raised were captured in the final two chapters of this volume by the coeditors. Hough and Amidon, rather than summarizing this body of work, each proposed particular directions necessary to advance this line of inquiry. In his chapter, Hough (1967) raised the question of how the relationship of theories of teaching to theories of learning was conceptualized. Understanding this relationship, he argued, was important in order to build a language that teachers (and others) could use to describe “the elusive phenomenon of their instructional behavior, the climate in their classroom, the effect of this climate on student attitudes and achievements” (p. 2). He further argued that, while teaching and learning were distinctly different processes, in classrooms they are “so closely related that to attempt to better understand one while failing to give full attention to the other would seem to be an untenable approach to the development of a functional instructional theory” (p. 375). Hough’s arguments about the relationship of theories of learning as a basis for developing theories of instruction foregrounded the importance of examining how researchers’ goals lead to the development of particular problems of study, ways of observing in classrooms,

and in turn to particular ways of understanding the situated relationship of classroom interactions to particular forms, ways, and kinds of learnings.

In the final chapter, Amidon and Hunter (1967) identified a second challenge, one that stemmed from the fact that in the previous 15 years (1950s–1960s), more than 20 systems had been developed that made a generalizable understanding of classroom verbal interaction difficult. Based on these developments, they called for “careful research with presently existing systems or modification of systems that will allow for reference back to current data” (p. 388). In calling for this direction, they foreshadowed the second line of inquiry, a contrastive analysis of classroom interaction research.

Line of Inquiry 2: Contrastive Analyses of Classroom Interaction Research

In 1970, Simon and Boyer (1970) addressed the call for comparative studies of existing programs by constructing an anthology entitled *Mirrors for Behaviors*, to examine 79 interaction analysis systems. They argued that each system constituted a metalanguage for understanding teaching-learning processes in classrooms but that no single metalanguage was possible given the diversity of areas of study and epistemological approaches. Table 1 presents the seven categories of studies that Simon and Boyer identified through comparative analysis:

Table 1 makes visible how and for what purpose the designers of these systems undertook studies of classroom interactions. It also makes visible that each area of study drew on particular theories, had particular goals, and constructed particular languages for observing particular patterns of behaviors that were constituted in and through classroom interactions. In turn, these lines of inquiry led to different understandings of the nature and outcome of classroom interactions and thus what constituted learning in these contexts. This chapter made visible why no single set of

Table 1 Seven categories of behaviors reflecting goals of system designers

| Research focus | Definition of behaviors examined |
|------------------------|---|
| Affective | Emotional content of communication |
| Cognitive | Intellectual content of communication |
| Psychomotor | Nonverbal behaviors, posture, body position, facial expressions, and gestures |
| Activity | What is being done that relates a person to someone or something else (e.g., reading or hitting) |
| Content | What is being talked about |
| Sociological structure | Sociology of the interactive setting, including who is talking to whom and in what roles |
| Physical environment | Descriptions of physical space in which the observation is taking place, including materials and equipment being used |

principles could be identified to guide teachers in developing a common understanding of learning in classrooms, given the differences in focus of each area.

In 1974, a cross-national team of Dunkin (Australia) and Biddle (USA) undertook a different form of analysis, the analysis of the conceptual and epistemological logics of inquiry guiding different investigations of teaching. In their book, *The Study of Teaching*, they identified 500 studies guided by different theoretical perspectives that were systematic, observational, and over time in classrooms. This direction they distinguished from studies of teacher effectiveness, which they argued, had more than 10,000 studies by 1974. Their analysis identified a range of investigations that, when taken together, constituted a rich and varied vocabulary about teaching. This vocabulary was related to the range of different phenomena of interest as well as research approaches: climate and directiveness, discipline and group management, behavior modification research, classroom as a social system, knowledge and intellect, use of logic in the classroom, and linguistic concepts and sequence units. Within each of these areas, they identified additional vocabularies associated with particular objects of study. However, this rich vocabulary was not without its own challenges, given the lack of coherence across studies in design, populations studied, and methodological processes guiding this research.

Their analytic approach is visible in the following description on the area they labeled, *a classroom as a social system*. By focusing on studies that were framed by this conceptual argument, they were able to identify ways in which objects of study were bounded, the nature of interactional processes studied, and when and where these phenomena were observed, among other epistemological issues. This analysis also involved undertaking a more fine-grained analysis of the range of processes being analyzed, e.g., lesson format, moves in the classroom game, and location and other ecological features as well as group structure, group function, teacher roles, and pupil roles, among others.

Additionally, they examined ways in which researchers bounded interactional units of analysis and the kinds of unit boundaries identified: sequential patterns of classroom behavior, episodes and incidents, teaching cycles, behavior episodes for individuals, and what they called strategic concepts (i.e., thought units, complex chains, and teaching modules). By focusing on ways that researchers conceptualized the units of analysis and how they framed and recorded chains of (inter)actions, they identified a previously unexamined approach that shifted the focus from talk as reflective of behaviors of interest to the researcher to language in use in classrooms through the study of linguistic features. This finding foreshadows the second program of research, the *classroom as a communicative system*, a direction that they viewed as promising for studying the situated nature of learning-teaching relationships as linguistic processes. Based on this meta-analysis, Dunkin and Biddle developed a conceptual model of factors (Fig. 1) influencing the nature of classroom interactions and learnings that developed from these processes, within and across times, contexts, and purposes of interactions (i.e., growth).

As indicated in Fig. 1, in constructing this model, they considered not only moments of interactions in classrooms but also multiple sources of influence on teachers and students as well as the immediate and long-term outcomes (learnings)

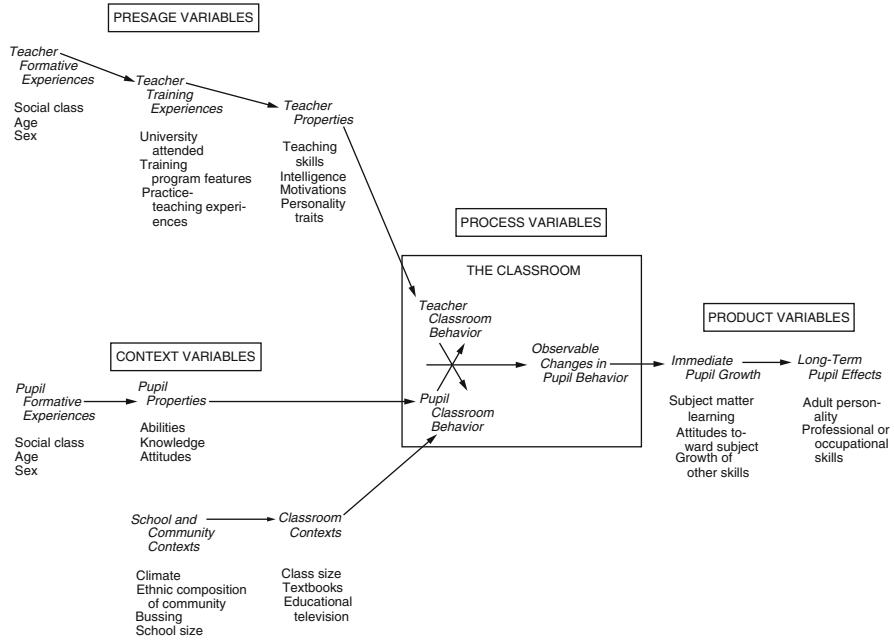


Fig. 1 A model for the study of classroom teaching from Dunkin and Biddle (1974, p. 38)

developed through these interactions. This conceptualization recognized that both teachers and students bring histories to interactions grounded in past experiences and opportunities for learning as well as community and cultural factors. This model, therefore, contextualized classroom interactional contexts as embedded in and influenced by larger contexts as well as situated phenomena. It also framed learning in terms of pupil growth (immediate and long term), and that growth was also related to subject matter learning as well as growth of other skills, including professional and occupational skills. Their model, therefore, proposed a range of different relationships of classroom interactions to the situated nature, not only of learning but also of pupil growth, both in situ and over time.

Line of Inquiry 3: Paradigms for the Study of Teaching

The third line of inquiry contrasts with the two previous conceptual approaches is that it frames research on interactions in classrooms from a paradigm approach (e.g., Gage 1963; Shulman 1986). We include this line of inquiry to further explore contrasting perspectives on what counts as *interactions* and to explore what became, and remains today, a major approach to examining the pedagogical actions of teachers (e.g., Shulman 1986). Rather than personally tracing the roots of this line of inquiry, we draw on a seminal synthesis of research that traced these roots

between 1960 and 1986 undertaken by Shulman (1986). In his lead article *Paradigms and Research Programs in the Study of Teaching: A Contemporary Perspective* in the third edition of the *Handbook of Research on Teaching*, Shulman systematically identified what he called different paradigms for studying teaching in classroom contexts. The paradigms he identified and their epistemological goals are presented in Table 2.

In characterizing these paradigms in this way, he added further insights into the variations in researchers' conceptualizations of, and goals for, exploring the relationship of classroom interactions to student learning across these paradigms. As indicated in Table 2, each paradigm was guided by particular theoretical orientations, which, in turn, led to different objects of study, ways of relating actions of teaching to particular outcomes (e.g., student capabilities or capacities), as well as ways of framing the particular area of study. Based on this analysis, Shulman constructed what he called a *synoptic map* (Fig. 2) of factors that impact interactions in classrooms and their outcomes.

This map contrasts with that of Dunkin and Biddle in multiple ways. For example, as indicated in Fig. 2, this synoptic map included different traditions related to teacher and student (inter)actions, processes involved, and kinds of outcomes of interest to researchers within this epistemologically diverse set of paradigms, rather than tracing sources of influence on both the interactions and learnings developed across time and events. What this map makes visible are sources of influence on teachers and students as well as epistemological differences in programs and areas of study. However, what is missing, when we contrast this representation with that of Dunkin and Biddle (1974), is a conceptual synthesis of the actual processes involved in and accomplished through classroom interactions (for critiques of the focus on pedagogical processes and practices, see the EU Dialogue on the nature of didactics/didaktiks across national contexts in Hudson and Schneuwly 2007).

Table 2 Shulman's (1986, p. 8) characterization of research on teaching paradigms

| Paradigm | Conceptual focus of the paradigm |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Process-product tradition | Studies the relationship of teaching performance and subsequent student capabilities |
| Academic learning time program | Relates teaching performance to student actions, as inferred from the time allocations made by students |
| Student mediation program | Examines student thoughts and feelings, usually in relation to teacher actions and subsequent student actions or capacities |
| Teacher cognition program | Examines relationships of teacher thought to teacher action (e.g., studies of judgment policies and teacher assignment of students to reading groups) |
| Classroom ecology program | Examines reflexive influences of teacher and student actions, frequently illuminated by aspects of thought, to explore how and if different patterns of interaction may subsequently be related to changes in student capacities |

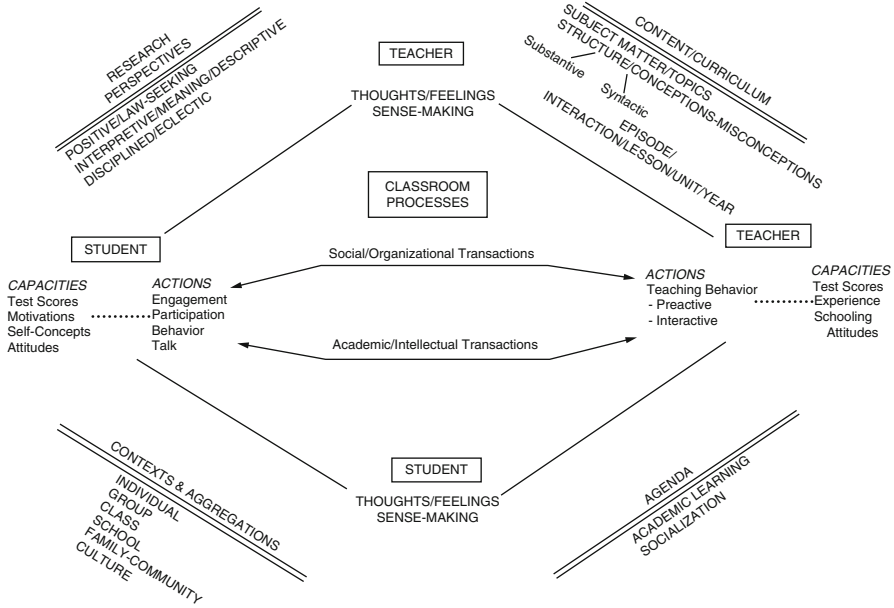


Fig. 2 Shulman’s (1986, p. 9) synoptic map of research on teaching

Telling Case 2: Program 2 Classrooms as Communicative Systems (1960s–1980s)

In this section, we trace developments related to research perspectives grounded in discourse processes that frame ways of understanding relationships of classroom interactions to situated opportunities for learning constructed in and through language/discourse in use of both teachers and students in differing configurations across times, events, and contexts (Cazden 1986; Bloome et al. 2005). Given that the chapters in this third edition of *Discourse and Education* (Wortham and Kim in press) bring to the fore different theoretical approaches and areas of research involved in studying the relationship of discourse and education, we elected to focus this section on making visible the roots (1960–1986) of conceptual arguments leading to an understanding of language/discourse in use in classrooms and its relationship to the situated nature of learning, developed over the past six decades.

In this section, therefore, we trace histories of conceptual arguments and educational initiatives that were foundational to understanding the situated, negotiated, intertextual, and socially accomplished nature of what counts as discourse and its relationship to learning in classrooms (e.g., Heap 1991; Cazden 1986; Mehan 1979; Nuthall 2007; Markee 2015). As we will show, arguments presented in this program

overlap in time with those in Program 1 and form the foundation for current directions taken in research on discourse in educational contexts that are represented in current and previous editions of this encyclopedia (Davies and Corson 1997; Martin-Jones et al. 2008; Wortham and Kim [in press](#)).

Initial Roots and Rationale for Studying the Functions of Language in the Classroom

The initial roots of Program 2 are located, not in published research but in a series of working groups funded by the US government. In her preface to *Functions of Language in the Classroom* (Cazden 1972), Cazden marked the beginning of this program as occurring in 1965, after the first summer of Head Start. In this working group, a small group of anthropologists, linguists, psychologists, and sociologists was called together by Joshua Fishman (Yeshiva University), to propose to the federal government priorities for research on “children’s language and its relation to school success” (p. vii). This working group and the related volume form the foundation for Program 2, *Classrooms as communicative systems*.

This working group led to a second working group, which in turn led to the publications of the volume entitled *Functions of Language in the Classroom*. This volume provides a series of theoretical and empirical studies that deconstructed what was then referred to as the *linguistic deficit hypothesis*. This hypothesis, proposed by psychological researchers, argued that low-income children entered school without language. In his introduction to this volume, Hymes (1972) provided a comprehensive conceptual synthesis of the research guiding the studies in the volume. His introduction makes visible how advances in studies of language in use in linguistically diverse groups demonstrated that low-income children entered school with a fully developed language and that these linguistically diverse students were not deficient in core skills necessary for academic achievement in schools. This body of work led to a (re)formulation of understandings of language in use in classrooms and to the development of the *linguistic difference hypothesis*, which in turn led to deeper understandings of the conceptual, linguistic, and social resources that children (and teachers) bring to their interactions in classrooms.

In his introduction, Hymes also presented a series of theoretical arguments central to understanding how to conceptualize actors participating in classroom interactions as well as the nature of the discursive and social processes that participants draw on and participate in and to interpret what is happening. Central to the argument was the conceptualization that the verbal repertoire of a person or group may “comprise several varieties of language (including more than one language)” (p. xxxvii). Patterns of language use, therefore, are shared by members and can entail alternation among these varieties. This conceptualization led to a further argument that in classrooms, a common language of the classroom, and by extension of groups within the classroom, while constructed by participants, may not be shared by all, given

different configurations in which individuals participate as well as their history of access and opportunities for particular contexts for interaction.

In conceptualizing the nature of language and what is entailed in interactions, he also framed ways of examining the question of what counts as meaning to particular actors in such interactional situations. He argued that meaning in instances of *speech* is grounded in contexts and is meaningful to those who use particular features as well as to those who hear them. Meaning, therefore, is “not in the narrow sense of meaning as naming objects and stating relationships, but in the fuller sense; that is, meaning also is associated with conveying respect or disrespect, intimacy or distance, seriousness or play” (p. ix). It also signals “the appropriateness of one or another means of speech, or ways of speaking, to one or another topic, person, situation; in short, with the relation of the structure of language to the structure of speaking” (p. ix). From this perspective, he argued, “functions of language in the classroom are a special case of the general problem of the study of language in its social context. The key to understanding language in context is to start, not with language, but with context” (p. xx).

In characterizing the situated nature of language based on these theoretical and empirical arguments, Hymes framed the need to understand that language is not defined and organized by formal canons or simply in referential terms; thus, research on language in use in classrooms and other social settings, from this perspective, explores speech and meanings in particular situations of use, by particular actors and/or configurations of actors (e.g., classroom groups), for particular purposes (see also Heap 1991). Through these discursive processes, therefore, students as well as teachers are understood to construct social and academic repertoires and a language of the classroom (or group within the classroom), as they interact with each other, drawing on collective as well as individual historical resources. They also engage with language resources constructed by others brought to the interactions for particular purposes (e.g., texts and curriculum resources), through which they construct particular opportunities for learning.

This volume was also significant in that the research on which such conceptual arguments were based were drawn from empirical studies that examined particular ways in which language was used within particular speech communities. In this volume, researchers examined nonverbal communication, sign language, language variation, verbal strategies, Black English, code-switching, dialect, and participant structures. Classrooms studied by these interdisciplinary researchers included students from different communities: Black, deaf, Hispanic, Navajo, Hawaiian, and Warm Springs Indians, among others. This body of research examined variations in language in use that influenced speaker-hearer interpretations of what was happening, including intonation, tone of voice, rhythm, and style.

The theoretical and empirical work in this volume, therefore, was foundational in making visible the consequential and complex nature of language in use, in and outside of classrooms. Together, these chapters provided a basis for examining how language in use in classroom interactions relates to a language of the classroom and how participants constructed local and situated meanings for, and understandings of, what is possible for individuals and the group to know, understand, access, and do, in

particular interactional events as well as across times and events. This volume, therefore, created a theoretical ground for investigating and conceptualizing classroom interactions, not as behaviors, but as language-based phenomena in which discourse in use (i.e., utterances) is tripartite (Fairclough 1992). Each utterance is a text to be interpreted, a social process that shapes what is being jointly constructed, and a discourse practice (i.e., socially framed ways of speaking). Additionally, there are also traces of other texts in the developing discourse that when examined from this perspective provide insights into an intertextual web of meanings as well as processes for engaging with oral, written/graphic, and visual texts that the person is drawing on (e.g., Fairclough 1992; Bloome et al. 2005).

Learning(s) opportunities are, from this perspective, collectively and individually constructed in and across the interactions of particular actors in particular time, who are jointly constructing particular academic and social events. This perspective frames the need both to examine what is being collectively constructed by the group (e.g., teacher with students, students with others) and then to examine how and in what ways individuals contribute to the group construction as well as how they interpret and use (or not) what was interactionally proposed. This latter aspect of the interactional process involves examining, as Bloome et al. (2005) argue, what is proposed, recognized, and acknowledged by participants as they interactionally accomplish what is socially and, by extension, academically significant in the particular moment in time as well as across times and events. This epistemological stance also requires researchers to seek evidence of learning by tracing how what was constructed in one event or point in time is taken up and used (or not) in subsequent points in time. Thus, by tracing individuals across times and events in particular classrooms and/or across classrooms and subject matter, the discourse-based researcher seeks to understand what counts as academic competence of particular students in particular classrooms (e.g., Castanheira et al. 2001).

Extending the Roots: Teaching as a Linguistic Process (A Federal Initiative)

In 1974, a second series of meetings extended the work represented in the *Functions of Language in the Classroom* volume. These meetings were part of an initiative overseen by N.L. Gage that brought national and international scholars together to analyze what was known to that point in time and to propose programs of research that would be systematically funded over the next decade. These panels focused on a range of different research directions (e.g., information processing, behavior analysis, theory development, teaching as a linguistic process, among others). The goal of Panel 5: *Teaching as a Linguistic Process* was “. . . to develop the means to improve teachers’ work on the basis of improved understanding of linguistic phenomena in school settings” (Gage 1974, p. 1). This goal led the panelists to formulate six approaches to research needed to understand the complex nature of teaching and learning relationships in linguistically diverse classrooms, ones that framed directions that became Program 2:

- Determine the rules governing classroom discourse and the relationship between classroom discourse and frame factors in the school.
- Study the acquisition by students of rules for school discourse.
- Determine ways in which differences in dialect, language style, and interactional norms affect learning in the classroom.
- Describe and analyze patterns of student-teacher communication in order to determine the effect of the social identity of the participants on ways in which teachers overtly and covertly present information.
- Specify the critical components of characteristics of natural communication situations that are necessary for the acquisition of a second language and that will encourage native language maintenance.
- Develop and field test materials and procedures to improve teaching and, thereby, learning on the basis of knowledge of linguistic process in classrooms.

In framing classroom interactions from discourse/language-in-use perspectives, this panel provided a contrasting view to the classroom interaction research presented in Program 1 and laid the foundation for studies of learning as constructed in situated and contextual nature of the discursive and communicative work of participants in classrooms. In describing these roots, we made visible a series of differences between this program and Program 1. Both programs developed in parallel time frames, and both focused on studies of classroom interactions; however, conceptualizations of what counts as interaction and how it relates to the situated nature of learning differed.

The developing direction framed by the panel is visible in the actions in 1978, when the National Institute of Education (NIE) announced a funding call for research on *Teaching as a Linguistic Process in a Cultural Setting*. Eight research teams grounded in theories from psychology, anthropology, education, sociolinguistics, and sociology were awarded multiyear grants. In 1981, Green was invited to analyze what had been learned through these studies. Her contrastive analysis led to two published syntheses of these studies that made visible both how the different researchers conceptualized the classroom as a communicative system (Green 1983) and how the work of these researchers related to the work of scholars in Program 1 (Green and Smith 1983). Table 3 represents the conceptual arguments that she identified across the eight studies that constitute conceptual principles guiding the study of classrooms as communicative systems.

The contrastive analysis of common constructs across the eight studies made visible a common set of underlying principles about the nature of classroom interactions and what is accomplished in and through such interactions. As indicated in this table, a series of common principles were identified across all studies: classrooms as communicative environments, contexts as constructed, meaning as context specific, and inferencing as required for communicative comprehension. Differences were also identified across studies that were related to both the purpose and contexts of the studies and the particular theories grounding the research. One principle that made visible sources of such differences was entitled *Teachers orchestrate different participation levels*. This principle showed the greatest variation, which was

Table 3 Conceptual constructs framing teaching as a linguistic process (adapted from Green 1983)

| Constructs | Agreement across eight studies |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Classrooms are communicative environments | 8 |
| Differentiation of roles exists between teacher and students | 8 |
| Relationships between teachers and students are asymmetrical | 8 |
| Differential perception of events exists between teacher and students | 6 |
| Classrooms are differentiated communication environments | 5 |
| Lessons are differential communicative contexts | 5 |
| Communicative participation effects student achievement | 7 |
| Contexts are constructed during interactions | 8 |
| Activities have participation structures | 4 |
| Contextualization cues signal meaning | 5 |
| Rules for participation are implicit | 6 |
| Behavior expectations are constructed as part of interactions | 6 |
| Meaning is context specific | 8 |
| All instances of a behavior are not equal | 8 |
| Meaning is signaled verbally and nonverbally | 8 |
| Contexts constrain meaning | 8 |
| Meaning is determined by and extracted from observed sequences of behavior | 8 |
| Communicative competence is reflected in appropriate behavior | 7 |
| Inferencing is required for conversational comprehension | 8 |
| Frames of reference guide participation of individuals | 8 |
| Frame clashes result from differences in perception | 6 |
| Communication is a rule-governed activity | 8 |
| Frames of reference are developed over time | 5 |
| Form and function in speech used in conversations do not always match | 8 |
| Teachers orchestrate different participation levels | 5 |
| Teachers evaluate student ability by observing performance during interactions | 5 |
| Demands for participation cooccur with academic demands | 3 |
| Teachers signal their theory of pedagogy by their behaviors (verbal and nonverbal) | 4 |
| Teacher's goals can be inferred from behaviors | 4 |

partially due to the fact that not all studies examined how the teacher engaged with students in classrooms but rather examined student-student interactions as well as family discourse and discourse on playgrounds, thus creating different situations for learning social as well as academic knowledge and processes.

In framing these principles for exploring the classroom as a communicative environment constructed in and through the language in use/discourse of students with teachers as well as with others, this contrastive analysis made visible how across disciplines' as well as studies' common understandings of the nature of the

classroom as a communicative system were possible to identify. It further makes visible the need to uncover both the common understandings and differences in goals and logic in use of particular studies that investigate the nature of language in, and of, classrooms as well as other contexts (e.g., home and playground) in which students engage with a broad range of interactional partners. Furthermore, it made visible the need to understand how classroom interactions are conceptualized when investigating its relationship to the situated nature of learning.

Future Directions

Advances in research grounded in the study of classroom discourse and interactions in classroom and their relationship to individual and collective learning in classrooms have expanded exponentially over the past three decades as advances in epistemological approaches have been developed. Today researchers interested in studying the situated nature of learning in and through classroom interactions have a range of epistemological approaches to draw on, including discourse analysis, conversation analysis, critical discourse analysis, and narrative analysis, among others. These advances are grounded in theoretical developments at the intersection of education and related disciplines (e.g., anthropology, learning sciences, and sociology). However, as the other chapters in the third edition of *Discourse and Education* make visible, the wealth of theoretical and epistemological approaches guiding present work, while highly productive in making visible different understandings of these complex phenomena, also creates a challenge, one similar to that faced by Smith and Ennis (1961), Amidon and Hunter (1967), and Dunkin and Biddle (1974).

The challenge is one of transparency in reporting, and thus making visible, both the *logic of inquiry* guiding a particular study or line of inquiry and *the logic in use* in particular studies that frame what counts as data collected and analyzed as well as how these data are interpreted and reported. This challenge is particularly great given the different theoretical and methodological directions that have been developed nationally and internationally (e.g., Edwards and Westgate 1994; Barnes and Todd 1995; Morine-Dershimer 2006; Mercer and Hodgkinson 2008; Kumpulainen et al. 2009; Kaur 2012; Markee 2015). This complexity, we argue, like that of the early phases of this work, requires contrastive studies that will make transparent the layers of complexity, rather than leading to the selection of one approach or body of research over others.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Learning Science: Discourse Practices](#)
- ▶ [Linguistic Anthropology of Education](#)

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Discourse Analysis Across Events

Angela Reyes and Stanton Wortham

Abstract

Discourse analysis is a research method that provides systematic evidence about social processes through the detailed examination of speech, writing, and other sign use. In a recent book (Wortham and Reyes 2015) and in this chapter, we argue that educational research on processes that occur across events – such as learning, socialization, and identity formation – can benefit from cross-event discourse analysis. This chapter outlines a linguistic anthropological method for doing discourse analysis both within and across events, showing how to study the pathways that linguistic forms, utterances, cultural models, individuals, and groups travel across linked events.

Keywords

Discourse analysis • Speech event • Context • Learning • Socialization • Identity

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Introduction

Discourse analysis is a research method that provides systematic evidence about social processes through the detailed examination of speech, writing, and other sign use. There are several approaches to discourse analysis. Most approaches are concerned with the analysis of single speech events or with the analysis of recurring types of events. Such approaches are valuable, but they cannot illuminate processes that emerge across events. In this chapter, we describe a method for doing discourse analysis across linked speech events (cf. Wortham and Reyes 2015 for a more extended account). This approach draws primarily on the field of linguistic anthropology – a discipline that studies language use in social and cultural contexts. In this chapter, we outline a linguistic anthropological method for doing discourse analysis both within and across events, showing how to study the pathways that linguistic forms, utterances, cultural models, individuals, and groups travel across linked events. These links are implicitly or explicitly created by participants in discourse, and the analyst’s job is to trace these links. We discuss how educational research concerned with processes that occur across events – such as learning, socialization, and identity formation – can benefit from cross-event discourse analysis.

Recent theoretical and empirical work has made clear that many important social processes can only be understood if we move beyond single speech events to analyze pathways across linked events (Agha 2007; Agha and Wortham 2005; Wortham 2012). Learning, for example, involves systematic changes in behavior from one event to the next. A learner has experiences in one or more events and then behaves differently in subsequent events. In socialization, to take another example, a novice experiences events characteristic of a group and then participates more competently in future events. Identity formation also takes place across multiple events, with an individual identified as a type of person in one event, then more predictably as that type in subsequent events. No matter how sophisticated our analyses of discrete events, we cannot offer empirically adequate analyses of processes like learning, socialization, and identity formation that inherently take place across events unless we study pathways across linked events. In order for discourse analysis to be a useful method for studying such processes, it must uncover how people, signs, knowledge, dispositions, and tools travel from one event to another and facilitate behavior across pathways of events.

Traditionally discourse analysis has been done on single events or on recurring types of events. Linguistic anthropological approaches to discourse analysis were largely developed for analyzing discrete events, and most of the methodological tools we discuss below come from this earlier work. In this chapter, we discuss how linguistic anthropological approaches have been extended to analyze pathways of linked events over time and illuminate crucial human processes that take place across chains of events. The next section describes traditional work on discrete speech events. Then we discuss discourse analysis across events.

Within Events

The analysis of discrete speech events over the past several decades has been enormously fruitful (e.g., Goffman 1981; Gumperz 1982; Hymes 1964; Sacks et al. 1974; Silverstein 1992). Founding figures of discourse analysis such as Goffman (1981), Hymes (1974), Jakobson (1960), and others have described the central components of any given speech event. Every speech event includes **participants** – a speaker, an addressee, and often an audience or overhearers. It includes a **message**, communicated over some channel that connects speaker and addressee, “encoding” the message in some denotational **code**. The speech and nonverbal signs that constitute the event have an **organization** – at least a beginning, middle, and end, and often more complex kinds of poetic patterning. The communication takes place in some context, both a physical **setting** and a social world with **norms** about social identities and social events. The event has social **consequences** and accomplishes social action.

Speech events in American classrooms, for example, often include teachers and students as participants. The participants and classroom settings are themselves embedded in local cultural contexts within which models of personhood and social norms circulate – for example, models and norms about the “learning disabled” (Mehan 1996), “model minorities” (Reyes 2007), “unpromising boys” (Wortham 2006), “jocks” and “burnouts” (Eckert 1989), and so on. Academic subject matter is one type of message that is communicated through a linguistic code, such as Spanish, and through some spoken or written channel, such as writing on a blackboard. Classroom interaction often has an organization, like the “IRE” (initiation-response-evaluation) routine in which teachers ask questions, students respond, and teachers evaluate responses. In this routine, participants take turns being speaker, addressee, and audience. Consequences of such events include a wide range of possibilities, such as learning new academic content, reproducing social stereotypes, and so on.

Different approaches to discourse analysis prioritize different components and consequences of speech events and offer different accounts of how these components interrelate. Linguistic anthropologists are often concerned with the social functions of speech, and this centrally includes the social identities or positions that participants assign themselves and others. To examine this, a linguistic anthropological approach to discourse analysis depends centrally on a distinction between what Jakobson (1957/1971) called a **narrated event** and an “event of speaking” or **narrating event**. The narrated event is what is being talked about, while the narrating event is the activity of talking about it. Narrated content includes more than just narratives. Any communicative encounter involves a narrating event (the interaction between participants) within which a narrated event (the topics and characterizations that make up a conversation) is discussed. In classroom interaction, for example, the narrating event often involves teachers and students engaging in explication, discipline, or byplay, and the narrated event often involves academic subject matter or explicit instructions for behavior.

When people narrate events, they often **voice** or depict narrated characters as occupying recognizable social positions (Bakhtin 1935/1981; Wortham 2001). Oftentimes this is done using **reported speech**, direct and indirect reports of what a narrated character said. Reported speech connects narrated and narrating events, reproducing and characterizing something from the narrated event to accomplish action in the narrating event. That is, when narrators voice a character they not only **position** that character in recognizable ways, but also position themselves in relation to that character in the narrated event, in relation to other participants in the narrating event, and in relation to groups in the larger social world.

For example, Reyes (2013) describes classroom interactions in which a student, Samuel Jung, is ridiculed with respect to a nickname he has acquired at the school: Samsung Electronics. On one occasion, the teacher and students are discussing sample sentences for their assignment and Samuel Jung interrupts to contest the use of his nickname. In this interaction, the narrating event involves the teacher, Samuel Jung, and other students having an academic discussion, teasing Samuel, and struggling over their right to use the nickname. There are two narrated events: a conversation about the assignment and a struggle over Samuel Jung's nickname. Reyes analyzes how Samuel Jung is assigned a voice partly through reported speech when the teacher offers a sample sentence that Samuel Jung might use to address his classmate Sam: "Help me Sam, my circuit breakers are going." Reyes explores how the teacher uses reported speech like this not only to help establish a recognizable voice for Samuel Jung by comparing him to a piece of faulty electronic equipment in the narrated event, but also to help establish her own positioning as a teacher who controls classroom discussion with a sense of humor in the narrating event.

Reyes' account demonstrates how analysts need to rely on context beyond the speech event even when doing discourse analysis of discrete events. Silverstein (1992, 1993) argues that the central problem in discourse analysis is determining **relevant context**. Relevant context gets established as speakers organize their messages systematically so as to foreground certain aspects and as other speakers subsequently presuppose the same aspects of context. Participants do this largely through the systematic deployment and uptake of **indexical signs** that presuppose or create aspects of context.

An indexical sign signals its object by pointing to it (Peirce 1932; Silverstein 1976). For example, uttering the word "dude" can indexically presuppose a particular type of young male speaker. As a speech event unfolds, indexical signs normally accumulate and point to similar contexts, presupposing certain aspects of context as more and more likely to be relevant. For example, an utterance containing "dude" can co-occur with other signs that mutually reinforce one another, such as looking a certain age, wearing particular clothing, someone replying "bro," and so on. Silverstein (1992, 1993) calls the accumulation of such signs that point to similar aspects of context **contextualization**, the process through which the context relevant to interpreting a speech event is established. Over the course of a discursive interaction, a series of indexical signs may come to presuppose some aspects of the context as relevant. If and when "dude" and accompanying signs have collectively established context that involves a particular young male type, the speech

event has become **entextualized** (Silverstein 1992, 1993). That is, the event has become stable and presupposable as some kind of social action – for example, identifying a speaker as a relaxed, carefree, and confident young male.

The mutually reinforcing processes of contextualization and entextualization depend on the emergence of a **configuration of mutually presupposing signs**, or a “poetic structure” (Jakobson 1960; Silverstein 1992, 1993), a set of signs that collectively establishes relevant context. If more and more signs come to presuppose the social type of a relaxed, carefree, confident young male, these signs lock together in a mutually presupposing structure. Once this happens, speakers routinely infer that a given social type is being invoked. Thus, a pattern of indexical signs comes to presuppose relevant context, and this allows speakers to infer the social types being invoked and the social action being performed.

For example, Reyes (2011) describes a classroom interaction in which a student, Pete, cries “racist” as a teacher is trying to get students back on task after a 10-min break. The use of “racist” emerges not in response to explicit racist language, but in response to more subtle, indexical cues that emerge in a poetic configuration that collectively presupposes a racist stereotype. In the interaction, the narrating event includes the teacher, Pete, and other students. The narrated events include a conversation about student behavior and a conversation about fantasy weapons. The teacher begins by saying he wants to “send somebody to the office.” The teacher and students proceed to collectively and playfully describe weapons that will be used on disobedient students: saying “the hammer,” “the hammer of Thor,” “the sword of light,” “the sword of darkness,” “the sword is dark,” “the blade is black,” and “this is black.” Then Pete cries “racist.” Reyes traces two poetic progressions that establish relevant context and make his use of “racist” intelligible. First, the weapon becomes increasingly dangerous – from being a “hammer” to a “sword” to a “blade” of a sword. Second, the weapon becomes increasingly dark, going from “light” to “dark” to “black.” The unfolding discourse links increasing forms of violence to the darkening of the weapons, ending in “black,” which can be an emblem of a racialized identity. The “racist” cry takes up this emergent configuration of signs by presupposing the implicit indexical link between “black” and “violence,” and thus, it is a bid to entextualize the preceding discussion as invoking a racist stereotype. In her analysis, Reyes considers not only this discrete event but also things outside of this event, such as racial ideologies and the wider practice of crying “racist” in other kinds of events.

It should be clear from the account so far that any adequate discourse analysis must include context beyond the speech event itself. Part of discourse analysis focuses on **co-text**, that component of context composed by other signs in the speech event (“hammer,” “sword,” “blade,” and so on). But co-text never suffices, because relevant context always extends beyond the speech event. Participants and analysts must be familiar enough with the social context to recognize cultural models and the signs that index them. Potentially relevant context is indefinitely large – extending from signs in the same utterance to locally established stereotypes to widely circulating, institutionalized models. So any adequate discourse analysis focuses on contexts beyond the speech event, presupposing models of identity and social life

that are necessary to interpret the significance of indexical signs and determine the type of social action occurring. Discourse analysis across events goes beyond this claim to make a stronger argument about context beyond the speech event: pathways across linked events are central to many social processes and represent an important new focus for discourse analysis.

Across Events

Sometimes discourse analysts have to know what happened in some other event to interpret a discursive interaction, and adequate discourse analyses always presuppose something about models that have been created and learned in other events. Wortham and Rhodes (2015) make this argument more extensively, describing for narrative discourse, in particular, two different types of context beyond the speech event: context beyond the event that is inevitably presupposed even when the analysis focuses on a discrete individual event and context that involves pathways of linked events.

When we ask certain kinds of research questions, discourse analysis can require a unit of analysis that extends beyond the individual speech event to several events linked in a pathway. Many central human processes that educational research is concerned with take place across and not within events. Learning involves increasingly competent participation in social activities across events, with exposure and practice in one event facilitating participation in subsequent events. Socialization requires an individual to develop repertoires of cultural models, skills, and habits across events and apply those repertoires more appropriately across time. Identity formation relies on being recognized as a certain kind of person across events such that an identity becomes increasingly presupposable over time. Few human processes take place exclusively within single events, and most social scientific research explicitly or tacitly studies processes that involve linked events of one kind or another.

A focus on cross-event pathways raises an important question for discourse analysis. If discourse analysis excels at revealing the structure and function of discrete events, how can this research method provide systematic evidence relevant to processes that occur only across events, like learning, socialization, and identity formation? One response is to do discourse analysis across pathways of events, studying the linkages that allow individuals, signs, stereotypes, and objects to travel across events and participate in a social process like learning, socialization, or identity formation. Instead of assuming that a discrete event is pivotal or typical, discourse analysts must use methods for systematically tracing linkages across events and showing how relevant social processes are accomplished across pathways.

Our approach draws on work in linguistic anthropology to conceptualize how pathways of linked events emerge and function. Linguistic anthropologists have studied the **recontextualization** of speech events for several decades (Bauman and Briggs 1990; Silverstein and Urban 1996). Mehan (1996), for example, describes

how a student becomes “learning disabled” as ways of speaking about him move from less formal discussions among educators and parents into more formal documents and diagnostic settings, then into official institutionalized accounts. No one event is pivotal, and the characterizations change in some respects from event to event, but across the pathway of events the student’s identity emerges and becomes durable.

Agha (2007) provides a powerful general theory of cross-event pathways. He starts with the concept of **register**, a model of discursive behavior that links signs – ways of speaking or behaving – with evaluative typifications about people. Only certain kinds of speakers typically say “dude,” for example, and anyone who utters this form seems either like a young male associated with certain subcultures or like someone imitating or ridiculing such a person. Registers are collections of such links, with a set of signs that presupposes some recognizable social type of speaker, hearer, and event. Agha argues that any association between a sign and a typification has a **domain**, the group of speakers who recognizes this linkage. He then explains how these three elements of a register (sign, typification, and domain) change over time as speakers use and re-use signs across events. The domain expands or contracts, and the signs that index a typification, plus the nature of the stereotype itself, change as the register is used over time.

For example, instead of assuming that a speaker who uses “dude” comes from a defined group, we must investigate how the term has been and is being used, across contexts, investigating empirically how the sign, the stereotype, and the domain emerge, solidify, and change. Kiesling (2004) does such an analysis, tracing the various meanings of “dude” across a range of social contexts over several decades. From Agha’s perspective, we must study cultural models and the signs that index them in this way, across pathways of events.

Agha presents two central concepts for describing the emergence and transformation of registers: **speech chains** and **enregisterment**. Empirically, associations between signs and the social typifications they index emerge across chains or pathways of linked events. In the simplest case, someone hears a certain association (“dude” being used by a certain type of young male) and then in a subsequent event uses that term to index a similar social type (while telling a story about such people, for example, perhaps using reported speech to voice a narrated character). A register emerges across such linked events, as sign-stereotype links are established and re-used by members of a growing social domain.

Enregisterment is the process through which recurring signs become linked to social typifications across speech chains. An identity for an individual or a stereotype about a group becomes widely recognized through enregisterment, as larger groups of speakers come to recognize the link between a set of signs and an emerging group. Cultural patterns like registers do not stay stable for a bounded group, as presupposed in many simple theories of society and culture. Instead, links between signs and stereotypes emerge and shift. Participants in interaction must coordinate their heterogeneous repertoires in practice, not draw on a stable set of shared categories (Bourdieu 1972/1977; Rymes 2014). A register emerges and changes as

speakers repeat the use of certain signs across events, indexing presupposed stereotypes that themselves shift over time.

Often a register has evaluative content, construing speakers positively or negatively. Sometimes registers are institutionalized, when schools, governments, or other institutions codify guidelines for usage or disseminate sign-stereotype linkages. These evaluations and institutionalizations can provide stability to a register, but signs, typifications, and domains continue to change, and individuals who come to the register at different points in its history often use it in heterogeneous ways. Analysis of any register thus requires attention to changes that emerge over time. Inoue (2006), for example, describes how a register referred to as “Japanese women’s language” emerged over a century ago in Japan. She traces how the same sorts of speech come to index very different groups of women across decades.

Cross-event chains or pathways constitute a different unit of analysis, larger than individual speech events but smaller and more dynamic than macrolevel sociological essentializations. In order to analyze pathways of linked events, a discourse analyst must study the individual events that make up the pathway. But discourse analyses of processes that concern many educational researchers – such as learning, socialization, and identity formation – must also study how cross-event linkages emerge and solidify.

Discourse Analysis Within and Across Events

Cross-event discourse analysis borrows crucial principles from within-event discourse analysis, but it also has some distinctive characteristics. As Silverstein (2005) argues, the principles for **intradiscursive** entextualization are in many ways similar to those for **interdiscursive** enregisterment. That is, many of the same principles used to explain the solidification of social action within an event can be extended to explain the emergence of registers across events. Configurations of mutually presupposing signs emerge within a discrete event. Similarly, sign-typification linkages across events come to presuppose each other and establish a more robust pathway that has a clear shape and direction. Across a set of linked events, participants signal particular typifications and position others in ways that become familiar and robustly established. As participants across events presuppose the sign-typification linkage, it becomes more durably presupposed. The emergence of sign-typification links across events can be analyzed using the same tools introduced above, identifying configurations of indexical signs across events that presuppose each other and establish more robust pathways that accomplish cross-event processes like learning, socialization, and identity formation.

For example, Wortham (2006) describes the emergence of a robust social identity for several students in an American high school class across an academic year. He traces the emergence and use of signs that come to index a particular identity for individual students across events. In one case he describes, the student’s identity shifts over time as she goes from being a disruptive outcast to a principled dissenter.

The analysis shows how teachers and students establish each of these identities across many linked events by deploying signs that presuppose increasingly relevant context, context that allows participants to infer more and more robustly that the student is a disruptive outcast or a principled dissenter. Within a given event, the identification might be provisional or transitory, but across events certain signs and models of personhood come to presuppose each other and lock together in a configuration that makes the social identity difficult to evade.

As described above, the social action accomplished in an event emerges as relevant context is established, as configurations of signs become organized such that they position narrated and actual participants as accomplishing social actions. When we do discourse analysis on pathways of linked events, something similar but more complicated happens. Table 1 compares discourse analysis within and across events. Discourse analysis across events includes the same general components as discourse analysis within events, but several additional components are required to analyze a pathway of linked events.

Discourse analysis across speech events is similar to discourse analysis of discrete events, focusing on how narrated events and indexical signs create relevant context as signs are configured poetically, thereby establishing participants' positions and social actions. But discourse analysis across events has three additional features. First, when discourse analysis extends across events, analysts must select the events to focus on, identifying which events are linked in a pathway. Linked events become relevant context for each other, often through devices like reported speech, recurring narrated events or other sorts of parallelism. These linked events form a special kind of context, **cross-event context**, that is important to establishing social action both within and across events. Second, indexical signs across linked events provide a more extensive set that can be configured into mutually presupposing structures and thus establish relevant context. In order to explain how social action and social processes are accomplished across pathways of events, analysts must describe a **cross-event configuration of indexical signs**. Third, pathways across linked events can accomplish more complex social processes and more durable results than are typically achieved in single events. Analysts must describe how actions and processes are accomplished as a **pathway of linked events takes on a definite shape**. Discourse analysis across events shows how participants use signs to accomplish a more rigid pathway – establishing robust positioning, social action and social processes – as configurations of signs across events link together and come to presuppose relevant context.

In the first stage of this approach, represented on the first line of the table, the analyst infers which events are potentially linked in a pathway. The process of determining relevant linked events requires inference, and this inference depends on which indexical signs and aspects of context become relevant. Many events might potentially be part of a pathway, and the analyst must examine signs in these events in order to decide which ones are in fact linked. After identifying linked events, the analyst describes the narrated events for each. In the next stage, represented on the second and fourth lines, the discourse analyst engages in the iterative process of

Table 1 Components of discourse analysis within and across speech events (Adapted from Wortham and Reyes 2015)

| | Within events: Contextualization and entextualization | Across events: Recontextualization and enregisterment |
|--|--|--|
| Narrated Events Serve as Resources | <i>Map Narrated Events</i> Discursive interactions describe narrated events, which communicate content (this communication itself being a type of action) <i>and</i> provide resources for other social action in the narrating event. Mapping narrated events identifies potential resources that may be important to the discourse analysis. | <i>Select Linked Events and Map Narrated Events</i> Narrated events have been established in prior discursive interactions, and these are often presupposed such that they become resources in subsequent events. Analysis must identify linked events that might make up a pathway and map the narrated events within each of these. |
| Indexical Signs Presuppose and Create Relevant Context | <i>Select Indexicals and Identify Relevant Context</i> Indexical signs point to potentially relevant aspects of the context. Participants and analysts attend to these signs and make inferences about what context is relevant. This is the process of contextualization, in which relevant context emerges for understanding what is happening in the speech event. | <i>Select Indexicals and Identify Relevant Cross-Event and Other Context</i> Indexical signs point to past and future events along the pathway, tying events together. Other events along the pathway are established as a central part of relevant context, through indexical links like reported speech, shared narrated events and repeated evaluations. Focal indexical signs from across linked events point to cross-event context (other events linked in a pathway) and to other aspects of context that become relevant to understanding social actions and processes accomplished across the pathway. |
| Poetic Configuration of Signs Establishes Relevant Context and Supports an Account of Social Action | <i>Configure Indexicals</i> Not all potentially salient indexical signs point to aspects of context that become relevant, and not all possible interpretations of social action become plausible. Signs are configured poetically, making some of them more salient. Ultimately, a poetically organized configuration of | <i>Delineate Cross-Event Configurations of Indexicals</i> A set of signs and relevant context gets established as indexicals across events are poetically configured, as signs from several events come to presuppose each other. As this cross-event configuration of signs solidifies, it provisionally ends the back-and-forth construal of |

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | <p>Within events: Contextualization and entextualization</p> | <p>Across events: Recontextualization and enregisterment</p> |
| | <p>mutually presupposing indexical signs ends the back-and-forth construal of relevant context and possible interpretations, such that one account of social action becomes the most plausible.</p> | <p>relevant context and establishes the social actions and processes that are being accomplished across events, thus establishing a more rigid pathway.</p> |
| <p>Relevant Context Grounds Inferences about Voices, Evaluations, Positions and Actions</p> | <p><i>Construe Indexicals</i> Narrated events and indexical signs make certain aspects of the context relevant to interpreting the discursive interaction. Through entextualization, participants construe these signs and contexts, providing possible interpretations of the voicing, evaluation, positioning, and social action occurring in the narrated and narrating events. Rows 2, 3, and 4 are iterative, with the selection of relevant context and the construal of that context shaping each other, until a configuration of signs solidifies and makes one interpretation of the positioning and social action most plausible.</p> | <p><i>Construe Indexicals and Trace the Shape of Pathways</i> As linked events collectively come to presuppose overlapping relevant context (e.g., relevant stereotypes from the larger society), a pathway becomes more rigid and particular interpretations of social action become more highly presupposable. Instead of entextualization, we have the broader process of enregisterment, with a pathway of events collectively accomplishing some social action and process. This is also a dialectic process, with newly relevant context in a current event providing opportunities for reinterpreting the pathway, while a firmer account of the pathway constrains the context that might be relevant. When cross-event configurations of signs become stable, they make one construal of the action and broader social process most plausible.</p> |
| <p>Participants' Positions in and across Narrating Events can be Inferred from Relevant Context, and Social Action is Accomplished as Participants Come to Presuppose one Version of What Happened</p> | <p><i>Identify Positioning and Social Action in Narrating Events</i> Relevant context allows participants and analysts to infer the interactional and evaluative positions being occupied by narrated characters and participants in the narrating event. These</p> | <p><i>Identify Emerging Cross-Event Actions and Processes</i> Participants and analysts attend to relevant context across events and make inferences about positioning and social action both within and across events. Pathways across events can accomplish more complex, durable social</p> |

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

| | Within events: Contextualization and entextualization | Across events: Recontextualization and enregisterment |
|--|--|---|
| | positions, together with other relevant context, allow inferences about the types of social action occurring in the narrating event. Inferences are always provisional, but in practice stable interpretations of an event usually come to be presupposed. | actions and processes, like socialization, learning, and social identification. Over time pathways across events become rigid and presuppose certain outcomes, but these can change with future recontextualizations. |

identifying relevant indexicals that occur across linked events, then inferring from the relevant context signaled by these indexicals the types of voices, evaluations, and positioning that might be occurring across events. Construals of voices, evaluations, and positioning make certain indexicals salient, but then newly considered indexicals make new construals plausible, in a back-and-forth interpretive process. This dialectic ends provisionally when a configuration of mutually presupposing indexical signs from across events solidifies and establishes some interpretation as most plausible. This cross-event configuration of signs is represented on the third line of the table. In the last stage, represented on the last line, analysts infer the social actions and processes accomplished across the pathway.

Conclusion

This chapter has described a method for doing discourse analysis across events. Discourse analysis across events can enhance educational research on a range of issues, such as learning, socialization, identity formation, instructional practice, and classroom interactional structure. Any event – in an educational setting or otherwise – participates in multiple pathways, and an analyst must often trace a pathway of linked events relevant to the research focus in order to illuminate how the focal object or process unfolds. Discourse analysis across speech events requires analysis of individual events in a pathway, but it also requires three additional steps. Analysts must **identify linked events** that make up a pathway, studying how events become relevant to each other as they become linked through reported speech, parallelism across narrated events, or other devices. Analysts must **delineate cross-event configurations**, studying how indexical signs across events come to presuppose each other and create relevant context that establishes more rigid pathways. Finally, analysts must **trace the shape of pathways**, showing how they become rigid and establish more complex and durable processes like learning, socialization, and identity formation.

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Part II

Discourse, Power, and Identities

Language Choice and Symbolic Domination

Monica Heller and Mireille McLaughlin

Abstract

The unequal distribution of school success along ethnic, racialized, and classed lines has been a central field of enquiry for educators, linguists, and sociolinguists. In this chapter, we present an overview of the field, starting with the pioneering work of Bourdieu and Passeron. We then move through the diverse explanations that have developed to explain the role language plays in scholastic attainment: deficit, difference, and domination. We follow with an exploration of contemporary work on language creativity and authority in a globalized economy, where multilingualism gains value at the same time as the mobility of population is transforming how state languages are imagined. Finally, we present two emerging trends in the study of language choice and symbolic domination: governmentality and intersectionality.

Keywords

Linguistic capital • Social reproduction • Symbolic domination

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Symbolic Domination and Education

Research on language choice and symbolic domination in schooling can be seen as one approach to one of the major sociological questions regarding education, namely, the role of education in social and cultural reproduction. Sociologists and anthropologists of education have long argued that schooling often is supposed to be a major means of meritocratic, and hence democratic, access to social success; in fact its evaluation procedures favor the already successful. In other words, schooling simply reproduces existing social hierarchies, whether based on class, ethnicity, race, religion, or gender.

Most of this research was based on examination of patterns of school achievement that is on the statistically skewed outcomes of the educational process. Pioneering work of Bourdieu and Passeron (1970) on this subject focused attention on the process of social selection through education. Central to their argument is the notion that schools contribute to social and cultural reproduction because the knowledge they value is not, as they claim, universal, but rather is the privileged property of the dominant classes. As a result, students who come to school already possessing that knowledge have a better chance of doing well at school than those who do not. However, to fulfill this function effectively, it is crucial that it be masked, that is, all participants must accept the basic, albeit false, assumption that schools really are meritocratic. Bourdieu and Passeron term symbolic domination the ability of the dominant classes to convince themselves and others that the existing social hierarchy is thus justified on the basis of inherent properties of people or knowledge (this might include personality characteristics such as talent or drive, or properties of knowledge, such as the relative purity or clarity of languages).

For Bourdieu and Passeron, language is central to the exercise of symbolic domination, for it is through language that reality is socially constructed. Clearly, this implies that there are many ways in which linguistic variation, as it is tied to social differentiation and stratification, is relevant to social and cultural reproduction. However, for the purposes of this chapter, we limit the discussion to two of the most evident ways in which language contributes to this process, that is, through preferences for the acquisition and display of knowledge through certain languages (or language varieties) rather than others or for the acquisition and display of knowledge of certain languages themselves. We do want to emphasize, however, that the struggle over access to linguistic resources, and to the ability to determine their value, is never about language alone. Rather, language is a terrain of struggle in which other principles of social organization, that is, other ways of making difference (gender, race, sexuality, ability, religion), are produced and reproduced themselves and get bound up in the production and reproduction of social inequality.

In the rest of this chapter, we show how the notions of Bourdieu and Passeron have met up with an Anglo-American tradition of sociolinguistic interest in linguistic and social difference and school success and how the resulting cross-fertilization permits an analysis of the local and the global conditions influencing social selection through language choice in multilingual educational settings. This type of analysis

opens the door to explorations not only of social reproduction (the only scenario Bourdieu and Passeron discussed) but also of challenges to existing forms of symbolic domination. In the final section, we consider some implications of these areas of research for future trends in research, policy, and practice.

Sociolinguistic Approaches to School Achievement: Deficit, Difference, and Domination

The skewed representation of certain groups among those doing well or, conversely, doing poorly has been a central debate in the field of education. The first scholarship on the question opposed two schools of thoughts: proponents of a “genetic” deficit opposed those explaining the (lack of) success of pupils through “environmental” factors. While geneticists situated differences in the bodies of ethnic groups, environmental scholars explained the (lack of) success of pupils in terms of cognitive, social, and linguistic deficit (Jensen 1969; Bereiter and Engelmann 1966). In a structuralist fashion, intelligence, knowledge, and language were understood as fixed social objects. Even while arguing against essentialism, “environmental” scholars situated the explanation of underperformance in the aptitudes, skills, or culture of the groups of students themselves.

Along with other social scientists, several prominent sociolinguists (notably William Labov and John Gumperz; cf. Gumperz 1982, 1986; Labov 1972, 1982) attacked this argument on the grounds that sociolinguistics showed that the problem was not one of the degrees of knowledge, but rather one of a kind. They demonstrated that educationally unsuccessful groups certainly possessed systematic knowledge (e.g., their linguistic production was perfectly grammatical, even if its rules were different from those of the standard). According to them, the problem was that schools did not recognize this knowledge, since it was different from the forms of knowledge valued by educators. This insight inspired over a decade’s worth of research focusing first on discovering the nature of linguistic and cultural differences at play in a variety of settings and their consequences for educational evaluation and second on ways of transforming schooling so as to take these differences into account in ways that might equalize chances of school success for otherwise marginalized groups.

The most influential of these studies focused on differences between White, Black, and Native American students and schools in the USA. Among these, it is important to cite the early work of Philips (1972), who showed that Native American ways of learning and displaying knowledge were radically at variance with those of classrooms run by White teachers. In particular, Native American students were accustomed to learning by observation, to collective undertakings, and to choosing when to display competence once acquired. Teachers’ insistence on individual displays of the learning process forced students to violate their cultural norms, resulting in patterns of student resistance. While such research has inspired many people, and many such programs seem to have met with at least a certain degree

of success, they have also encountered criticism from a number of quarters (e.g., Heath 1983; Delpit 1988; Ogbu 1993). What these critiques have in common is that they point out that the cultural difference model (as it has come to be known) cannot account for some cases because it does not take into account the relationship between cultural difference and social dominance; in other words, it tends to ignore the relations of power obtained in schooling (and in research on schooling) and to neglect the contribution of schooling to social and cultural reproduction. Its primary recommendation (culturally compatible programs and pedagogy) does not accord with minority needs to at least understand the language and culture of power (Delpit 1988) and does not work unless students are convinced that education actually gets them somewhere (Erickson 1993; Ogbu 1993, 1999). It also fails to address issues faced in ethnolinguistically heterogeneous settings, whether stable or in flux.

A body of research emerged conceiving of language choice as an area for the reproduction and resistance to various forms of domination. Much of this research focused on the issue of language choice as one area where struggles over the value and distribution of linguistic and cultural capital emerge most clearly. One reason for this is that research on code-switching since the 1970s demonstrated the prevalence of this practice in (usually officially monolingual) educational institutions in multilingual settings and established its effectiveness for purposes of social, discourse, conversational organization and crossings (Martin-Jones 1995; Rampton 1995). By the early 1990s, this strand of research had also developed an awareness of the necessity of examining the social, economic, and political constraints and processes that not only make language choice an issue in such settings but also make them meaningful. It became clear, in other words, that language choice practices in educational settings were about, and had to be understood in terms of, social structures and processes beyond the ethnographic present and the local site (Heller 2006). Indeed, given the centrality of social selection in educational processes, it became clear that language choice in schools or other educational settings was, at least in part, about struggles of power; about, quite literally, whose voice would dominate educational discourse; and about whom education is really for.

This trend is usefully captured in Heller and Martin-Jones (2001), a collection of papers from a variety of such settings around the world. The collection explicitly aims to link language choice practices in interaction in educational settings to institutional processes and to the political economic foundations of symbolic domination. The central notion is that codes represent institutional authority, or challenges to that authority, and can be drawn on in ways that serve principally to establish or resist the local, interactional order and, through that order, the larger institutional and social one. It is the mediation through the local interactional order that instantiates symbolic domination, since it is there that relations of power are masked through appeals to legitimizing ideologies.

For example, the first author's own contribution to that collection shows how, in French-language minority schools in Canada, the authority of the teacher is maintained through an interactional order based on a sequential organization of turn-taking, which is institutionally legitimized through the notion of "respect" ("respect" means listening silently while others talk and talking when invited to do so). This local

interactional order permits teachers to control both the form and the content of talk in ways which, among other things, allow them to reproduce institutional language norms (a preference for standard, monolingual-type French). These norms are in turn legitimized through the notion that they are necessary for the maintenance of French as a minority language and for the maintenance of the quality of that French. The unintended effect, however, is to privilege students who are speakers of the valued variety of French, members of the new middle class, as against working-class speakers of the (often bilingual) vernacular, despite the fact that the schools ostensibly exist to promote the interests of all francophones, especially those who suffer most from economic, social, and political marginalization. Williams (1987), Jaffe (1999 and her contribution in Heller and Martin-Jones 2001), and McDonald (1990) have made similar arguments about how the standardization of minority languages (in their cases, Welsh, Corsican, and Breton) through education (as well as through related forms of linguistic research and legislation) serves the interests of emerging middle classes who benefit from political mobilization, while constructing new relations of inequality internal to the ostensibly unified minority. Martin Rojo and her collaborators (2010) show how the knowledge immigrant students bring to Madrid schools is “decapitalized,” that is, actively reduced in value, through a complex interaction of interactional and institutional processes, which depend on each other. The result is the construction of the social category “immigrant,” composed of a reduced number of national or regional and gendered stereotypes, as a candidate for school failure. These cases show clearly how language choice helps to reproduce (or, on rare occasions, to challenge) the unequal distribution of resources in the community through symbolic domination.

Education and Language Choice in a Global World

Recent research follows the reproduction and challenges to symbolic domination in the globalized economy. These studies link the distribution of resources and to the transformation of the value of language in late capitalism. Globalization has disrupted ethnonational understandings of the value of language and increased the visibility of multilingualism in terms of valued commodified resources (Heller 2010), human rights (Duchêne 2008), and migration (Martin Rojo 2010; Pujolar 2010). May calls this process the “multilingual turn”: the increased circulation of people, ideas, and capital makes it impossible to ignore the multilingualism which is characteristic of modern classrooms (May 2014). Further, this multilingualism is understood as both complex and dynamic, moving us away from the more static “culture contact” models of earlier approaches.

Recent studies have turned their attention to the multiple ways in which marginalized students respond to dominant school and societal linguistic ideologies. Studies have examined a variety of modes of struggle to gain access to dominant forms of language, in particular English on the global stage. These include some important examinations of the ways in which the value of English in the globalized new economy is tied to more local or regional structures of social selection. Many of

these have focused on Korea and the Philippines, whose position in the world economy has shifted in recent years (Shin 2014; Lo 2009; Park and Bae 2009; Kang and Abelmann 2011). Other studies have examined forms of creative resistance, some of which lead to change and some of which have the perverse consequence of reproducing the social order (Rampton 2011; Jaspers 2014). Others have focused on attempts to appropriate dominant forms of linguistic capital, trying to seize control of definitions of its value (see in particular work on World Englishes, e.g., Kachru et al. 2009).

A second thread ties these processes to market conditions in order to help us understand how linguistic legitimacy and the value of linguistic resources get constructed in the globalized new economy. Park and Wee (2012) focus in particular on markets for English, while much of the work out of Europe and North America focuses instead on changing values of multilingualism (Duchêne and Heller 2012).

Future Directions

Current work has begun to explore the ways in which language choice as a discursive or conversational strategy is connected to its effects regarding the distribution of linguistic (and hence other cultural or even material) resources, that is, to social and cultural reproduction. However, we still understand poorly the nature of that link and in particular its relationship to legitimating ideologies of language, class, ethnicity, gender, and education and to institutional structures and processes. Emergent work in this field tends to cluster around notions of governmentality and intersectionality. Sociolinguistics has much to contribute to both of these conceptual fields.

The notion of language creativity is often challenged by the structural inequalities existing between the authority of the school and the strategies of pupils. In spite of years of linguistic resistance being performed by students, schools continue to select and reproduce social hierarchies. The concept of governmentality is emerging in sociolinguistics as a space to situate creativity and resistance within broader political economic rationalities (Rampton 2014). Following Foucault (1982), scholars pay attention to the rationalities that structure unequal linguistic subjectivities in school settings. Among this body of work, Flores (2014) studied bilingual policy in the USA and argued that bilingual education, at first a strategy of resistance, gets reincorporated in the dominant, colonizing ideologies it first sought to disrupt. He argues that as a result, minority population's fluid linguistic practices continue to be excluded from the resources distributed through education.

Emergent research also links language choice to other processes of categorization and oppression (Rampton 2011; Block 2014). In dialogue with scholars of intersectionality, sociolinguists argue that language is a rich terrain for the reproduction of social inequalities. In a language economy, it is constructed, understood, and valued as a skill (Heller 2010). Conceived as a competence, it becomes a terrain for discrimination based on merit (McLaughlin 2014). In this, linguistic discrimination (like ableism) differs from gendered, ethnic, racial, and sexual discrimination,

as skills are considered legitimate terrains of discrimination in late capitalist societies. As a result authors have been able to chart in greater detail how language becomes a terrain for the reproduction of other types of discrimination (Allan 2013).

The results of such research have clear practical implications. This work fundamentally asks whom education is for, who benefits from the way things are, and who is marginalized. That leaves us with the question of whether we are happy with the picture our research portrays or whether changes are needed. Either way, such research should help us understand what policies and practices actually produce and therefore help identify critical points of intervention. Most importantly, it shows that educational language choices are never neutral.

Cross-References

► [Critical Discourse Analysis in Education](#)

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

Alastair Pennycook: [Critical Applied Linguistics and Education](#). In Volume: Language Policy and Political Issues in Education

Danny Martinez: [Researching the Language of Race and Racism in Education](#). In Volume: Research Methods in Language and Education

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Multilingual Classrooms at Times of Superdiversity

Massimiliano Spotti and Sjaak Kroon

Abstract

In the present contribution we deal with multilingual classrooms and superdiversity. More specifically we deal with the consequences that a revised understanding of language – based on the concept of language repertoires – has for language education as well as for educators caught in the transition between diversity and superdiversity. After highlighting that dealing with multilingualism in regular school classrooms, at least in Western Europe, has been a matter of concern for teachers and learners' educational pathways for decades, we move on to dealing with the founding fathers of sociolinguistics and what their seminal work has brought to the recent reevaluation of the concept of sociolinguistic repertoires. We then discuss how this concept highlights the fact that regular education professionals appear to suffer from a “trained blindness” mostly focusing on attainment targets and normativity, rather than paying attention to the actual way in which students “Language” across formal, nonformal, and informal institutional spaces.

Keywords

Multilingualism • Education • Superdiversity • Immigrant minority languages • Repertoires

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Introduction

The issue of dealing with multilingualism in regular school classrooms has been a point of attention for teachers right from the start of compulsory education, at least in Western Europe, when children speaking nonstandard varieties of the official language, i.e., dialects, came to inhabit classrooms where they were confronted with teachers using the standard variety as a language of instruction (cf. Cheshire et al. 1989). Furthermore and in addition to local varieties, the very moment in which mainstream educational institutions also opened their doors to children that belonged to, back then, establishing immigrant minority communities, they became immediately confronted with the bilingualism of their newly admitted students and with an array of phenomena that came along, e.g., limited proficiency in the school language, the presence of ethnic minority languages in schools, low school achievement, discrimination, prejudice, societal disadvantage, remedy measures, and the presence of non-local varieties of the official language (cf. Jaspaert and Kroon 1991). This situation gave rise to a plethora of educational reactions that often were far from being based on the results of adequate empirical research. One telling example was the establishment of early language compensation programs in the USA that were subsequently deemed to have failed as a consequence of their limited understanding of the variability of language as a human resource and an instrument of teaching and learning (cf. Kroon and Vallen 1997). Other examples are the varieties of approaches in transitional bilingual education that ended up becoming an instrument for the production of monolingual children in multilingual classrooms (cf. Van Avermaet and Sierens *forthcoming*). One of the main presuppositions of these and similar approaches to language variation phenomena in educational contexts was their indebtedness to a monoglottal ideology. That is, they were led by the politically driven widely spread metapragmatic judgment that bilingualism, as any form of hybridity in language use, had to be regarded as an impediment hindering the educational pathways of pupils from immigrant minority backgrounds and resulting in their lagging behind in comparison with their monolingual peers. Over the decades, however, it became clear that multilingualism in education and society had instead to be considered as a resource, a positive asset for learning and development (Kroon and Vallen 2006). As a consequence of ongoing migration movements, multilingualism became a much more multifaceted phenomenon than it had been in the early years of bilingual education: Dozens of languages became part and

parcel of urban classrooms in the last decades of the twentieth century, and teachers simply had to deal with these languages in their regular teaching (cf. the case studies in Gogolin and Kroon 2000 and Bezemer et al. 2005). This contribution starts where the previous contribution of Bezemer and Kroon (2008) has ended, that is, it starts from the field of research in regular multilingual and multicultural classrooms. It will show how the monoglot ideology mentioned above has moved from bilingualism and the challenge brought by bilingualism to education, to multilingualism. From there, it will come to grips with a new phenomenon, that of superdiversity, and it will draw upon the implications that superdiversity holds for education as well as for the ways educators seek to find solutions for combining superdiversity with the normativity that necessarily characterizes (language) education.

Early Developments and Initial Contributors

Our working definition of bilingualism, or rather multilingualism, here is one that sees two or more languages or varieties of an official language being involved in a communicative exchange in a sociocultural space. Once we examine the relationship between bilingualism – since that is the reduced and manageable form multilingualism is traditionally given in schools – and education, we see that this relationship is a complex one. In fact, for the past decades, we have become confronted with the fact that there are several concerns about bilingualism and the educational wellbeing of pupils. These concerns address its additive or subtractive as well as its balanced or unbalanced nature, along with the possible lagging behind of bilingual pupils' educational achievement in comparison to their monolingual peers. The ruling assumption was, and partly still is, that exposure to and engagement in language variation is potentially damaging for pupils' development.

John Edwards' review of the field of bilingualism and his examination of the concerns listed above, and of how they have played a role in establishing who is (and who is not) a bilingual, is still one of the most representative publications in the field (Edwards 2004). His uptake, very much anchored in a structuralist understanding of language, shows that much of the concern with bilingualism had to do with coming up with workable definitions of who is and who is not a bilingual language user and with what a bilingual can and cannot do. Before Edwards, many have engaged with the job of defining and measuring the degree of bilingualism that someone may hold. In 1933, for instance, Leonard Bloomfield had already observed that bilingualism resulted from the addition of a "perfectly learned" foreign language to one's own (Bloomfield 1933). Weinreich (1953) instead defined bilingualism in a somewhat vaguer fashion. He addressed it as a loose alternation of two codes. All of the employed criteria ended up revamping the debate on whether someone either could or could not be categorized as bilingual and raised also the question around the degree of competence and performance someone had to have at both individual as well as societal level in order to be a bilingual.

From there, research on bilingualism and education has progressed on two major pathways (cf. Hamers and Blanc 2000 for a comprehensive review). The first

engaged with the effects of bilingualism for the individual in different domains, the second instead engaged with the development of metalinguistic awareness and knowledge in bilingual education with an emerging research consensus that bilingualism has resulted to have positive effects on children's cognitive development. While research on cognitive development has given way to supportive evidence for the inclusion of bilingualism in school classrooms, it appears instead that regular education has kept on cultivating a bleak view on all that surrounds hybrid forms of linguistic expression and language variation among students. In fact, although approaches to bilingualism in education seem to be advantageous for students' careers, such approaches are mainly situated in "experimental" educational contexts (that are made bilingual). Positive developments around bilingualism and bilingual education (Cummins 2000) were and still are meeting the barricades of regular education where the shaping of pupils' identities as citizens of a country and speakers of a mother tongue were (and still are) seen as part and parcel of a national project (Kroon 2003). We therefore need to reconsider the concept of bilingualism (i.e., multilingualism) as a personal as well as school classroom phenomenon.

Major Contributions

The study of language and education, and more precisely of language as social practice in educational contexts, is much indebted to the work of John Gumperz (1974) and Dell Hymes (1972). Both started approaches to language variation in and outside the classroom while academically engaged in debates around bilingualism. It is thanks to Gumperz, from his work on linguistic relativity to his later work on *cross-talk*, that sociolinguistics managed to gain ground in mapping the infrastructure of spoken language in intercultural encounters. In his theorizing, while a named language was a category for those who studied language, it had not been so for those who were the object of that study, that is, for users of that same language. Gumperz, in fact, started focusing on communicative practices, functions, and repertoires in spoken interactions and, for him, an approach to the study of *language* became an approach in which the central question is not how (meta-)linguistic knowledge is structured, but rather a study in which the core notions are interpretation, understanding, and meaning-making in interaction and social communication among language users. Gumperz (1982) proposed a sociolinguistic analysis that had as its focal point how interpretation is intertwined with understanding and through that with the construction of shared common ground. Gumperz' earlier work was linked to the beginnings of sociolinguistics and particularly to the establishment of what became known as the "ethnography of communication" (Gumperz 1972). The later phase of his work became what is generally referred to as interactional sociolinguistics and implied a strongly critical stance toward other influential schools of linguistic thinking. What is regarded as the Gumperzian approach to the study of language and society can thus be summed up as a focus on social interaction through language.

The Gumperzian conceptual, intellectual, and empirical itinerary and its follow-up that we have just outlined needs to be put next to another pivotal figure of

contemporary sociolinguistics, Dell Hymes. For Hymes, language is formed in, by, and for, social, cultural, and political contexts – injustice and social hierarchy on the one hand and human agency and creativity on the other. There is, for Hymes, nothing “mechanical” about the production and reproduction of texts, cultures, or institutions, education being here the case in point (cf. Cazden et al. 1972). What were then understood by structural linguists as different languages could in fact be different language varieties, and what an analysis of language features could do would be to designate or highlight lexical or phonological styles that made up for varieties of the same language. Hymes followed a linguistic-anthropological tradition, the foundations and assumptions of which have tended to develop in parallel with (the other) mainstream sociolinguistics in the Labovian-Fishmanian tradition. In this linguistic-anthropological tradition, a gradual deconstruction of the notion of “language” itself happened: “Language” as a unified (Chomskyan) concept was “chopped up” and reconfigured, as it were, into a far more layered and fragmented concept of “communication,” with forms and functions far broader than just the transmission of denotational meaning (e.g., Hymes 1996). Rather, Hymes, with his strenuous efforts to eradicate inequality in education, gave way to the concept of voice (cf. Juffermans and van der Aa 2013) which made the discrepancy between form and function in language use a useful analytic tool for the understanding of the making of inequality in educational contexts and beyond.

Of particular interest here is also the work done around the concept of *language ideologies* since the early 1990s. Building on the Hymesian dichotomy of form and function, scholars started working on how people hold socioculturally conditioned ideas about language, its usage, and its effects within institutions (Silverstein 1979; Kroskrity et al. 1992; Blommaert and Verscheuren 1998; Kroskrity 2000). What this development gave way to was the idea that the use of language comes along with metapragmatic judgments about how to use it, why we use it, and for which effects. Even more: People use language on the basis of how we language-ideologically construct and perceive our interactions (Woolard 1994; Jaffe 1999; Irvine and Gal 2000). Distinctions between language forms – the “variation” of dialectology, for instance – appear to be governed by ideologically mediated understandings such as those distinguishing “standard” from “dialect” or “sociolect.” In fact, any aspect of linguistic-communicative form can be ideologically configured in such a way that it “indexically” points towards an aspect of social and cultural structure and derives meaning from it. The contextually situated deployment of such ideologically mediated variation creates an object far more complex than the established notion of “language” itself: the “total linguistic fact” (Silverstein 1985). This invites a kind of analysis that bypasses the a priori assignment of specific sociolinguistic statuses to specific linguistic-communicative resources because such statuses – e.g., the assumption that certain resources are “English,” “standard English,” or “standard American English” and the assumptions that the identities of those who use these varieties fall within certain categories – become objects of inquiry in their own right. Evidently, this calls into question the presupposed stability of “-lingualism,” as in “bi-“ or “multi-,” and gives priority to language being understood as a set of empirically observable *practices* in which “languages,” “codes,” “-lects,” and

“register” emerge as the ideological byproduct. Notwithstanding Gumperz’, Hymes’, and Silverstein’s efforts of bringing a new sociolinguistic armor for unraveling the intricacies of intercultural encounters taking place in, among others, educational settings, regular education has kept steady against language variation and hybridity whether in its spoken or written form. This aversion for language variation in regular school classrooms is well documented in Europe by ethnographic studies dealing with teachers managing their multilingual classroom realities through a monolingual lens or exposing a monolingual habitus in their approach to the language hybridity of their pupils (see Bezemer et al. 2005; Gogolin and Kroon 2000; Kroon 2003). In contrast to this ongoing monolingual approach set up in multilingual classrooms, the more recent history at the change of the century has shown that education could not do away with the incipient growth of a student population that had multilingualism as its *conditio humana*, making language variation and hybridity of oral and written expression become key features of regular school classrooms. Classrooms with an ever growing plethora of languages have become education’s daily bread. Sociolinguistic research across the previous and present century has tried to make a point about regular classrooms as loci for and of identity construction, as well as loci for the nurturing and spreading of stylized heteroglossic speech practices of youngsters with immigrant minority backgrounds.

In this regard, a further advancement in the field of sociolinguistics and education is the one brought by research on crossing and stylization in the everyday linguistic practices of youngsters in multiethnic Britain by Rampton (1999). This language crossing in the UK context has been corroborated by Harris’ (1997) work on language use and new ethnicities in secondary multicultural classrooms, examining language use of postdiaspora London’s youth, as well by other linguistic ethnography scholars outside the UK, such as Jaspers (2005), Spotti (2007, 2008), and Van der Aa (2013). This new sociolinguistic endeavor showed that while, on the one hand, variationist sociolinguistics, as Rampton (2011, p. 2) points out, pays much attention to forms and ideologies, not much attention is being paid to situated interaction. On the other hand, whereas conversation analysis pays attention to fine-grained situated interactions, it tends to neglect discourse and ideology. It is instead through the combination of stylistic performances together with ideological categories that scholarly efforts have brought the analysis of speakers’ stylistic choices to pay attention to the nonreferential social indexical possibilities given to speech.

Recent research already shows awareness of the above in tackling multilingualism and, while doing so, investigating the ideological categories that are emerging from discourses about multilingualism and education (see Blommaert et al. 2012). Another advancement in the study of multilingualism is the one brought into sociolinguistics by the Copenhagen group led by Jørgensen and the formulation of the concept of polylinguaging (Jørgensen et al. 2011). While developed almost exclusively within the frame of a longitudinal project on urban multilingualism in Copenhagen multiethnic schools, polylinguaging emphasizes the multisensory, multimodal, multisemiotic, and multilingual nature at play in the meaning-making process involved in communicative exchanges. This reassessment sees language as

but one of the vehicles through which meaning is made and communicated through the strategic employment of multiple semiotic resources. In interaction, speakers first and foremost use linguistic resources rather than languages understood as coherent packages. Somewhere along the way speakers learn that some of these resources are thought to belong together in “languages.” In this sense “languages” can be described as sociocultural constructs (Heller 2007; Makoni and Pennycook 2006). These constructs have a powerful impact on speakers’ sociolinguistic knowledge and organization of linguistic material, and speakers sometimes juxtapose features from different “languages” in the same interaction. Such polylingual behaviour (Jørgensen and Møller 2014) may evolve into recognizable ways of speaking that their users (and others) may identify with and describe through labels such as “street” or “Ghetto” language or with adjectives such as the “natural” way of speaking, running the risk of tripping over the wires of new forms of essentialist ideologization of these language forms.

Work in Progress

It is through the momentum started by Blommaert (2010) that the term globalization has become associated with sociolinguistics. The term “globalization,” according to Blommaert (2010, p. 13), “is most commonly used as a shorthand for the intensified flows of capital, goods, people, images and discourses around the globe, driven by technological innovations, mainly in the field of media and information and communication technology, and resulting in new patterns of global activity, community organization and culture.” A central concept in globalization is mobility, especially mobility of human beings. Traditionally, this type of mobility tended to be restricted to rather fixed groups of people emigrating from one country to another for reasons of poverty, unemployment, war, discrimination, and the like, with the aim of improving their own or their children’s living conditions in their new country of residence. According to Vertovec (2006, 2007), the profile and nature of migration in Western countries has changed considerably since the 1990s. Taking the United Kingdom (UK) as an example, he shows that over the past decades the nature of immigration “has brought with it a transformative ‘diversification of diversity’ not just in terms of ethnicities and countries of origin, but also with respect to a variety of significant variables that affect where, how, and with whom people live” (Vertovec 2006, p. 1). Vertovec proposes using the term “superdiversity” to refer to the outcome of these ongoing demographic, legal, religious, and sociological changes as a result of globalization. He writes: “Super-diversity is distinguished by a dynamic interplay of variables, including: *country of origin* (comprising a variety of possible subset traits such as ethnicity, language[s], religious tradition, regional and local identities, cultural values and practices), *migration channel* (often related to highly gendered flows, specific social networks and particular labour market niches), and *legal status* (including myriad categories determining a hierarchy of entitlements and restrictions). These variables co-condition integration outcomes along with factors surrounding *migrants’ human capital* (particularly educational

background), *access to employment* (which may or may not be in immigrants' hands), *locality* (related especially to material conditions, but also to other immigrant and ethnic minority presence), and the usually chequered *responses by local authorities, services providers and local residents* (which often tend to function by way of assumptions based on previous experiences with migrants and ethnic minorities)." (Vertovec 2007, p. 3; *italics in original*).

The discourse that derives from superdiversity arguably provides a refreshing perspective in that it withholds a liberating potential in the endeavor to find a "new way of talking about diversity" (Fanshawe and Sriskandarajah 2010, p. 33) beyond the structures and constrictions brought by classic multiculturalism (Phillimore 2011). As a representative of postmulticulturalism, superdiversity discourse discards cultural, social, and linguistic "groupism" and the old binaries of national culture versus minority cultures, natives versus migrants, and local versus global. Such binary constructs, in fact, have often assumed a zero-sum game in which the migrants' stronger transnational patterns of association imply that the latter is only partially integrated in the local mainstream society at hand. In contradistinction, superdiversity discourse hinges heavily on the metaphor of simultaneity, as exemplified for instance in: (a) "multiple embeddedness" of migrants who, according to Glick Schiller and Çağlar (2013, p. 499), form networks of social relations and multiple social fields; (b) intersectionality, as "the complex, irreducible, varied, and variable effects which ensue when multiple axes of differentiation – economic, political, cultural, psychic, subjective and experiential – intersect in historically specific contexts" (Brah and Phoenix 2004, p. 76; and see Wessendorf 2010, pp. 28–30); and (c) scalarity, which in Kell's (2013, p. 19) sophisticated treatment of it implies "reading out" both the horizontal links (threads) and the vertical moves (jumps) of the interaction events and meaning-making processes unfolding over time and across spaces. The metaphor of simultaneity presented above combines the idea of (a) superimposition, nesting, and palimpsest – of earlier and later "generations" of migrants in particular neighborhoods, for instance (Blommaert 2012, pp. 98–102) – with the idea of (b) intersection and entanglement – for instance the combination of different codes or idioms carrying different national, class-based, or ethnic indexicalities into one "urban vernacular" (Rampton 2011), whether or not understood as instances of "polylinguaging" as "the use of features associated with different 'languages'" (see also: Creese and Blackledge 2010; Jørgensen et al. 2011, p. 33).

Problems and Difficulties

Accepting the concept of superdiversity has consequences for our vision of language and language use and thereby also for language learning and teaching. The switch from a diversity perspective on language teaching that sees language as a countable ontologically existing reality to a vision of using a language to engage in polylingual languaging does not mean that languages and their normativities no longer exist. Blommaert proposes to use Language with a capital L to refer to these entities. This

becomes especially clear in education where the national standard language of a country in the majority of cases is at the same time the medium of instruction in all school subjects and the target language of what often traditionally but erroneously is called “mother tongue education” (cf. Bezemer and Kroon 2008). A main characteristic of the school and its language is normativity. This includes the existence of clear and respected rules about what the legitimate language of education looks like. In urging them to use this legitimate language, schools turn their students into members of an ideological linguistic community that overshadows possible other local or virtual speech communities they are also part of (Madsen et al. 2013). Apart from linguistic norms, there are also pragmatic norms, i.e., norms that indicate how the language is used in specific circumstances. In mobile text messaging, for example, it might be fully acceptable to write “w84me” if you want somebody to wait for you, whereas in a written composition in English the use of such utterances or “supervernacular,” i.e., a new form of semiotic code emerging in the context of technology-driven globalization processes, is likely to lead to a negative teacher evaluation. The same applies to the mixed use of the school language and one or other minority or home language and even to speaking the school language with too strong a regional or foreign accent. In all these cases, the almost sacrosanct norm of the school language is decisive for the evaluation of students’ performance. As a consequence, what in reality is “nobody’s language,” i.e., the school language, becomes “everybody’s language” in evaluation, testing, and sanctioning practices. In their everyday practice, teachers will have to face the challenge of deconstructing these ideologically shaped differences as a prerequisite for their students’ learning. In superdiverse classrooms, students are engaged in meaning-making activities by using all the resources and features available in their linguistic repertoires. More often than not, however, the products of their polylingual languaging practices are disqualified by teachers because they are considered to be at odds with national educational language norms. How can teachers deal with language diversity in superdiverse classrooms? How can they combine the predominantly normative perspective on language and language education that they have been taught to adhere to in their education and training as a teacher, and that they have subsequently made their own, causing them to disapprove of and discredit nonstandard language use? How can they combine this normative perspective with a new vision of language as using all linguistic resources available, irrespective of either the language or language varieties from which these stem? Further, how can teacher education play a role here? An important first step would be adopting a different perspective on language, language teaching, and language learning.

Future Directions

Blommaert and Backus (2013) provide a programmatic perspective on language education in times of superdiversity which would fit well with the questions raised above. They consider learning languages as developing multilingual repertoires consisting of asymmetrical contextual competences. This language learning takes

place in a context of power relationships, i.e., formal education, in which, as a consequence of educational normativity, some varieties are credited and others are discredited. It moreover takes place in different ways, i.e., specific language resources become part of a learner's repertoire through "a broad range of tactics, technologies and mechanisms" (Blommaert and Backus 2013, p. 14). It goes without saying that the degree to which this happens can differ for each of the languages involved. The above implies that there are quite a few different modes of learning languages (or linguistic resources, to be more precise) that lead to different levels and forms of "knowing" a language. Along the line of Corder (1973), who had already highlighted the importance of the concept of repertoires for every language user, Blommaert and Backus (2013) distinguish: (1) highly formal and patterned *comprehensive language learning* in schools; (2) *specialized language learning* related to specific and specialized skills and resources, e.g., learning academic English; (3) highly informal and ephemeral out-of-school *encounters with language* (e.g., age group slang learning, temporary language learning, single word learning, recognizing language); and (4) *embedded language learning*, i.e., learning a language that can only be used if another language is used as well (e.g., computer technology-related English used in Dutch). With regard to the competences that can be achieved through these modes of language learning, Blommaert and Backus (2013, p. 22) distinguish: (1) maximum competence, (2) partial competence, (3) minimal competence, and (4) recognizing competence. Language-learning trajectories in superdiversity and the resulting forms of knowing language are diverse and primarily based on the actual use of languages in communicative encounters, i.e., usage-based. This usage-based conceptualization of repertoires reflects the complexity present in superdiverse learning environments, a complexity that often finds the aversion stemming from formal institutions that rely mostly on a "trained blindness" toward what the language user actually does. Teachers, whether in regular education or at work in the field of language qualifications aimed at certifying the purposes of integration, have to become prepared for functioning more effectively in superdiverse contexts. This includes a change in teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding language and language teaching in order to enable them to find a balance between the educational requirement of normativity and the societal reality of language diversity and polylingual languaging. This renewed approach also asks for a change in the (hidden and explicit) language curriculum that both schooling institutions and teacher trainers use. The purpose of this change is meant to make different modes of in- and out-of-school language learning possible and acceptable and to enable teachers to guide and monitor these language-learning processes and to create the language use contexts in which they can flourish. Finally, a change of norms regarding language as a subject and language as a medium of instruction is needed in order to make it possible for students to learn *in* a language that they know best, even if this language of learning is not the language of teaching and even if the students have only oral proficiency in this language. Needless to say, all these changes would immediately affect existing nationally embedded, self-evident top-down realities and therefore will not easily be realized.

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

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Discursive Approaches to Policy

Francis M. Hult

Abstract

What is today recognized as a discursive approach to policy might appear to be a fashionable innovation; however, it has been cultivated over time as the field of language planning and policy (LPP) has matured. This contribution traces the early foundations of an approach to LPP that focuses on the interplay between human agency and societally circulating (language) ideologies. It examines work that has focused on national policies as well as research focused on policy in practice, including how language practices can be understood as de facto language policy. Challenges related to making connections between policy and practice are also discussed. Finally, future prospects for researching language policy with a discourse analytic orientation are considered.

Keywords

Discourse • Ethnography • Ideology • Language policy • Language planning • Practice

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Early Developments

The early days of language planning and policy (LPP) could be characterized as development work, focusing on the role of languages for nation-building in post-colonial contexts, which then gradually emerged as an academic field as theoretical dimensions of language planning began to be developed by scholars such as Haugen, Fishman, and Rubin, among others (Blommaert 1996; Spolsky 2005). Early work in LPP tended to focus on the national scale, in particular societal multilingualism and policy documents that aimed to manage it, with an emphasis on developing countries in the 1960s and minority languages in European settings by the late-1970s (Blommaert 1996). What is today recognized as a discursive approach to policy might appear to be a fashionable innovation; however, it has been cultivated over time as the field of LPP has matured.

It has long been recognized that LPP should be considered in relation to human agency, regardless of the scale of focus. Hymes (1974, p. 85n4), for instance, noted that “policies and nationwide generalizations should be based on close knowledge of actual situations, just as local situations cannot be adequately understood in isolation.” Likewise, Haugen (1983, p. 271) pointed out that “while official government agencies are often involved, we should not limit the term ‘planning’ to such action. . . Individuals make their selections, and they may be followed by voluntary groups, whose practice may become normative.” Heath (1971) produced *Telling Tongues: Language Policy in Mexico, Colony to Nation*, an ethnohistorical account of language policy in Mexico. In the 1980s, building on approaches to sociolinguistics and ethnography, Hornberger conducted fieldwork for what would become a pioneering study (Hornberger 1989) of language policy “on the ground,” exploring how members of Peruvian communities experience bilingual education policy and its relationship to language maintenance and shift. Other researchers such as Martin-Jones, Canagarajah, and Chick, working in the 1980s and 1990s, followed a similar tack in examining relationships between language policies and classroom practice (Martin-Jones 2011, p. 4). Thus, while it has been argued that LPP was somewhat dormant in the 1980s and ethnographic perspectives were lacking (Blommaert 1996), a socially situated orientation to language policy had been slowly under way since at least the 1970s and the apparent rejuvenation of LPP in the 1990s was incubating in the preceding years.

Nonetheless, it is in the 1990s when a focus on socially and culturally situated LPP gains momentum with the on-going work of Hornberger and Martin-Jones, among others such as Tollefson and Schiffman. In the early 1990s, Tollefson (1991) laid the foundation for critical language policy with his book *Planning Language, Planning Inequality*, drawing on social theory to highlight the importance of considering the role of power and ideology and foreshadowing later work that would integrate critical discourse analysis in language policy studies (Johnson 2011). In the mid-1990s, Schiffman (1996) presaged with his book *Linguistic Culture and Language Policy* what would in the 2000s become an increasingly popular approach—looking beyond policy texts and focusing on policy *in situ*—framed variously as “micro language planning” (Baldauf 2008), “New Language Policy Studies”

(McCarty et al. 2011), and a “newer wave of language education policy research” (Menken and García 2010). Joining the chorus of scholars like Hornberger, Martin-Jones, and Heath, Schiffman proffers that language policies must be understood in relation to “linguistic culture” or “the set of behaviours, assumptions, cultural forms, prejudices, folk belief systems, attitudes, stereotypes, ways of thinking about language, and religio-historical circumstances” (1996, p. 5). Policy, Schiffman (1996, p. 58) avers, is not only about texts but about discourse. Ball (2006), writing about educational policy more broadly, makes a similar assertion that analysis must attend to both policy-as-text and policy-as-discourse. A focus on policy texts, however, does not suggest a decontextualized or abstract analysis. Rather, Ball (2006, pp. 44–45) points out, “it is crucial to recognize that the policies themselves, the texts, are not necessarily clear or closed or complete. The texts are the product of compromises at various stages (at points of initial influence, in the micropolitics of legislative formulation, in the parliamentary process and in the politics and micropolitics of interest group articulation).” Policy-as-discourse, in turn, draws attention to the situated meaning of policy as it is experienced: “there are real struggles over the interpretation and enactment of policies. But these are typically set within a moving discursive frame which articulates and constrains the possibilities and probabilities of interpretation and enactment. We read and respond to policies in discursive circumstances that we cannot, or perhaps do not, normally think about” (Ball 2006, p. 49). The threads of policy-as-text and policy-as-discourse are interwoven in contemporary discursive approaches to language policy. While research may emphasize one or the other, they are closely related and often considered together.

Major Contributions

Discursive approaches to language policy have been used to focus on both large-scale national contexts and small-scale classroom and community contexts as well as connections across these scales. Methodologically and theoretically, researchers have been particularly influenced by critical discourse analysis as well as ethnographic discourse analysis; conversation analysis has been used as well.

National-scale research continues to be a central focus of discursive language policy studies (e.g., Milani 2009; Ricento 2005). Research along this path is less about describing policy situations and more about examining, echoing Tollefson, how social inequalities, power relations, and value systems are intertwined in policy making, interpretation, and implementation. While such research can be mostly (or even exclusively) trained on policy documents such as national legislation or educational curricula, it is nonetheless deeply socially situated because the emphasis, as in critical discourse analysis generally, is on critical reading with the aim of bringing to light how (language) ideologies and relationships among languages and their speakers are entextualized. Often influenced by Foucauldian orientations to discourse, scholars interrogate how policies contribute to valorizing certain ways of thinking about societal multilingualism and the speakers of specific languages based

on what is (or is not) included in policy documents. Studies also focus on how the interpretation of policies may be constrained by circulating discourses, offering insight into sociopolitical and historical factors. Indeed, policy research in this vein may not always examine policy itself directly but instead investigate how political or ideological debate related to the management of multilingualism is constructed in media (e.g., Hult and Pietikäinen 2014).

Since the 2000s, the greatest growth in discursive approaches to language policy has been in considering the relationship between policy and practice, continuing on the trail blazed in the 1980s by LPP scholars such as Hornberger, Martin-Jones, and later Schiffman. Research along this path has varying degrees of connection to the analysis of policy text but is always anchored in a particular local context (e.g., Menken and García 2010; McCarty 2011). Studies, thus, share a focus on discursive interaction, and data collection involves, *inter alia*, audio-/video-recording of lessons, field observations in schools and classrooms, and interviews and/or focus groups with stakeholders (e.g., teachers, students, administrators, and families).

Some researchers are concerned with how teachers and administrators experience national, regional, or provincial/state policy documents. They investigate questions related to how discourses circulating in policy texts are variously reproduced or resisted in policy interpretation or implementation as well as the extent to which policy texts adequately account for sociolinguistic circumstances in schools and communities (e.g., Arias and Faltis 2012; Menken and García 2010). Studies following this path often combine the aforementioned critical analysis of policy documents with ethnographic discourse analysis in order to trace how policy discourses are understood and taken up with respect to educational practice in particular sites by focal individuals. Ricento and Hornberger's (1996) onion metaphor is frequently used as a conceptual guide because it highlights the role of individuals on different scales (e.g., state, district, school, and classroom) as mediators of language policy implementation.

Other researchers focus their attention mainly on practice and less, if at all, on policy documents. As Schiffman (1996) pointed out, language policy is not necessarily about formal texts: "language policy seems to be dichotomized into *overt* (explicit, formalized, *de jure*, codified, manifest) policies and *covert* (implicit, informal, unstated, *de facto*, grass-roots, latent) aspects of policy; what usually gets ignored, of course, are the covert aspects of the policy" (p. 13; emphasis in original). A growing body of work from the early 2000s onwards has sought to remedy the dearth of empirical work on implicit and informal language policy through close examination of how *de facto* policies emerge in classroom practice (e.g., Liddicoat and Taylor-Leech 2014; McCarty 2011). As Spolsky asserts, "language policy may refer to all language practices, beliefs and management decisions of a community or polity" (Spolsky 2004, p. 9). Policy, in this view, becomes increasing inseparable from practice.

Much of the work in this direction has been grounded in ethnography or ethnographic discourse analysis and influenced variously by the linguistic anthropology of education and the ethnography of policy (McCarty 2011, p. 12; cf. Sutton and Levinson 2001). What is of particular interest in this line of inquiry is how values

about languages are reproduced or resisted through everyday practices in schools and classrooms. Studies attend to how circulating ideologies serve to mediate practices, how communicative norms of interaction come to serve as *de facto* language policies, and may or may not directly examine how individuals relate to *de jure* policy documents. It is an orientation to policy that shifts attention from a centralized focus on texts and the national scale to a decentralized focus on local scales and individual experiences (cf. Shohamy 2009).

It should be noted that even if this ethnographic discourse analytic perspective is becoming especially prominent, there are other approaches to policy-in-practice as well. Notable, for instance, is the well-established tradition of Language Management Theory (LMT), particularly in the Czech Republic, that focuses on both the simple management of communication issues in interaction as well as organized management through systematic interventions by groups and organizations (Neustupný and Nekvapil 2003, p. 184–188). LMT is grounded in ethnomethodology and involves the analysis of interactional data and interviews. Another line of emerging inquiry is situated specifically in the tradition of conversation analysis and uses the close examination of classroom talk to investigate “language policing” as *de facto* policy and to examine empirically how classroom practices do or do not align with established educational language policy, whether formal or informal (Amir 2013, p. 21–24).

A common interest among most researchers taking discursive approaches to language policy is making connections across scales of social organization. It has been a longstanding goal in the study of language in society to understand relationships between large and small scales. As Fishman remarked, “just as there is no societally unencumbered verbal interaction so are there no large-scale relationships between language and society that do not depend on individual interaction for their realization” (1972, p. 31). The mapping of such relations has greatly matured with the development of discursive approaches to which the nature of scalar processes is epistemologically fundamental and thus closely tied to empirical methodology that goes beyond dialectal analysis of large and small scales to consider also how discourses operate on myriad intermediary scales (Hult 2010; cf. Ricento 2000).

Researchers following the path of critical language policy employ techniques from critical discourse analysis to map how ideologies that circulate on scales such as print and online media, linguistic landscapes, or historical artifacts relate to discourses present in policy documents or how discourses in one policy document relate to other policy documents. In doing so, studies aim to identify explicit instances of intertextuality in order to map the trajectory of certain discourses as they flow through policy situations or seek out evidence of interdiscursivity to determine how ways of thinking and organizing ideas flow more implicitly across scales in order to frame policy and political debate (Blommaert 2005, p. 185–186). Likewise, those working in the ethnographic discourse analytic tradition are grounded in the fundamental principle of ethnography to relate the particular to the whole. Although studies along these lines are grounded in specific schools and classrooms, the objective is to understand how individuals experience wider language ideologies, power relations, or sociopolitical debates. Such work highlights

the role of agency in language policy processes by bringing to light how teachers, students, and other stakeholders are active “arbiters” (Menken and García 2010, p. 1; Johnson 2013, p. 100–101) of policy interpretation and implementation in a way that makes societal policy issues concrete and humanized rather than only abstract and legalistic.

One fruitful methodological development that combines elements of both ethnographic and discourse analytic traditions is nexus analysis. First put forth by Scollon and Scollon (2004), Hult (2015) describes how nexus analysis is particularly well suited to contemporary language policy investigations because it allows researchers to trace how specific discourses flow across societal, interpersonal, and individual scales. Nexus analysis is already being used by an increasing number of researchers of educational language policy who seek to make such links (e.g., Compton 2013; Dressler 2015; Hult 2010).

Work in Progress

A number of doctoral researchers in different contexts worldwide are at various stages of conducting research that picks up on the current trends in discursive approaches to language policy. A few of them are noted here as examples of work in progress. Kimberly Chopin at the University of Copenhagen, is studying a Danish university context, drawing upon nexus analysis to explore how an institutional language policy related to the medium of instruction was taken up and negotiated by the members of a particular science department. Situating her study within the wider issue of English-medium instruction (EMI) in higher education, she attempts to identify interrelationships between what happens in a local context and what is happening in academia and in the sciences on European and global scales. Marianne Blattès at King’s College London is investigating processes of translation, interpretation, and recontextualization related to the enactment of a 2013 policy that facilitates EMI at French universities. Her study, which combines an ethnographic approach with critical discourse analysis, reveals existing tensions across multiple scales of official discourse, institutional policies, and local practices. Corey Huang at the University of Hong Kong is examining the relationship between institutional language policies and campus linguistic landscapes by comparing two Hong Kong universities with different historical and cultural trajectories, one traditionally English-medium and one traditionally Chinese-medium. He aims to trace how ideological tensions in physical and policy spaces contribute to students’ educational experiences. Sarah Compton at the University of Jyväskylä is carrying out a discursive ethnography informed by nexus analysis in a school district located on the east coast of the United States. Her work examines how parents, teachers, and administrators create annual individualized education plans for deaf and hard of hearing students from multilingual homes as mandated by the national language-in-education policy, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Crissa Stephens at the University of Iowa is also examining the US context. She uses critical ethnographic and discourse analytic methods to examine language policy in public

education in relation to the New Latino Diaspora, focusing on discursive constructions of multilingual identity among students and families within the institutional environment and on the impact of power relationships and language on educational opportunity and access. Alsu Gilmetdinova at Purdue University, in turn, is studying schools in Tatarstan, Russia as sites of language policy implementation using principles of language policy, TESOL and multilingual education, and linguistic anthropology to investigate how teachers' attitudes towards multilingualism with respect to Russian, Tatar, and English relate to their negotiation of educational language policy.

Problems and Difficulties

Along with discursive approaches has come a gradual broadening of the scope of "language policy" as a focus of inquiry. While early LPP researchers tended to train their eyes on official documents, especially those produced on a national scale by governments, a wider range of phenomena have come to be included as language policies. Schiffman (1996) draws attention to the full range of possibilities of implicit and explicit, de jure and de facto policies to which research should attend. Accordingly, contemporary language policy research is not limited to national legislation but also includes curricular documents, assessment instruments, teacher handbooks, school websites, normalized language choices, classroom practices, individual beliefs, and more. A fundamental question arises, then: "Is the resultant micro work still language policy and planning, or does it (should it) then fall into some other sub-field of applied linguistics or of some other discipline; e.g., sociolinguistics, education, critical discourse studies (CDA) or business studies" (Baldauf 2008, p. 19)? There is a potential risk that the "language policy" moniker becomes meaningless if almost any study of language practice can fall under its scope. When investigating norms of interaction in classrooms or how teachers relate to language ideologies during their lessons, then, it is useful to reflect on what is gained by framing a study as "language policy."

Spolsky (2004, p. 5) asserts that language policy includes three components: language practices, language beliefs, and language management. Practices are patterns of language use, beliefs are values and ideologies about language, and management is "the explicit and observable effort by someone or some group that has or claims to have authority over the participants in the domain to modify their practices or beliefs" (Spolsky 2009, p. 4). In light of this tripartite definition of policy, it is worth considering whether or not a study must include language management if it is to be usefully framed as "language policy" research and therefore distinct from a general critical discourse analysis, ethnography of communication or conversation analysis of an educational context. One could also ask if a study should use key LPP principles such as status, corpus, and acquisition planning as conceptual lenses in some way in order to be usefully framed as "language policy" research (cf. McCarty 2011, p. 8). In essence, if we accept a broad view of language policy, as discursive approaches to LPP do, we must reflect critically on our object of study (Johnson

2013, p. 9). How do we know a language policy when we see it? Formal, de jure language policies are generally easy to identify because they are meta-discursively framed as such (though some official educational policies or assessment instruments are not always readily identified as *language* policies; see Menken 2008). However, it is not always as easy to determine the point at which a behavior or a practice becomes a de facto language policy.

Even for researchers who explicitly orient to official, de jure policies, relating policy to practice can be easier said than done. As Hornberger and Johnson point out, “unless a bilingual teacher explicitly states that, in her classroom, she has interpreted and appropriated some language policy X in explicit ways, how can we be sure that educational practice is necessarily influenced by educational policy” (2011, p. 284)? It may be possible to provoke reflection about formal language policies through interviews or by presenting participants with policy documents. It is not uncommon, though, for participants to be unaware of explicit policies but still implement policy discourses implicitly after appropriating them in various ways through interaction with other educators or media. As such, it is sometimes of analytical interest for researchers to attempt to identify the implicit implementation of these discourses and trace them to explicit policies in an effort to understand how policies enter into practice and the professional value systems of educators. While such analyses must be carefully documented with evidence of intertextuality and interdiscursivity, it is nonetheless a challenge to demonstrate a policy-practice connection with absolute certainty.

Future Directions

Attention to the relationship between language policy and practice has grown considerably during the 2000s. This work has been built firmly on a foundation laid in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s and with methodological pillars in ethnography and (critical) discourse analysis. All signs suggest that this line of inquiry will continue to develop. Davis, for instance, offer the label of “engaged language policy and practices” (ELP) for the flourishing body of work that represents “a shift from unidirectional top down enactment of policies and plans towards recognition of the complex interplay of ideologies and institutional practices” (2014, p. 83). Work in progress by current doctoral researchers also suggests that interest in this line of inquiry remains strong in the forthcoming generation of LPP scholars.

Along with growing interest in policy-practice relationships, whether framed as micro language planning, New Language Policy Studies, or engaged language policy and practice, among other emerging labels, theoretical and methodological advances that facilitate the design and implementation of LPP studies which seek connections between large-scale policies and local practice are also needed. Ethnographic and (critical) discourse analytic approaches continue to gain prominence and various ways of integrating them, such as nexus analysis, can also be refined through further empirical application and reflection.

At the same time, research examining national language policies and curricula is far from extinct. While purely descriptive policy cases may be falling out of favor, critical discourse analytic studies that examine the ideological underpinnings of government efforts in policy and planning remain useful, whether or not such analyses are directly related to classroom practice. Likewise, studies that investigate the representation of language policy and language ideological debate in traditional and new media also continue to be vital. Accordingly, it is probable that theories and methods following in the tradition of critical language policy will continue to advance. Interpretive (critical) discourse analysis of policy should continue to develop. There is also room for the application of more quantitative methods such as corpus analysis, which has proven useful as a complement to critical discourse analysis (Baker et al. 2008) and has strong potential for LPP research (Fitzsimmons-Doolan 2015). Globalization and mobility mean that diversity and multilingualism will be ongoing policy concerns worldwide; (critical) discourse analytic investigations of related policy developments raise awareness about the value systems behind political actions that are otherwise easily taken for granted.

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Categorizing Learners Beyond the Classroom

Eva Hjörne and Roger Säljö

Abstract

All social activities rely on categorization. In order to understand the world, to discuss it with others, and to participate in social action, we have to *re-present* to ourselves and to others what is happening. Language is the primary mechanism for this. In this chapter, we address issues that relate to categorization in educational settings. Using ethnomethodological analytic methods, we have analyzed the discursive activities of multi-professional pupil health team meetings in Sweden, where specialists discuss and interpret children's problems in school and decide on how to provide support. We found that the meetings were highly routinized and characterized by a high degree of consensus among the staff as to the perspectives relevant for handling the problems encountered. The nature of the accounts produced, and the categories used by the staff individualize the problems of pupils by pointing to lack of ability or other necessary qualifications on the part of the individual pupil for managing life in school. The problems are very rarely seen as consequential to pedagogical practices or teacher actions. It is noted that the pupils have no say in articulating their accounts of the issues discussed.

Keywords

Categorization • Pupil health • School difficulties • Multi-professional teamwork • Discursive practices • Ethnomethodological analytic methods

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Introduction

All social activities rely on categorization. In order to understand the world, to discuss it with others, and to participate in social action, we have to *re-present* to ourselves and to others what is happening. Language is the primary mechanism for this, and categorization can be seen as one of the most “fundamental organizing principles of human thought and action” (Edwards 1991, p. 515). In institutional settings, such as courts of law, hospitals, and schools, categorization is an important element of and instrument in daily practices. Institutional categories are constitutive of how we construe entitlements and obligations of social actors. In schools, a child who is categorized as “learning disabled,” “immature,” or as a “slow reader” is met with expectations that are different from those that apply to other children.

Institutions are central to the functioning of a complex society, and they play a decisive role in the production and use of knowledge. Through the use of categories in institutional practices, people are “transformed” into entities that the organization can recognize and process (Lipsky 1980). In this sense, categories are part of an “institutional machinery” (Mehan et al. 1986, p. 164), and they “work as some kind of stabilizing standards” (Douglas 1986, p. 63) for the activities undertaken. Through categorizing, the institution puts similar “things” together, and entities of “dubious standing lose their ambiguity” (Douglas 1986, p. 59). In this manner, the institution organizes and encodes information, produces knowledge, and coordinates its daily practices.

In this chapter, we address issues that relate to categorization in educational settings. We want to emphasize that categorization is to be seen as a very practical activity, as something that people do to get their job done. In schools, as elsewhere, categorizations are consequential; as Bowker and Star (2000) put it, the “material force of categories appears always and instantly.” The focus of this chapter is on how difficulties children encounter in school are interpreted in the context of pupil health meetings, i.e., settings where teachers, heads of schools, and specialists such as school psychologists, social workers, and others discuss children’s problems and decide on how to provide support (Hjörne and Säljö 2004, 2014a, b).

Early Developments

The activity of classifying and categorizing children is as old as schools themselves. In fact, the very introduction of schooling some five thousand years ago in Mesopotamia implied a significant transformation of identities; “children” were turned into “pupils.” This was a new category and a new social role with specific obligations on how to behave. What has varied during history are the kinds of categories that have been considered informative and justified when organizing school practices and when, for instance, understanding learning difficulties. In the nineteenth century, when public schooling was introduced in many countries, a religious and moral discursive tradition served as a provider of categories that were used to account for school failure. Pupils were described as vicious, lazy, slow, immoral, or as nailbiters, to mention but a few examples of categories that typically referred to the alleged moral character of children (Trent 1994; Deschenes et al. 2001). During the early twentieth century, the testing of intellectual capacities of children and their maturity was introduced. The testing movement was grounded in medical and psychological accounts of school difficulties. New categories emerged with a fine-grained set of concepts, especially for describing the lower end of the scale. Terms such as mentally dull, feebleminded, imbecile, idiot, backward, slow, moron, and intellectually weak were introduced as relevant accounts (Trent 1994).

Later during the twentieth century, other modes of accounting for school difficulties were introduced. A range of factors that relate to social background and upbringing of children came to be used. In this more sociological understanding of children’s adaptation to school, family conditions came to be seen as important determinants that have to be attended to when trying to improve school performance. Categories such as disorderly behavior, concentration difficulties, aggressiveness, immaturity, shoplifting, and truancy now came to play a prominent role. The mental hygiene movement of the 1950s and 1960s in a similar fashion pointed to social background as significant for understanding success in school. When accounting for school problems at this time, the children were, for example, described as maladjusted, rejected, or as coming from bad homes.

Understanding categorizing practices in schools is a key to understanding how diversity is dealt with. It is also obvious that categories are ideological in nature (Tomlinson 2015). An important function of categories throughout the history of schooling has been “to control difficult children, divert them away from schools (...) into institutions or regimens of treatment” (Hacking 1999, p. 111). Furthermore, a very important general observation is that accounting for school failure seems to have been based mainly on categories of individual failure and have left structures in school largely intact (Deschenes et al. 2001).

Institutional Reasoning and Categorizing Practices

In recent decades, the topic of categorization, and its consequences for children and their schooling and identity, has emerged as a research interest in its own right. An important line of research has been carried out by Mehan and his colleagues (Mehan 1986; Mehan 2014; Mehan et al. 1986). In this work, in-depth studies of the processes and consequences of sorting students into categories such as “normal,” “special,” or “educationally handicapped” are reported. Mehan and his colleagues have found that in the American context, the school psychologist, and the social language (Bakhtin 1986) of this profession, plays an important role. Thus, when “the school psychologist speaks, it is from an institutionally designated position of authority” (Mehan 1986, p. 160). A consequence of the categorizing practices invoked by psychological categories is that the problems of the child “are treated as if they are his private and personal possession” (p. 154). This is yet another confirmation of the observation that there is a strong tendency in school to explain difficulties in terms of individual disorders. And, as a consequence, the problems become located “[b]eneath the skin and between the ears” (Mehan 1993, p. 241) of the child.

When scrutinizing descriptions of “deviance” in school in the UK, Hester (1991; see also Hargreaves et al. 2012), using data from Child and Family Guidance Service as a part of the Special Education Services provided, found that certain kinds of activities, attributes, characteristics, and school problems of the pupils were, in a sense, expected to be relevant to report. “Such recognitional ‘work’ is what provides a sense for the participants of their being respondents to an independent or objective set of problems within the school,” as Hester (1991, p. 461) puts it. Thus, these categorizing practices contribute to the construction of the facts of “deviance,” and these facts, in turn, become the “grounds for intervention and treatment” (p. 462). Similar categorizing practices have been reported by Verkuyten (2002) in studies of teachers’ talk about pupils’ problems in school in the Netherlands. He argues that defining a student as, for example, “disruptive” implies introducing an explanation for poor educational results that is accepted by the institutional actors. The study also confirmed that the accounts produced emphasized the role of the students, while at the same time hiding the teachers and their activities from view.

In a study of so-called class conferences (a kind of pupil health team meeting) in Sweden, reported by Cedersund and Svensson (1993), similar results were found. The discourse employed, though vague, still pointed to children’s shortcomings in traditional, individualizing terms as the causes of school problems. Categories such as weak, slow, and immature were frequently used. This is a further indication that there seems to be a prevalence of the psychological discourse in school settings in many different Western countries (Hjärne 2015).

In a practice perspective, categories should not be seen as passively reflecting a pre-given social reality. Rather, they are formative for our understanding of a problem and for our acting in the world. Our “‘seeing’ is ‘in-formed’ by the terms in the dominant discourse of the day” (Shotter 1993, p. 102). The

categorizing practices create a common understanding of what to “see” and “how to go on” when solving dilemmas as Shotter puts it. Another facet of this constitutive nature of categories is that once an institutional category has been accepted as valid, there is, as Hacking (1986, Hacking 1999) points out, a “looping effect” by means of which people “spontaneously come to fit their categories” (Hacking 1986, p. 223). In other words, there is a tendency to find people who fit into the categories used by institutions, and their identities may be shaped accordingly.

This phenomenon that categories themselves generate people who fit into them is significant in the context of pupil health. The study by Thomas and Loxley (2007) is an interesting illustration of this. They refer to the results of the Warnock report by The Department of Education and Science in the UK in 1978. The committee introduced the idea that one in five pupils has special needs in school (earlier, the figure was assumed to be around 2%) with the positive intent of “highlighting children with difficulties and directing resources to them” (Thomas and Loxley 2007, p. 79). This direct link between categorizing practices and the provision of resources testifies to the centrality of categories in pupil health. Since the “consensus has always been that such rationing will follow the axiom that resources will be provided in ratio to the need assessed” (Thomas and Davis 1997, p. 269), the claim that one of five pupils were in need of special support had as a direct consequence that an increasing proportion of the school population was found to be in need of special support. Expressed differently, this implies that the committee “actively generated a ‘reality’, which had to be lived up to” (Thomas and Loxley 2007, p. 79). A significant element of this “looping effect” is that to “be called ‘special’ is to be given a new identity within the schooling system” (Thomas and Loxley 2007, p. 77), a process that can be expected to have far-reaching consequences at the individual and institutional level (McCluskey et al. 2015). This can be seen as a decisive step in a child’s future career in school, and “when known by people or by those around them, and put to work in institutions,” categories may well even “change the ways in which individuals experience themselves” (Hacking 1999, p. 104; see also Jenkins 2014).

Categorizing Children in School Practices

In complex societies, children’s adaptation to school is central. The significance of schooling for the life careers of individuals has become increasingly important. Prevention of school failure and dropout is high on the political agenda. Many educational systems are operating in societies which are more diverse in terms of the social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds of their respective populations. Also, many countries now have some kind of comprehensive compulsory school system in which children of different backgrounds and academic orientations are educated in the same classroom. All these factors add to the complexity of teaching and learning practices, and issues of pupil health have become increasingly emphasized.

One characteristic feature of the interpretation of school failure during the past few decades is the widespread adoption of neuropsychiatric diagnoses (Hinshaw and Scheffler 2014). These diagnoses include conditions such as ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), MBD (Minimal Brain Dysfunction/Disorder), syndromes such as ASD (Autism Spectra Disorder) and Tourette, dyslexia, dyscalculi, to mention but a few. To some extent, neuropsychiatric disorders can be seen as yet another set of categories that originate in medical and psychological diagnostic traditions. The problems are located in the individual, and, in most cases, they are considered as biological in nature (Mehan 2014). The role and consequences of the uses of categories of this kind for the individual as well as for the school system are important to analyze (Graham 2010; Renshaw et al. 2014; Evaldsson 2014).

In many school systems, pupil health has expanded as an activity, and there is an increasing professionalization with special needs teachers, school psychologists, social workers, and others taking part in multiprofessional team work. Analyzing the discursive activities of such multiprofessional pupil health team meetings in Sweden, we found that the nature of the accounts produced, and the categories used by the staff nevertheless referred more or less exclusively to individual traits of the pupil as causes of the problems observed (Hjärne and Säljö 2004, 2014a, b). Lack of adequate intellectual capacity and immaturity are frequently used. An illustration is when the team in one school is discussing Jonas, 9 years old (see in Excerpt 1).

Excerpt 1

| | | |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Assistant principal | It's difficult to get him to concentrate and to get his work sort of finished and then of course.uhm in other words he might not be the most (.) he needs time and private lessons [to]- | han är svår att få å koncentrera sej å få arbete gjorda färdigt å sen har han väl naturligtvis.ehh en liten alltså han e ju inte världens (.) det tar väl tid å han behöver enskild undervisning för [att] - |
| Special needs teacher: | [mmm] | [mmm] |
| Assistant principal | Everything is not just easy for him, rather, he has some problems | allting går ju inte bara lätt för honom, utan han har ju lite problem |

Excerpt 2

| | | |
|---------------------|---|---|
| Assistant principal | Malin . . . I think she hides . . . I think she's got problems in school she has difficulties, it's not easy for her and this she hides . . . | Malin . . . jag tror att hon gömmer . . . jag tror att hon har problem i skolan hon har de svårt hon har de inte lätt å de gömmer hon . . . |
| School nurse | She's a weak pupil you mean? | hon e en svag elev menar du? |
| Assistant principal | yeah she's weak | ja hon e svag |

Furthermore, the problems are accounted for without considering the role of the teacher's activities, the family, or any other contextual elements. In the next excerpt (Excerpt 2), the team elaborate the school problems of a 9-year-old girl (Malin) and the members use the category "weak," implicitly meaning being weak intellectually, as an explanation.

An interesting feature of the work in these multiprofessional teams is that many of the categories used are ambiguous and vague, and the concrete instances of exactly how the problems appeared in the classroom are generally not presented or considered relevant to discuss. Nevertheless, there is a high level of consensus in the team. We have observed very few overt disagreements in these settings, and the representatives of the various professions do not seem to interpret the problems differently. When discussing Philip, 10 years old, (Excerpt 3), several of the experts are involved, and they all follow the same idea of explaining his supposed problems by means of one of the most frequent categories, "immaturity."

Excerpt 3

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Special needs teacher | Well, visually he has a good memory and memory of sequences and so on. So that's not it, it's not that type of problem. But it is entirely possible that he has, in addition, but we, we don't have time to get that far, but on the other hand when he is here then he works and then he reads, he sort of sounds together and then he puts a lot of energy into it and tries, but he sort of gets nowhere, and then he is gone and then he is lost and, well all the time he is somewhere else. Comes in late . . . | jo, han har ju visuellt bra minne och sekvensminne och så där. Så det är inte det, det är inte den typen av problematik. Men det är ju mycket möjligt att han har, dessutom, men man, vi hinner komma så långt, men däremot när han är här så jobbar han och då läser han, han liksom ljudar ihop och då lägger han ner mycket energi och försöker, men han kommer liksom ingenstans, och så är han borta och så är han försvunnen och, ja hela tiden är han någon annan stans. Kommer sent . . . |
| School nurse | But he is about to start in [fourth] | Men han skall börja i [fyran] |
| Special needs teacher | [Mm] | [Mm] |
| School nurse | And the teacher wants, well says that he is on the level of a first grader. | Och läraren vill, ja säger att han är på en ettas nivå. |
| Special needs teacher | Mm, first grader during the autumn possibly. | Mm, etta på hösten möjligtvis. |

Another interesting feature of the process of categorizing children is that most of the accounts and categories produced are negative in character, i.e., they focus on weaknesses of the pupils rather than on their strengths. When discussing Maria, 10 years old (Excerpt 4), the team do not point at any strengths in her behaviors in school.

Excerpt 4

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Special Needs Teacher | Maria doesn't do anything in principle and she has no idea when she does things, so she doesn't sort of know what she is doing. It doesn't matter if it comes out wrong or right or nice or, there is sort of, it's just far out everything. Everything is just way out. She is completely out of it and so is her mother, so when she is with her mother it is sort of, then she is not on time and ah . . . | Maria gör ingenting i princip och hon har ingen aning om när hon gör saker, så hon vet liksom inte vad hon gör. Det gör ingenting om det blir fel eller rätt eller snyggt eller, det finns liksom, det är bara hej hopp allting. Hela hon är hej hopp och det är mamma också, så när hon är hos mamma så är det liksom, då kommer hon inte i tid och ah . . . |
|-----------------------|---|---|

A striking observation when analyzing how the team talk about pupil difficulties is that the problems accounted for are rarely contextualized as responses to pedagogical practices, teachers' activities, or other aspects of life in the classroom and in school. There are hardly any discussions of the appropriacy of pedagogical practices for particular pupils, or if they could be modified so as to support pupils with reported difficulties. Rather, the presumed problems are understood as residing within the pupil and determining his/her inability to participate in school practices in the expected way. In the next meeting, the team again discuss Philip (Excerpt 5), without introducing any new contextualization of how to understand his school behaviors.

Excerpt 5

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Special needs teacher | . . . he spins around, doesn't manage things the others have managed and he has great difficulties according to the teacher, she has, I've - | . . . han snurrar runt, klarar inte sånt som de andra har klarat och har jättesvårt enligt läraren, hon har, jag har - |
| School psychologist | Difficulties schoolwise, difficult to follow, yes yes, it could be the case that one has hit the ceiling a bit too, his developmental maximum that there sort of begins to be some resistance | skolmässigt svårt, svårt att hänga med, ja ja, det kan ju vara så att man har slagit i taket lite grann också, sitt utvecklingstak att det börjar ta emot |

In this manner, our results show that the meetings are not cumulative or systematic. Little attention is paid to previous decisions. There are almost no discussions concerning the goals of the actions taken, and, consequently, no attempts to evaluate what previous discussions and decisions have resulted in. It is also hard to see that the multiprofessional character of the team adds to the nature of solutions produced. There is no obvious sense in which the team members provide different analyses or suggest alternative modes of handling the situation. On the contrary, results such as these show that the team regularly uses a limited number of individualizing categories that are well established. The function of these categories is to match the institutional category "pupil in need of special support" with the few options that the staff perceive as available: an extra year in school, having an assistant as extra

help, etc. It is worth noting that the pupil's own perceptions of life in school, and/or his/her alleged problems, are not visible or attended to in this process.

Individualizing School Difficulties

When summarizing the implications of the research such as this one often ends up in one of two traditions of argumentation; either schools or pupils are considered to be suffering from “deficits” and/or as failing to meet expectations. In our opinion, it is necessary to avoid ending up in any of these positions. An important premise to take into account is that pupil health teams are coping with very different, and sometimes conflicting, demands. Any normative claims as to how to deal with various dilemmas will have to take this into account. Schooling, very clearly, is an ideological activity where different kinds of dilemmas constantly have to be handled. These dilemmas concern how limited resources are to be used, what ambitions and goals are reasonable to have for teaching and learning in different circumstances, and a range of other issues related to inclusion and exclusion. Decisions on matters of this kind do not follow from laws of abstract logic, but are, and have to be, grounded in values and knowledge (Pijl 2015).

During the last hundred years, we have seen a radical expansion of education. In many, if not most, parts of the world the number of students at various levels of the educational system, and the number of years of schooling for each age cohort, have increased dramatically. Secondary and even tertiary education, previously catering to the needs of small elites in society, is now available to large proportions of the population (Riddell and Weedon 2014). In contemporary society, where knowledge has come to play an increasingly important role for the future of the individual, there are high expectations that schools will provide students with knowledge and skills that are relevant for active participation in working life and in the practices of a democratic society, and, in general, for the development of a productive and healthy lifestyle.

This development implies that issues of pupil health, and the support of individuals who risk becoming marginalized, have become increasingly important. Yet we see from recent research how learners and learning difficulties are categorized and interpreted by teachers, and other members of school staff, and by the general public. This is a problem that has to do with the politics of representation of human abilities and needs, in and through educational discourse. At the same time, discourses about learning difficulties are, increasingly, a site of institutional struggle. One illustration of this is that, during recent decades, many groups who were previously marginalized or even excluded from education, such as people with various kinds of learning disabilities, now are able to successfully participate in learning practices suitably geared to their needs. Innovation and flexibility in the organization of teaching and learning practices have been grounded in attempts to meet the needs of individuals of different backgrounds and with different needs, rather than insisting on maintaining traditional modes of instruction and authority patterns. This change of ideologies, and of school practices, to a large extent is grounded in new modes of categorizing and understanding human capacities and needs.

An important problem in this field of research is to develop knowledge that is relevant for teaching and learning practices. The present trend of relying on neuro-psychiatric diagnoses carries an obvious risk of resulting in segregation of increasingly large proportions of children from mainstream schooling. This is a development that, from an educational point of view, is problematic. In many cases, segregation from mainstream, even when carried out with the best of intentions, has questionable consequences for the identities of learners and for the expectations of teachers and others on what can be achieved (Hjörne and Evaldsson 2015). Also, there is very little evidence in empirical research that strategies of segregation are beneficial. The role of pupil health systems in dealing with these issues clearly requires more research.

Future Directions

The creation of pupil health systems is an important step in the process of instituting arenas where significant events and features in school are publicly and openly analyzed by those who have the most intimate knowledge about the daily activities in school. In addition, in recent years we can see an increased emphasis on prevention and health promotion in the context of pupil health in many countries. Knowledge is built through such collective practices where the difficulties experienced by learners are attended to, defined, and collectively handled. However, the potential of these arenas as contexts in which practices of schooling, and responses by pupils to these, are critically explored does not seem to have been fully exploited. To further our knowledge about how to analyze and understand problems of this kind, and how to convert such knowledge into viable pedagogical practices that are accepted by teachers, students, and parents, must be seen as joint responsibilities for many parties in school as well as those outside, such as university-based researchers analyzing these issues. But, to be productive, such knowledge cannot be grounded in research that ends up reinforcing the familiar patterns of pointing to student “deficits” and school “deficits.” In our opinion, the reasoning has to be much more complex, innovative, and strategic, and it must recognize the dilemmas in pupil health. It must include habits of critically scrutinizing the local teaching and learning practices, appreciating the value of dissent between the actors on how to solve problems, sensitivity to the perspectives of pupils on their own schooling, and continuous concern with implementing and evaluating activities that will enhance the possibilities for inclusion into mainstream schooling for large proportions of children.

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Formation of Gendered Identities in the Classroom

Harriet Bjerrum Nielsen and Bronwyn Davies

Abstract

The purpose of this chapter is to examine ways in which classroom discourses and practices are implicated in the construction and maintenance of a conventional gender order where each gender is formed as opposite to the other, with male identity ascendant and female identity subordinate. This gender order has been contested and also to some degree changed during the last decades and so have the theoretical understandings of gender and identity. The shifting images of gender in classroom research reflect these changes. The new “what about the boys?” research that appeared in the 90s can be seen, for example, as a major reaction against what was seen to be an unacceptable rise in girls’ educational success, a rise that destabilized boys’ position as members of the dominant gender. Whereas the early research tends to blame the teachers for gender difference, showing how they interact differently with boys and girls, the later research focuses more on the part young children, and then students, play through the desire to be, and indeed the social necessity of being, “normal.” Over time the research has demonstrated that gender and identity are more multiple and mobile than was originally thought, being different across cultures (with many children being bi- or multicultural), across social and political contexts and across historical times, with each space-time demanding something quite different, even contradictory, of each child and student. We argue for future gender research that makes the processes of gender construction more visible to both teachers and students, making classroom text and talk more readily accessible to critique.

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Introduction

Gender has many facets. It is a dimension of bodies and physical reproduction, individual identities and personal experience, language and discourses, and social relations and everyday interaction. Gender is also central to divisions of labor and to the structuring of institutions such as families and schools. How young children and students take up their position in the existing gender order is an intriguing question for gender researchers. The research indicates that the social and discursive processes through which gender is constructed and maintained make the forces at work in the construction of gender difference largely invisible. There are a number of ways of making sense of this invisibility that we will explore in this chapter.

Children and students accomplish their assigned gender as if it were a natural and normal characteristic of their identities. Children develop an emotional commitment to the gender they have been assigned as early as 2 years of age. And when they arrive in preschool, most children already act, speak, and behave in recognizably gendered ways as if taking up gender difference was a natural part of their identities. Yet gender is also a construct that varies across culture, historical period, social class, ethnicity, age, and individual circumstances. Images of gender also vary in the lifetime of any individual and from one context to another. Separation in the social relations and activities of girls and boys in middle childhood appears to be a relatively widespread as well as a highly context-specific phenomenon. Research indicates that gender separation among children interacts with specific social conditions and that gender segregation may also be institutionalized, for instance, in schools, classrooms, subjects, work groups, seating arrangements, and out-of-school activities. Classrooms have demonstrably been sites where a hierarchical binary gender order has been maintained, along with a shifting array of hegemonic or marginalized positions within each gender group.

In this chapter, we trace the changing understandings of the role of classrooms in the formation of gendered identities. Different theories have emphasized varied aspects of the process of learning gender in age-related ways throughout life. One axis of disagreement lies in the tension between *socialization and agency*: is gender imposed on the child from the surroundings or do children actively create gender with their peers? Another axis of disagreement concerns *identity versus interaction*: does gendered interaction have formative consequences for identity and behavior of the person over time or is it something that mostly exists in moments and immediate contexts of interaction? A third axis of disagreement moves between *the practical and the symbolic*: is gender linked to patterns of practice and material structures, to lived life, or should it be understood mainly as negotiated positions in cultural discourses? These tensions should not be framed as either/or. Gender works in a complex matrix of bodies, structures, materialities, symbols, discourse, interaction, practices, identity, desire, and power.

Early Developments

From Rousseau through to the 1950s, gender differentiation was an explicit *goal* of education. Children were to be explicitly taught appropriate forms of masculinity and femininity. This was challenged after the Second World War, with the emergence of equal rights and child-centered discourses. However, even though there were language shifts and structural changes which suggested that gender was no longer a defining feature of students' identities, many of the assumptions and practices constitutive of gender difference remained remarkably intact. "Boys" and "girls" had become "children" or "students" in policy documents, and mixed schools became the norm in most parts of the Western world. Inequality became less visible though not because it was not present. In a subtle twist, the new "ideal child" was based on boys' behavior and learning strategies. Furthermore, in classroom studies, the students who were observed and referred to as "students" were actually only the boys. Until around 1970, the few studies focusing on gender influences in primary classrooms had criticized the treatment of boys, suggesting that female teachers were unable to meet the boys' learning needs effectively (Brophy 1985). During the 1970s, feminist researchers began to make girls visible in the classroom and to reveal the problematic patterns hidden by the cloak of egalitarian educational discourses. They found that the assumed advantages enjoyed by girls at the primary level were not sustained. This led to important texts such as Spender and Sarah's edited collection *Learning to Lose* (1980) from Australia, Delamont's book *Sex Roles and the School* (1980) from England, and Wernersson's *Könsdifferentiering i grundskolan (Gender Differentiation in Compulsory School, 1977)* from Sweden.

Major Contributions

Gender and Class Structures in the Classroom: Research from the 1970s and 1980s

The first wave of feminist research showed that the supposed gender neutrality of the modern school was an illusion. Sex/gender had remained a major organizing principle of the classroom despite the claim and intention of gender neutrality. In the 1970s and 1980s, it was found that teachers, on average, paid less attention to girls than to boys (Brophy 1985; Kelly 1988). Kelly (1988), in a meta-analysis of 81 quantitative studies of primary and secondary schools, showed that in all countries studied, across all ages, school levels, subjects, and socioeconomic and ethnic groupings, girls received fewer instructional contacts, fewer high-level questions and academic criticism, less behavioral criticism, and slightly less praise than boys. Kelly's study also showed that, while girls volunteered to answer questions as often as boys, they were less likely to initiate contact. Other studies found that boys initiated more contact with teachers in classroom talk, while girls tended to contact the teacher outside this context (Brophy 1985; Nielsen & Larsen 1985). Qualitative studies revealed a typical discourse sequence in a primary school classroom: teacher asks a question; a girl raises her hand and is appointed to answer; she does so briefly and her answer is usually correct; a boy interrupts with an interesting comment on the topic, and the teacher leaves the girl and engages in an exchange with the boy; other boys then join the discussion; the girls silently wait for the next question or may use the time to whisper together on other matters.

Good, Sikes, and Brophy found that the level of academic achievement (often corresponding to socioeconomic and ethnic background) differentiated boys more than girls: low-achieving boys got more behavioral criticism, while the high-achieving boys "receive the best of everything" (1973, p. 81). High performance in girls gained ambivalent responses from the teachers: on the one hand, it was praised; on the other hand, it was often dismissed as the product of conformity and instrumentalism. As Walkerdine (1990) observed, an unruly, low-achieving boy could be perceived by the teacher as simply bored and having greater potential than a cooperative high-achieving girl. In general, girls' higher achievement and more cooperative style meant that they received less attention: while they were praised for their obedience and their desire to please the teacher, they were generally taken for granted and not registered in teachers' consciousness as individuals who were of any particular interest (Wernersson 1977).

Even though girls were often praised as good pupils in the primary school, performed better, and were reported to be more satisfied with school, several studies indicated a serious decrease in self-esteem of girls in secondary school (Lees 1986). Although girls continued to get better marks than boys, teachers often perceived girls' classroom participation to change dramatically and for the worse (Hjort 1984; Wernersson 1977). They tended to become less compliant, less self-confident, and participated even less in classroom discussions. Contradictory explicit and implicit norms for what was valued meant that while girls might meet the explicit demands of

obedient behavior, the (implicitly male) ideal was the more inventive and individualistic behavior that was rewarded in boys from the outset.

Gender Identities, Age, and Peer Group: Research from the 1980s and 1990s

In the 1980s, a different research focus emerged looking at the role children themselves play in constructing gendered worlds and in taking up gendered discourse. Already from preschool age, children are engaged in “category maintenance” (Davies 1989/2003) or “borderwork” (Thorne 1993) on themselves and each other. The expressions of, and significance attributed to, this creation and maintenance of borders vary with age, gender, and situational context. Boys tend to demarcate themselves more fiercely from girls than the other way around, and both genders engage more in borderwork in institutionalized or group contexts than in more informal and personal contexts. This new approach situated classroom talk in a broader cultural, linguistic, and psychological context, as part of a process of gender identity formation. This was an important interpretive shift in which girls’ cooperative style was no longer read negatively as obedience and passivity but as an active taking up of gendered identity and where female identities are often characterized as being relational and responsive to others.

Studies focusing on the formation of gendered identities and life-worlds indicated that girls’ cooperative and boys’ competitive and individualistic discursive strategies were mostly found and practiced in their respective single sex groups. Girls liked collaboration with peers and to do group work better than boys (Reay 1991). The girls were more active in classroom talk when human and social issues were discussed, and male dominance was found in science classes and when the discussion concerned politics and history (Hjort 1984; Kelly 1988). The drop in girls’ performance in secondary classrooms (Brophy 1985; Lees 1986; Öhrn 1991) was linked in the research to greater emphasis on abstract knowledge and facts, to more impersonal relations with teachers, to the more competitive atmosphere, and, related to this, to the limited area of application in school for the girls’ interactive skills (Brophy 1985; Hjort 1984). Generally it was found that girls were not taken seriously and were not given opportunities to develop their personal and social orientation.

The girls’ interpersonal interest was also seen in their dyadic friendships where their relational competence was used both as a means of establishing contact and in fighting and betraying each other. The boys’ more assertive and aggressive behavior was connected to their hierarchical and competitive social life, where getting public attention and admiration from the group of boys counted more than intimate relations and where demonstrating their generalized superiority over girls seemed to be a central purpose in establishing a collective male identity (Hey 1997; Paley 1984). The subtle interplay between the priorities and social orientations of girls and boys, the structure and content of classroom discourse, and the responses students got from their teachers were analyzed by researchers as maintaining and reinforcing

the gender order, though this was generally not a conscious intention of the participants.

The different social orientations of girls and boys were also seen as gender-specific platforms for strategies of resistance toward the power asymmetries in the classroom. These differed according to the class- and ethnicity-related cultures of the students. Studies of youth cultures analyzed different gendered identities as positions for gaining power and control both in relation to teachers and in peer groups. Some working class boys, for instance, seemed to oppose the middle-class culture of school through macho behavior, strengthening both their working class male identity and the likelihood of dropping out of school (Connell 2000; Mac an Ghaill 1994; Willis 1977). Similarly, girls' docility could sometimes be used to gain facilities or advantages, and they could use their interactive skills to gain influence. Adolescent working class girls appeared to have their own patterns of resistance, using more personal weapons against teachers and school routines (Lees 1986; Öhrn 1991).

Gender as Discursive Practices: Research from the 1990s and the Early 2000s

While studies from the 1980s mostly saw classroom behavior and discursive strategies of girls and boys as part of a process in which gendered identity is accomplished, in the 1990s researchers in the social constructionist and poststructuralist traditions challenged the idea of such coherent and stable identities and such coherent and stable gender binaries. Gender should be deconstructed and seen as dynamic and processual: "We are and have gender; but we can also do gender, avoid gender, ignore gender and challenge gender" (Gordon et al. 2000, p. 3).

In studies informed by poststructuralism, the focus changed to the discursive practices through which culturally available meanings are taken up and lived out. They asked what positions were open for students to identify within classroom texts and talk and how students were positioned and how they positioned themselves within the texts and talk of gendered discourses (Walkerline 1990). According to this approach, to do gender in the classroom is to continuously negotiate, maintain, or oppose such positionings offered in classroom texts and talk. At the same time, because gendered images, metaphors, and narratives are seen as part of the everyday, unexamined discursive practices of the classroom, they may pass unnoticed by both teachers and students (Baker and Davies 1989). The binaries that structure Western thought (abstract/concrete, rational/emotional, independent/dependent) were, in this research, tied to the binary male/female in complex ways (Davies 1989/2003). Patterns of language usage are interpreted as containing and shaping the positions that are open to boys and girls in the discursive practices of the classroom and shape the meanings that are attributed by themselves and others to what they do. A number of studies emphasized the ongoing processes of subjectification by which children and students constructed themselves as gendered subjects within specific contexts and organizational framings (Ambjörnsson 2004; Davies and Kasama 2004; Gordon et al. 2000; Mac an Ghaill 1994; Staunæs 2004; Thorne 1993). The result was not

seen as fixed identity categories but as an ongoing process where different students were included and excluded, according to what was seen as appropriate or inappropriate ways of doing gender, ethnicity, class, and sexuality in each specific place/time. As a methodological consequence, the analytic focus was often on the borderline figures or incidents – on those who did not fit within what was perceived as “normal” in a specific context – and hence on making the naturalized categories visible and potentially transgressable (Staunæs 2004).

Intersectional and Integrated Approaches: Present Research Perspectives

In today’s research, we see a move toward an increased integration in new ways of some of the earlier approaches. School ethnographies combining observations, interviews, and visual material from the everyday life at school, with an analysis of the wider material and political structures outside the specific school, have become more prevalent. Gendered patterns in classroom talk are not understood in isolation but seen and analyzed in their intersections with other social categories like social class, ethnicity, and sexuality (Nielsen 2014; Robinson 2013). There is today more emphasis on the complexity, ambivalence, and multiplicity of masculinities and femininities among and within individuals, resulting in an array of different and mobile, but still also hierarchically ordered, forms of masculinities and femininities.

Recent studies have observed gendered discourse and social interaction not radically different from those seen in the 1970s, albeit providing a more nuanced picture of variation related to social class and educational context (Gordon et al. 2000; McLeod and Yates 2006; Nielsen 2014). Nevertheless from the early 1990s, a new figure in the classroom has become a centre of attention: the “new” active girl who keeps her relational interests and competencies intact but does not lose her ambitions and self-confidence in secondary school. She does better than the boys, not only with regard to marks but also with regard to coping with new qualification demands in school and society (Hatchell 1998; Nielsen 2004, 2014). But she may also be the one who drops out of the workforce later on, disillusioned with the ideal that she can be and do everything (Wyn 2000). New research indicates increasing problems with eating disorders, self-injury, and depression, especially among young women (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2011).

Running counter to the success of girls in school is the discourse of “failing boys” that has become prevalent in public and educational debate, reestablishing boys as the ones who are “really” of interest (Arnesen et al. 2008). Whereas girls have been seen as changing along with new demands of qualification in the work market and the increased emphasis on gender equality in society at large, boys have in the same period been perceived as the conventional, never-changing backdrop for the new girls. However, new research on boys in the classroom, for instance, from Scandinavia and Japan, indicates that boys are also changing. In a longitudinal and cross-sectional project from Norway, boys from preschool through to high school were found to combine their customary self-assertion with increased relationality and self-reflection

in their interactions with peers as well as with teachers. In Japan, Davies and Kasama (2004) found that dominant masculinity in Japanese preschools was expressed through cooperation with the teacher. The individuality of boys was not accomplished against relationality and awareness of others' needs but in harmony with them.

Some recent studies have argued for the importance of enabling students to see discourse at work in its construction of identities and desire. It is argued that neoliberalism has increasingly made critique of gender inaccessible with its emphasis on individualism and its claim that gender is both natural and irrelevant (Nash 2013). Some explore the production of texts for children and students that provide alternative imaginary possibilities for gendered beings (Davies 2014), alternatives that acknowledge the forces of normalization while seeking out the lines of flight through which transformations, however fleeting, might come about.

Problems and Difficulties

A difficulty in making sense of the research of girls' and boys' situations in school is that they are often analyzed from quite different perspectives – the “new” girls in terms of agency and the “failing” boys in terms of an assumed feminized school context. Whereas the 1970s and 1980s saw a tendency to analyze boys in terms of class, and girls in terms of gender, the opposite is the case today where the “new” girl is often individualized, white, and middle class and the “failing” boys are grouped together as the losing gender. The “what about the boys?” studies continue with the approach of the 1970s in which female teachers are blamed for boys' failure and unhappiness. The “multiple masculinities” agenda in contrast focuses on the varieties of masculinity and blames the dominant boys for not accepting difference (McInnes 2008). The more poststructurally oriented studies question the automatic assumption of masculinities of one kind or another being inextricably linked to the male-sexed body.

Another complexity is that even if school today is, to some degree, characterized by new ways of constructing gender identities among girls and boys, the teachers' interpretation of the students may not have changed to the same extent. Oppositional girls are seen as a bigger nuisance than oppositional boys and are disciplined for less disturbing behavior than are boys (Gordon et al. 2000). Öhrn (1991) found in her study of Swedish classrooms that being outspoken and active does not necessarily give girls individuality in the classroom. Teachers still described girls in groups and boys as individuals and now refer to active girls collectively as, for instance, the “girl mafia.” Öhrn also found that teachers overestimated the extent of the girls' oral activity, while the reverse applied for the boys. Boys were only judged to dominate when the gender difference was extremely marked. The discourse about failing boys has aroused much more immediate attention than the discourse of “silent and insecure girls” in the 1970s and 1980s. The old gender order may also be seen in the research itself where the attention of even aware researchers is easily drawn toward the boys, often because of government funding priorities, while the girls remain marginalized (Gordon et al. 2000). And whereas the study of different

“masculinities” in school appears to be an interesting and legitimate subject in contemporary gender studies, the study of different “femininities” does not gain the same attention.

Future Directions

Language is both a means for constructing and maintaining gender and a means for expressing gendered identities. Studies of “being” gendered and “doing” gender can be seen as functionally related and reveal different aspects of the social process of gendered identity construction. Studies of individuals cannot give any final account of the collective process of doing gender, since something new is accomplished/created in the ongoing process of doing and talking not tell us anything about the motives and desires of the individuals who engage in this meaning making, what positions they read as available to them, and how it is they find themselves taking up one positioning or another in the various space-times they inhabit – and with what consequences for their sense of self over time. Studies of gender in classroom discourse reveal both obvious differences within each gender group and an array of gender positionings the same girl or boy can take up. At the same time, gender difference is extraordinarily resilient. A theory of gendered identity should take account of both resilience and emergent differences.

Future research might examine the interactions among gendered text and talk in the classroom, gendered identity formations and positionings, and the processes of subjectification, as they interact with each other. Also relevant is the impact of economic changes and governmental policies as they affect schools, families, workplaces, and research-funding bodies. Further, the growing interest in comparative, longitudinal, and generational studies (Davies and Kasama 2004; Gordon et al. 2000; McLeod and Yates 2006; Nielsen 2014; Andres and Wyn 2010) opens up the possibility of locating classroom discourse in a much broader multicultural and space-time perspective. Gender identities intersect with age, class, ethnicity, and sexuality, and each of these are shaped in turn by cultural and economic forces, as well as the micro-moments in peer group and classroom interaction (Davies 2014; Nielsen 2014). Research also needs to ask what the differences in teachers’ own gender, class, sexuality, and ethnicity mean for these processes (Robinson 2013). It is important that these studies do not just focus on talk but also on texts that students read and write and view and hear. Closely linked to these close-grained and broad-ranging studies, we envisage classrooms as sites where teachers and students together engage in critique of existing discourses and practices. Critique that makes existing discourses and practices visible will enable students to become aware of the ways in which normalizing and gendered discourses work on them and through them, generating specific patterns of desire and invisibly coercing them into gendered patterns of dominance and submission. Researchers will continue looking at what *is* but will also work with what *might be*, developing texts, both fictional and curricular, that help students and teachers think their way beyond taken-for-granted discourses and practices that hold the hierarchical, binary gender order in place.

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Language, Sexuality, and Education

Helen Sauntson

Abstract

Studies which examine intersections between language, sexuality, and education are relatively few in number and this field is still arguably in its relative infancy. With a few exceptions, what much current work on sexuality and education lacks is an explicit focus on the role that language plays in constructing discourses around sexuality in schools. And while work in the field of language and sexuality has examined the diverse ways in which sexual identity can be linguistically enacted, little of this research has yet been applied to educational settings. In the work on language, sexuality, and education that does exist, most major contributions fall into two broad areas: those which focus on discriminatory language practices relating to sexuality (especially homophobic language); and those which investigate more broadly the discursive construction of sexuality in educational settings. Within the first area, a number of studies have examined homophobic language use in schools and other educational settings. Some work has examined how homophobia is not always overt and is more often construed as a discursive effect of silence and invisibility. In work which examines the discursive construction of sexuality in educational contexts, some use has been made of narrative analysis and classroom interaction analysis. This chapter provides an overview of work within these two broad areas. Alongside work which focuses on schools, there is a growing body of work which examines the discursive construction of sexual identities specifically within language education (especially *English* language education). This chapter also provides an overview of work which examines language and sexuality in these different educational settings.

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 Sexuality • Sexual identity • Education • Schools

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Early Developments

The fields of language and sexuality and sexuality and education are both relatively new and there is currently very little research that brings these two emergent fields together. Academic work on sexuality, within the social sciences in particular, is often aimed at increasing understanding of what attitudes and ideologies about sexuality circulate in particular contexts, how they circulate, what the effects of that circulation are, and what happens when they are challenged. Language-focused work on sexuality uses the tools of applied linguistics to examine how particular discourses of sexuality are constructed, circulated, perpetuated, and challenged through language in a range of contexts, including education. Language is a key means through which social ideologies are constructed and circulated. If we can understand how language operates in relation to ideologies about sexuality, perhaps this may enable us to begin understanding how to use language to challenge those ideologies which are detrimental to certain kinds of sexual identities and relationships, most notably lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) identities. This is a key premise which underlies much current work in the field of language, sexuality, and education.

The field mainly arose from early work on language and gender in schools. It became recognized by some that the examinations of language, gender, and education which did not also take into account sexuality were inadequate. Mac an Ghail (1994) was one of the first to observe how male students at school frequently perform their masculinities not only through the overt subordination of female students, but also through the homophobic bullying of other male students who are not seen to be performing their masculinities in the same way as the majority of male students who consider themselves to be the dominant group. He also observes how allegedly “gay” behavior among boys is frequently associated with femininity in order to traduce the former. Epstein and Johnson (1998) also found the term “gay” being used in UK schools to refer to boys who were academically successful or who were simply seen as enjoying school work. In her study, she found that some boys rejected the perceived “feminine” of academic work as a defense against being called “gay.”

Secondary schools are particularly marked sites for the production of heterosexual identities (more so than primary schools which are normatively asexual). According to Eckert (1996), the transition into a heterosexual social order in secondary school brings boys and girls into an engagement in gender differentiation and encourages boys and girls to view themselves as “commodities” in a heterosexual market. Thus, schools are places where students learn not only what is prescribed by subject curricula, but also the norms and rules associated with dominant ideologies of gender and sexuality in order to commodify themselves in a predominantly heterosexual marketplace. Thus, the principle of queer theory which claims an integral and definitional relationship between gender and sexuality is of central importance to the study of language and sexuality and its application to the school context. Britzman (1997) additionally argues that students are routinely coded as heterosexual, or as having no sexual identity in English language classrooms. Britzman argues that this absence contributes to a pervasive discourse of homophobia. Similarly, Vandrick (1997) argues that the common practice of excluding homosexuality, bisexuality, and transgenderism from ESL curricula, textbooks, and teaching materials (and ESL research itself) constitutes a form of homophobia. A consideration of absence and silence as forms of homophobia is now incorporated into some current work on language, sexuality, and education (as discussed below).

The prevalence of the word “gay” being used as an insult in UK schools has also come under scrutiny in research. Duncan (1999) observes that “gay” is still mainly used to denote boys who do not possess enough of the qualities fitting the ideal male stereotype of the dominant peer group. Furthermore, in the schools that Duncan visited, hypermasculinity had a hegemonic status within the school culture. The use of “gay” as an insult was a key way of policing masculinity in the schools and was thus used more as a means of policing boys’ performance of gender than as an accurate way of referring to known or “out” homosexuals. More recently, Airton (2009) argues that gender continues to be a problem that is linked to homophobia. She observes that gender nonnormativity and queerness are often conflated in the school environment. In sum, much early and continuing research on gender found that homophobic language in schools was often directed, not necessarily as those who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual but rather at those who are perceived to be nonnormative in terms of their gender.

Major Contributions

Most major contributions to the field in recent years fall into two broad areas: those which focus on discriminatory language practices relating to sexuality (especially homophobic language); and those which investigate more broadly the discursive construction of sexuality in educational settings.

Work within the first area is largely based on the premise that a key way in which homophobia is enacted is through language. Work in the field of language and sexuality has examined the diverse ways in which homophobia can be linguistically enacted, but little of this research has been applied to school settings where the

effects of homophobia are, arguably, very damaging due to the young age of learners. The clearest recent indications of the levels of inequality and discrimination currently being experienced by students in UK and US schools come from national surveys conducted by Stonewall UK and the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), respectively. The 2012 Stonewall Report (*The School Report: The Experiences of Gay Young People in Britain's Schools in 2012*) found that more than half (55%) of LGB young people experience homophobic bullying in school. About 96% of gay students reported hearing frequent homophobic remarks in their schools. The Stonewall Report also found that only half of LGB students reported that their schools say homophobic bullying is wrong and only 10% reported that teachers challenge homophobic language each time they hear it. In the USA, the 2011 *National School Climate Survey* conducted and published by GLSEN found that 8 out of 10 (81.9%) LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender)¹ students in US schools experience harassment because of their sexual orientation, and three fifths (63.5%) feel unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation (www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/news/record/2897.html). Both surveys find prevalent use of the word “gay” being used as an insult in schools. And both surveys find a lack of visibility around LGB issues in school. However, the reports do indicate that biased language and victimization are decreasing slightly for the first time, and there is evidence that school-based resources and support is starting to make a difference in terms of challenging LGBT inequalities in schools.

The prevalence of LGBT inequalities in schools has also been found to be the case in other countries, such as Australia (Nelson 2009, 2012), Brazil (Moita-Lopes 2006), and South Africa (Francis and Msibi 2011). Current legislation and education policies in countries such as the UK and USA are starting to recognize the need to address sexual diversity issues in schools, but their remit is rather narrow in that they mainly focus on tackling homophobic bullying and explicitly homophobic language. While these intentions are an important step forward, they nevertheless fail to recognize that homophobia is not always overt and is more often construed as a discursive effect of silence and invisibility. Clearly, there are still many countries around the world in which there is no intention to challenge homophobia in schools or other contexts. We continue to live in a world where anti-homosexuality laws exist in 78 countries (according to 2013 survey by the International Lesbian and Gay Association [ILGA]). Homosexuality is punishable by death in five countries and it is punishable by imprisonment in several more. Therefore, it is almost impossible to research language, sexuality, and education in many countries which does restrict the international reach of the field.

Work in the area of discriminatory language, sexuality, and education is now beginning to examine in more depth the role of silence, as well as continuing to investigate overt homophobic language. Epstein et al. (2003), for example, identify schools as sites where heterosexuality is constructed as normal and sexualities which transgress this norm are silenced, often tacitly rather than actively. They explore

¹Some research focuses only on lesbian, gay and bisexual identities (LGB) where other research incorporates transgender identities (LGBT).

some of the key ways in which sexualities are constructed in educational contexts, with a specific focus on how heterosexuality comes to be naturalized, socially sanctioned, and highly visible while other sexualities are denaturalized, marginalized, and silenced. A range of routine silencing and regulatory discourses in schools have also been explored by Sauntson (2013), Gray (2013), Francis and Msibi (2011), Moita-Lopes (2006), amongst others. Sedgwick (1990) argues that silence is a speech act which, in the context of homosexuality, has the effect of constructing or reinforcing the notion of “the closet” – a metaphor for the nondisclosure (i.e. maintenance of silence) of an individual’s homosexual or bisexual identity. In recent sexuality-focused work in linguistics, scholars have argued that silence as a linguistic act can produce the effect of homophobia when that silence functions to exclude nonheterosexual identities when there is no logical reason for doing so. Leap (2011, p. 184) argues that “any text can become a site of homophobic reference” even when the homophobia itself is not explicit. This, he argues, is because homophobic messages are always in formation, and because the meaning potential of any text is only realized in the interaction between the text, the reader, and the context. A locutionary act may not necessarily be homophobic, but the perlocutionary effect on the reader may be experienced as homophobic depending on the context in which the text is circulating. In a special issue of the journal *Gender and Language*, the contributing authors discuss how homophobic formations can emerge from texts which appear to be “value-free.” Morrish states that “homophobia may still be the result even when overt homophobic messages are not part of the text’s content” (2011, p. 328). In educational contexts, DePalma and Atkinson (2006, p. 334) have also pointed out that heteronormativity is “maintained not only in terms of what is said and done, but also in terms of what is left out of the official discourse.”

Sauntson (2013) has examined this phenomenon of homophobia being enacted through linguistic silencing in interviews with teachers and LGB students in UK secondary schools in which they identify instances where they would have expected LGB identities to be explicitly discussed or made visible but they are not. Sauntson (2013) finds young LGB people to repeatedly report in interviews that sexual diversity (and especially homosexuality) is “not talked about” and “ignored” and that this has a negative emotional effect on them which, in turn, decreases their motivation to attend school. This raises two points of tension. One is that the routine silences around nonheterosexual sexualities in schools sits in tension with the fact that sexual diversity is actually very visible elsewhere (e.g. in the media). The other tension is that while positive and inclusive discussion about sexual diversity is often absent, homophobic language is present and pervasive in schools. In order for homophobic language to exist, there has to be an acknowledgment that homosexuality exists – otherwise, there is nothing to discriminate against. However, linguistic absence produces the effect of erasing sexual identities which are not normatively heterosexual. To use Butler’s (1990) term, particular identities are rendered “unintelligible” through their repeated silencing and absence. Furthermore, a gendered dimension emerges in Sauntson’s study when silence as a linguistic act is examined in relation to homosexuality. And this gendered dimension is often overlooked in research. Sauntson finds, for example, that young gay and bisexual

men experience explicit (most often verbal and physical) homophobia in school more often than young lesbian and bisexual women. The young women report experiencing homophobia but this happens more often through silencing, marginalizing, and ignoring by staff and other students. The latter is perhaps more difficult to identify and therefore challenge but this does not mean it should not be given as much attention as explicit homophobia. Those conducting future research in the field therefore need to be mindful of gendered experiences of homophobia in schools and to pay equal attention to the experiences of young women as well as young men.

Much work in this first area of language, sexuality, and education research has been theoretically informed by queer linguistics. Queer linguistics is informed by elements of queer theory (especially the work of Butler 1990) but incorporates analytical frameworks from linguistics in its application. At its core, queer linguistics questions and deconstructs the “normal” and the “normative” through examining particular contextualized linguistic practices. Queer linguistics can therefore provide a very helpful theoretical framework for examining how normative and nonnormative constructions of sexual identity are enacted through and inscribed in language practices in schools, and how these language practices may affect particular discourses of sexuality. Nelson (2009) argues that because identities within queer theory are conceptualized as performative acts which are produced through discourse, using a queer theory framework has the potential to engage teachers and students in LGBT issues in language classes.

The majority of work in the second main area also makes use of queer theory but focuses more on how lesbian, gay, and bisexual identities are marginalized in educational settings and how such settings are simultaneously imbued with language practices that function to prioritize and normalize heterosexuality. In order to explore these issues, some use has been made of the linguistic frameworks of narrative analysis (Morrish and Sauntson 2007) and classroom interaction analysis (Moita-Lopes 2006; Nelson 2012; Sauntson 2012). Morrish and Sauntson (2007) examine a corpus of electronic coming out narratives written by women identifying as lesbian and find that they frequently refer to schools and universities as key sites which play a role in their sexual identity construction. More specifically, compulsory and postcompulsory educational settings are ascribed different sets of norms, values, and attitudes by the narrators with postcompulsory education (university) being evaluated more positively. Morrish and Sauntson also find that negative evaluations of compulsory schooling seem to predominate in the stories. Analysis of the stories reveals how the narrators engage in a range of sociocultural activities in their lives which help them to shape and construct certain kinds of sexual identity. The study reveals how different sets of sociocultural values may be in conflict with each other in education, and how this may affect the way that people understand, experience, and shape their sexual identities. Moita-Lopes (2006) examines some homophobic taunting scenarios in classrooms in Brazil and observes how the teachers seemed unsure of how to deal with such incidents. This uncertainly plays a significant role in contributing to the discourse of heteronormativity which pervade the school environment. Moita-Lopes concludes that teachers need to be willing and able to address issues of homosexuality in their classrooms.

While much work focuses on schools, there is a growing body of work which examines the discursive construction of sexual identities (especially LGB identities) within EFL, ESL/TESOL, and language education more broadly. Ellwood (2006), for example, explores some of the ways in which English language classes can enable LGBT students to speak more openly about their own sexual identities, especially if a conducive environment is created by the teacher. O'Mochain (2006) reflects on his experiences as an EFL teacher in which he attempted to incorporate discussions of gender and sexuality into a context which were perceived to traditionally discourage such discussions (a Christian women's college in Japan). O'Mochain encouraged the students to analyze and critically discuss gender and sexuality issues (as well as more generic language and communication issues) in some life-history narratives of local Japanese lesbians and gay men. Gray (2013) critically examines the ways in which materials used for English language teaching are implicitly heteronormative and frequently render LGBT identities invisible.

Recent and current work combines classroom discourse analysis with ethnography (e.g. Sauntson 2012; Nelson 2009, 2012). Within a broadly ethnographic approach, Sauntson (2012) uses interactional and interview data from British secondary school settings to explore how gender and sexuality are discursively constructed in classrooms. The study focuses mainly on student-student classroom talk and uses a range of discourse analytic frameworks. The study reveals the intricacies of classroom interaction as a site where gender and sexuality identities are played out on a daily basis and as a site of constant ideological struggle.

Nelson (2009) provides a book-length empirical investigation into English language teachers' and students' experiences of talking in class about sexual diversity and of negotiating sexual identities in language classroom contexts. Within the overall ethnographic approach to the research, Nelson draws on focus group and teacher interviews as well as classroom observations to explore some of the pedagogic challenges and opportunities that arise as queer themes become increasingly visible in English language teaching around the world. Nelson concludes that a useful way forward is for teachers and students to see challenges *as* opportunities and offers a number of "macrostrategies" for enabling this to happen. These macrostrategies include: teaching sexual literacy as part of teaching language/culture; deconstructing antigay discourses for teaching purposes; recognizing that student cohorts and teaching staff are multisexual in a way that is intellectually enriching; evaluating teaching resources to consider whether they are upholding or challenging heteronormative thinking. Nelson offers some practical examples for helping teachers to put these strategies into action in classrooms.

Work in Progress

Despite the research that has been conducted, Nelson (2012) is critical that, in language-focused education research, there has still been relatively little dialogue between applied linguistics and queer linguistics and calls for more attention to be

paid to how linguistic analysis can offer important insights into sexualities and education. Some current work in progress does attempt to bring these two interrelated fields together more explicitly.

At the time of writing, an ESRC-funded seminar series entitled “Queering ESOL: Towards a cultural politics of LGBT issues in the ESOL classroom” is currently taking place in the UK. The series brings together key emerging research in this area and will produce a number of new publications focusing on the following areas: institutional and legal frameworks; sexual migration and the ESOL classroom; LGBT learners and teachers; religion and sexual diversity; LGBT representations; implications for ESOL policy and practice. The series emerged from a recognition that sexual diversity remains largely invisible in language teaching generally with potentially negative consequences for LGBT language learners. The emergence of “sexual migration” as a field of research within migration studies also has potential implications for language education policy and practice. To date, this is a relatively under-researched area in ESOL other than work by Nelson (2009, 2012). Contributions to the seminar series thus offer ways of identifying how best to support the needs of LGBT students and teachers in the light of new institutional and legal frameworks. The seminar series also aims to explore and make visible the cultural politics of LGBT issues in ESOL more broadly and it is anticipated that the subsequent published outputs from the series will play a key role not just in moving forward the field of language, sexuality, and education, but also the field of ESOL more widely.

Outside the area of ESOL, Sauntson’s forthcoming book *Language, Sexuality and Education* examines in a detailed and systematic way the diverse ways that language can play a role in constructions of sexual identities in school contexts. The research presented in the book draws on data from the UK and USA secondary/high school contexts and includes classroom observations, interviews with teachers and students, and curriculum documents. Data is analyzed using various methods of discourse analysis including feminist poststructuralist discourse analysis, corpus linguistics, critical discourse analysis, and appraisal analysis. The analysis focuses on examining how sexual identities are constructed through language in secondary schools and what different frameworks of linguistic analysis can reveal about how educators and young people experience sexuality and sexual diversity in schools. The research also considers whether different sexual identities are constructed differently through language and, if so, how this is achieved. There is consideration of whether different statuses are ascribed to different sexual identities and, if so, what these statuses are and how they are achieved through language. Through exploring these issues, this research aims to enhance our knowledge of how sexual diversity is understood, constructed, and enacted, with a view to challenging the problems around sexual diversity which evidently persist in schools. Another key aim of the research is to explore how the application of methods of spoken and written discourse analysis can develop knowledge and understanding of the relationship between language and sexuality in school settings.

Problems and Difficulties

It has been noted that work in the field of language, sexuality, and education tends to focus primarily on lesbian, gay, and bisexual identities even though “sexuality” could potentially refer to a much wider range of sexual identities. The reason is that any socially oriented study of sexuality cannot ignore issues of power and a key dimension of power in relation to sexuality is that certain sexualities are imbued with power while others are more marginalized. Critical analyses tend to focus on the experiences of marginalized groups as the research usually has an emancipatory aim of challenging social inequalities. There has also been a predominant focus on gay and lesbian identities in education whereas much less research has been conducted on bisexual and transgender identities. Thus, some “sexual identities” still remain relatively marginalized within the field.

The very notion of “identity” has been a long-standing theoretical issue for work in the field. Much work makes use of queer theory as its theoretical base and there is a long-recognized tension between the use of queer theory and the perceived necessity of focusing on sexual identity categories (lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual, gay, and so on) for visibility in research which has a socially transformative aim. Queer theory emphasizes nonspecificity and the erasure of identity. Indeed, much current work in the field of gender and sexuality across a range of disciplines has sought to resolve this conundrum – how is it possible to retain a commitment to a political and emancipatory agenda while, at the same time, resisting notions of “identity” as something which is fixed, stable, and inevitable?

A further related problem with utilizing queer theories within language study is that they have no clearly definable methodology. “Queer” resists methodological classification and organization in the same way that it resists definition and categorization. One practical solution has been offered by Bucholtz and Hall (2004). Their “tactics of intersubjectivity” model draws on a combination of selective aspects of queer and feminist theories and offers a framework for the analysis of the relationship between identity and language. The model provides an effective means of incorporating elements of queer theory into enquiry which wants to retain a commitment to some notion of “identity,” however fluid that notion may be. “Tactics of intersubjectivity” has been developed in the recognition that identities emerge in context, that they may be temporary and multiple, and that they are negotiated with other social actors and in relation to structures of power. Like queer theory, the tactics of intersubjectivity framework treats “identity” not as an empirical category, but as a product of processes of identification. The framework has been very influential in the study of language and sexuality and has made a significant contribution to sociolinguistics more broadly by offering new ways of conceptualizing the relationship between language and identity. Within the field of language, sexuality, and education, Sauntson (2016) uses the framework to examine how a group of LGBT-identified young people understand their sexuality identities in relation to the secondary school context.

A further difficulty is that there is heavy reliance on the notion of “normativity” within work in the field. But there is also a concurrent lack of theorizing around the

concept of normativity. Motchenbacher (2014) argues that much recent language and sexuality work makes frequent reference to the concept of normativity without fully explaining or theorizing it. He argues that speakers have a tendency to orient toward a shared notion of normativity in their language practices. However, normativity itself is not stable and a way of theorizing it is to view it as constantly shifting and relative to context. Motchenbacher illustrates these ideas through reference to empirical data in which speakers who identify as objectophiles discuss aspects of their sexual identity. Motchenbacher finds that the speakers orient toward a shared notion of what constitutes “normative” sexual behavior through describing their own sexual identity as nonnormative. However, the speakers simultaneously make efforts to construct their identity as normative through eliding their own sexual practices with those who they construct as normative. For example, they describe their relationships with objects in the same terms as humano-heterosexual monogamous relationships. In Motchenbacher’s work, it is not immediately clear whether it is identities or practices which are normative. However, it could be argued that if we combine Motchenbacher’s theory of sexuality and normativity with a sociolinguistic community of practice approach, it is the practices that subject engage in which are normative or nonnormative (or varying degrees in between) and identities *emerge from* these practices. Language itself is a practice. Therefore, language can be conceptualized as a practice which construes identity as normative or nonnormative in relation to sexuality.

Future Directions

The scope of language study in relation to sexuality is much broader than just focusing on homophobic language. Although it is important to examine explicit uses of homophobic language, so that it can ultimately be challenged, a problem with only focusing on explicitly homophobic language is that it can deflect attention away from other (often more subtle but just as damaging) ways in which homophobia is enacted in schools. A narrow focus on homophobic language can also shift attention away from the ways in which heterosexuality is linguistically constructed in school settings. In particular, it can detract from examining how language works to construct sexual identity “hierarchies” (a term used by Butler 2004) whereby particular kinds of heterosexuality are normalized and other sexual identities (including certain types of heterosexuality) are rendered less visible.

We are already beginning to see greater diversification of the field of language, sexuality, and education and this is likely to continue in the future. There appear to be two main “strands” of research emerging – that which focuses specifically upon teaching English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) contexts and English Language education, and that which focuses on language, sexuality, and education more broadly. It is likely that these two strands will continue to develop further as a key means of expanding the whole field of language, sexuality, and education. To date, much of the focus of research has been on schools and classrooms. Future research in the field may start to entail a greater diversity of understandings of

“education.” In other words, it is likely to consider a much wider range of educational settings beyond schools and is already starting to move beyond an examination of homophobic language to exploring a wider range of sexual identities and linguistic practices and to place more emphasis on a critical examination of how language upholds heteronormative thinking in many educational settings.

Within the two fields of language and sexuality and sexualities and education, more attention is now being paid to intersectionality with an acknowledgment that sexuality does not operate as an isolated aspect of identity. The field of language, sexuality, and education is similarly beginning to incorporate analyses of intersectionality. This includes some of the contributions to the Queering ESOL series (organized and delivered by Gray, Baynham, and Cooke and in progress at the time of writing). For example, both Cashman and Mole focus on intersections of nationality, ethnicity, and sexuality with Cashman’s (2014) research focusing on the identities, communities, and language practices of queer Latinidad in the USA and Mole’s (2014) research examining the experiences and language practices of Russian LGBT Migrants in Berlin between what he terms the “ethnonational” and the queer diasporas. Jaspal (2014) examines intersections of religious, ethnic, and sexual identities in his study of British South Asian gay men.

Future contributions to the field are also likely to involve the development of methods and of analytical frameworks. Milani (2013), for example, examines multimodal (linguistic and spatial) constructions of sexual identity in a university environment. He argues that using multimodal methods of discourse analysis, and incorporating a semiotic analysis of sexuality and space, could further our understanding of the relationship between language and sexuality and how it operates in educational and other contexts.

In light of some of the problems identified in the preceding section, future research would benefit from a greater focus on bisexual and transgender identities in relation to language and identity as these are currently under-researched. As discussed above, Motchenbacher (2014) has been critical of the lack of theorizing around the term “normativity” in the field of language and sexuality broadly and specifically within queer linguistics. In response to these important theoretical issues, there would also be value in continuing to interrogate the concept of normativity in relation to sexuality and education.

Cross-References

► [Formation of Gendered Identities in the Classroom](#)

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Playful Talk, Learners' Play Frames, and the Construction of Identities

Vally Lytra

Abstract

Drawing on educational and sociolinguistic research, this chapters attempt to bring together early, major, and more recent studies that have examined the intersection of playful talk, learners' play frames, and social identities in schools and classrooms. These studies confirm that playful talk is an enduring feature of classroom talk and action and highlight the importance of looking beyond learners' curriculum-oriented talk usually with teachers to the heterogeneity of voices, frames, practices, and discourses in schools and classrooms and its implications for learners' meaning making and identity work. They also point to the need to further examine learners' expressive repertoires, including various forms of playful talk, the values attached to their linguistic resources, and their multiple and often conflicting identity negotiations, embedded in broader social, historical, political, and ideological contexts and discourses, as well as teacher's playful talk and social affiliation.

Keywords

Playful talk • Play frames • Negotiation of identities • Schools

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Introduction

Recent educational and sociolinguistic research into learners' talk in schools and classrooms has investigated the intersection of language and identity construction drawing on social constructionist and poststructuralist perspectives. Social constructionist approaches view identity as "an emergent construction, the situated outcome of a rhetorical and interpretative process in which interactants make situationally motivated selections from socially constituted repertoires of identificational and affiliational resources and craft these semiotic resources into identity claims for presentation to others" (Bauman 2000, p. 1). From this perspective, language, including playful talk, emerges as one of the central semiotic resources available to learners for self and other identity ascriptions. By focusing on the learners' linguistic and other semiotic resources and the values ascribed to these resources, we can then explore "when and how identities are interactively invoked by socio-cultural actors" (Kroskrity 1993, p. 222). This understanding of identity is premised on a view of the self as an active participant in the interactively achieved social construction of meaning. However, Kroskrity (2001) cautions "against any approach to identity, or identities, that does not recognize both the communicative freedom potentially available at the microlevel and the political economic constraints imposed on processes of identity-making" (ibid., p. 108). Poststructuralist approaches to identity have alerted us to the uneven distribution of linguistic resources and the structural constraints within in which participants have to act. As Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) argue, "poststructuralist theory recognizes the sociohistorically shaped partiality, contestability, instability, mutability of ways in which language ideologies and identities are linked to relations of power and political arrangements in communities and societies" (p. 10).

Playful talk can, therefore, provide a productive locus for the study of the constitution and negotiation of learners' social and institutional identities in schools and classrooms (see also Luk Ching Man, "► [Classroom Discourse and the Construction of Learner and Teacher Identities](#)"). In this chapter, I use the term "playful talk" as a superordinate category with the purpose of capturing a wide range of verbal activities and routines, including teasing, joking, humor, verbal play, parody, music making, and chanting that can emerge in learners' talk. Some of these activities and routines may be more fleeting and highly unstructured (e.g., private

solo singing and humming of popular tunes in circulation) and others more ritualized (e.g., teasing, ritual insults). Moreover, these verbal phenomena may require different understandings of local and global contexts and allow for varying audience roles and participant structures. The notion of playful talk can be fruitfully combined with the concept of performance as linguistic practice that is “situated, interactional, communicatively motivated” (Bauman 2000, p. 1). Playful talk as performance then can “represent for participants an arena for the display, contemplation, and manipulation of salient elements, practices, and relationships that allow language to serve as a resource for the expression of identity” (ibid., p. 4).

Early Developments

Bateson in *Steps to an Ecology of the Mind* (1972) was one of the very first scholars to develop a theory of play and communication drawing on a number of disparate disciplines, including anthropology, psychiatry, and biology. In his pioneering essay *A Theory of Play and Fantasy* (reprinted in the aforementioned volume), he provides us with two important insights that have influenced the way subsequent scholars working within educational and sociolinguistic paradigms have conceptualized the relationship between play and communication. Observing two young monkeys playing in the San Francisco Zoo in the 1950s, he noted first that the monkeys were engaged in an interactive sequence of actions or signals that were similar to but not entirely the same as those of combat. Second, he noticed that the participant monkeys treated their playing as such. Based on these observations, Bateson deduced that the two monkeys were capable of some degree of metacommunication that involved exchanging signals carrying the message “this is play” (Bateson 1972, p. 178). Drawing on Bateson’s insights, subsequent scholars have explored the close association between play and combat in human communication and the liable nature of play as well as the significance of metacommunicative awareness in recognizing that an interactive sequence should be interpreted as play.

Goffman’s discussion of frames in *Frame Analysis* (1974) can be a useful point of entry into the examination of the unstable nature of play with important implications for the conceptualization of play frames in general and learners’ play frames in particular. Goffman regards frames as mechanisms through which participants structure their social and personal experiences, thereby providing us with an interpretation of what is going on in a given interaction (Goffman 1974, pp. 10–11). As indicated in the introduction of this review, playful talk as performance can encompass a wide range of verbal phenomena (e.g., humor, teasing, joking) which in turn set up play frames. Learners can then employ clusters of contextualization cues (e.g., laughter, shifts in pitch, rhythm, voice quality, volume, nicknames, repetition) which function as framing devices and signal how their utterances, movements, or gestures are to be interpreted by their teachers and fellow classmates. Contextualization cues as framing devices allow us to unpick the organization of social interaction and explore how learners strategically exploit playful talk to do identity work in educational settings. By framing talk as play, learners mark-off periods of playful talk

devoted to a particular verbal activity (e.g., teasing, music making, verbal play) from talk about other matters (e.g., talk about a school task). Learners need to have a certain degree of metacommunicative awareness in order to distinguish between those signals or cues used for play and those used for combat. Metacommunicative awareness is created and constantly renewed against a backdrop of shared cultural assumptions, associations, and background knowledge reflecting the learners' interactional histories and interpersonal ties.

Some of the earliest social interactionist studies on playful talk in urban neighborhoods in the USA and Turkey explored verbal duelling and ritual insulting routines among African-American young males (Labov 1972) and Turkish young people, respectively (Dundes et al. 1972). Although not focusing on schools and classrooms, these early studies have provided important insights into the investigation of playful talk, learning, and peer socialization.

Major Contributions

Educational and sociolinguistic research has tended to focus on learners' official school practices, often ignoring that there is more happening than just learning academic subject matter in schools and classrooms. Indeed, as Maybin (2006) aptly argues, mainstream accounts of schools and classrooms have tended to adopt an "educational gaze." They have tended to concentrate on the learners' curriculum-oriented talk usually with their teachers. As a result, they have often treated instances of "off task" talk in the classroom, for instance, or as learners pass through school corridors, play in school grounds, and have lunch together as marginal. Nevertheless, educational and sociolinguistic studies of schools and classrooms from an ethnographic perspective have repeatedly shown that playful talk is an enduring feature of classroom talk and learning (e.g., Lytra 2007, 2011; Maybin 2006; Poveda 2011; Rampton 2006; see also Garcez, "► [Microethnography in the Classroom](#)"). These studies have demonstrated that learners' talk is often saturated by the use of nicknames, crosssex teasing routines, and quiet solo singing. They have also illustrated that learners experiment with rhyme and rhythm, differences in intonation contours, pitch, volume, and repetition. Moreover, they have shown that learners often refer, allude to, or perform recyclable and recontextualizable fragments of talk from music, TV, fiction, and film as well as mimic and parody the voices of their teachers and fellow classmates. The shift of focus away from the learners' official school worlds has also been influenced by more recent approaches to classroom talk. These have probed into the heterogeneity of classroom discourses and practices and have highlighted the processes of recontextualization and dialogicality at play in learners' talk (e.g., Blackledge and Creese 2010; Gutiérrez et al. 1999; Haworth 1999; Kambarelis 2001). This line of research has emphasized "the social and cultural dimensions of children's language experience in school" (Maybin 2009, p. 70).

In his seminal study *Crossing: Language and Ethnicity among Adolescents*, Rampton (1995) was one of the first scholars to shift our analytical gaze away from

curriculum learning and draw our attention to the wide variety of different expressive resources and practices in young people's talk in multiethnic schools and classrooms. Among other practices, he identified crossing into Punjabi by black and white adolescents in routines of jocular abuse and the impact of popular media culture (in particular music making) on their talk and conduct across different interactional contexts at school. As far as the latter is concerned, he looked into crossing into stylized Asian English in school-sponsored theatrical performances and the spread of bhangra (a form of folk music and dance closely associated with Punjabi culture) among black and white adolescents. One important theme that emerged in his work was the different ways in which popular media culture provided young people with rich and complex linguistic and cultural repertoires for play to appropriate, transform, and recontextualize in order, for instance, to take part in a sequence of jocular abuse or in singing along snippets of Bhangra and pop songs.

In his more recent work, Rampton (2006) examined the positioning of such instances of playfulness in daily school activities and classroom routines. Although, as he argued, such instances of playfulness during instruction were often regarded as undermining teacher authority and the canonical patterns of classroom talk, they had the potential of opening up new possibilities for teaching and learning. Rather than sanctioning such talk throughout, the teacher in his study seemed to tolerate a high degree of playfulness by a group of over-exuberant and keen learners. Indeed, he seemed to regard their contributions as helping to keep the lesson on course. In doing so, the teacher and this group of learners negotiated and coconstructed a particular classroom settlement that appeared to be based on the strategic coexistence and mix of curriculum priorities and popular media culture (notwithstanding along with other influences). For the learners, this classroom settlement, Rampton maintained, seemed to allow them to explore different kinds of sociability, to consolidate existing friendship ties and aid them in their quest for social influence among their peers.

One strand of research that has fruitfully explored the intersection of learners' expressive repertoires, including various forms of playful talk and text production, such as producing and acting out imaginative episodes inspired by contemporary superheroes and characters from ancient Greek mythology, and popular media culture are child literacy studies (see also Bloome, "[► Literacies in the Classroom](#)"; Mahiri, "[► Literacies in the Lives of Global Youth](#)"; Prah, "[► Language, Literacy and Knowledge Production in Africa](#)"). Dyson's (2003) ethnographic research into primary school literacy development highlights the importance of young learners sharing what she called a "common sociocultural landscape" to draw upon in playful talk and text production. This shared sociocultural landscape provided young learners with diverse symbolic and textual material and resources to appropriate, recontextualize, and reuse in order to fashion both their official and unofficial school worlds. Moreover, their engagement with popular media culture opened up spaces for more polyphonic written and oral playful performances, which in turn, generated new opportunities and challenges for meaning making, learning, and social affiliation.

The importance of the children's shared common knowledge and metalinguistic awareness in participating in playful activities and routines has also been illustrated in studies looking at more linguistically, culturally, and ethnically rich pupil populations from an ethnographic sociolinguistics perspective (see also Fenner, "► [Cultural Awareness in the Foreign Language Classroom](#)"). In my own work (Lytra 2007, 2009), I examined the linguistic and other semiotic resources and practices available to a group of majority Greek and minority Turkish-speaking children in an Athens primary school. I illustrated how the children adapted and refashioned shared references to mainstream Greek popular media culture in their playful talk (e.g., teasing routines and music-making activities) across school contexts. I argued that these resources and practices functioned as a powerful identity kit for the display and coconstruction of a shared peer group identity and showed how this peer group identity coarticulated with their other social identities and roles at school (e.g., gender, pupil/language learner identities). The active participation in such playful routines and activities allowed minority children in particular to gain access to and display their knowledge and expertise of valued semiotic resources and practices associated with mainstream Greek popular media culture. At the same time, these processes of boundary leveling based on the sharing of out-of-school recreational practices, experiences, and a common sense of humour were fraught with tensions and contradictions. Minority children's claims to knowledge and expertise displayed through their playful talk could be contested by their majority peers, thereby raising boundaries of exclusion and positioning them as peripheral to the group.

Duff (2004) further explored the processes of boundary leveling and boundary raising in relation to intertextual references to popular media culture (e.g., references to shared jokes, one-liners, and set phrases from various media sources) in two linguistically, culturally, and ethnically diverse Canadian social science classrooms. Taking an ethnographically informed applied linguistics standpoint, she observed that for the local (Canadian born and raised) pupils and teachers such popular media culture laden talk, saturated by playful banter and repartee, served to affirm their sociocultural affiliations. For most of the newcomers (ESL learners), however, this ongoing playfulness was a source of fun but also bewilderment and ambivalence: more often than not, ESL learners had difficulty following the complex web of intertextual references which they had no or limited access to at home and through their various community networks. These well-established classroom practices among locals had the effect of restricting the active participation and involvement of ESL learners – or at best allowing them some marginal participation. This resulted to "what was cultural play for some [being] heavy cognitive and identity work for others" (Duff 2004, p. 253).

In a similar vein, Poveda (2011) examined how a group of Latin American students in a multicultural secondary school in Madrid appropriated the label "India" (American native) from a historical novel featuring Spanish colonial relations in America and exploited its mainly pejorative associations for verbal play among peers. He demonstrated how the students in question used this term for ritual insulting during classroom interactions to strategically reconstruct similarity and

difference among the diverse Latin American migrant communities in Spain, such as to draw contrasts between students' rural and urban backgrounds and lighter or darker skin colors. However, the social relationships and experiences they drew upon were not easily accessible to their Spanish origin peers which limited significantly the latter's participation in the jocular activities, thereby creating boundaries between "Spanish" and "Latin American" peer groups in the classroom.

One key theme permeating the aforementioned studies is how through playful talk and text production learners appropriated, reproduced, and evaluated the voices of others by drawing on a diversity of sources (such as popular culture and fiction) for meaning making and social categorization. The notions of intertextuality (Kristeva 1980), contextualization (Bauman and Briggs 1990), heteroglossia (Bakhtin 1981), and double-voicing (Bakhtin 1984) are central in understanding these processes. These notions are premised on an understanding of talk and text as being "constructed of a mosaic of quotations" (Kristeva 1980, p. 66). They have been fruitfully combined among others with insights from sociocultural and social constructivist theories of learning (e.g., neo-Vygotskian approaches) and interactional sociolinguistics (e.g., Goffman's work on *Frame Analysis*). This line of research has looked into learners' various types of playful talk across learning contexts (e.g., in undirected informal talk among peers, small group, and whole group instruction) and has foregrounded the opportunities for learning and social affiliation.

For instance, Maybin (2003) explored how, through the introduction of "other voices" (e.g., snippets of songs, parodies of teacher voices, "he-said-she-said" routines and other forms of stylised talk) in informal talk during group work, learners produced rapid frame shifts to play. The frame transformations of instructional interactions into more playful ones allowed learners not only to display and experiment with different institutional identities and classroom practices but also to scaffold their engagement in classroom tasks and support learning across classroom genres (see also Maybin 2006; Haworth 1999). In a more recent study, Møller and Jørgensen (2011) pointed out how minority Turkish-speaking students in a Danish primary school moved between serious and play frames to simultaneously negotiate peer relations and the group work assignment. In so doing, the students strategically drew upon their knowledge of the monolingual norms of the broader Danish society in their linguistic stylizations of teacher-talk and exchanges of jocular abuse.

Learners may also exploit the voices of others in creative and complex ways to resist dominant societal and educational discourses and challenge established classroom practices and routines. Hirst (2003) investigated how through the ventriloquation of diverse voices characterized by the pervasive use of teasing, ironic remarks, and parody learners appropriated and resisted aspects of the teacher's voice in an Indonesian second language classroom in Australia. Blackledge and Creese (2010) illustrated how Chinese and Turkish heritage language learners in complementary schools in the UK deployed stylized accents to mock themselves, each other and lower proficiency English language learners, or used parodic discourses to undermine the teachers' efforts to transmit reified representations of the heritage culture while concurrently participating in the learning task at hand. By

capitalizing on different voices and the social values attached to them they negotiated a range of self- and other-identity ascriptions. In this respect, “the students’ discourse became a battleground on which to play out oppositions between the ‘heritage’ identity imposed by the school and the students’ contestation and re-negotiation of such impositions” (Blackledge and Creese 2010, p. 141).

At the same time, exploiting the voices of others in parodic talk served to reproduce the unequal social structures and linguistic hierarchies widespread in broader society. In the Cantonese heritage language classroom described in Blackledge and Creese (2010), students made use of highly stylized and ethnicized accents to stigmatize the way emergent learners of English spoke and relationally position themselves as more competent English language speakers. In Jaspers (2011), ethnic minority students in a secondary school in Antwerp, Belgium, experimented with stylized renditions of incompetent or broken Dutch that caricatured emergent learners of Dutch with the purpose of signaling their advanced linguistic competence and clearly distinguishing themselves from less competent Dutch-speaking peers.

Work in Progress

As discussed in the previous section, there has been an increasing empirical focus on the heterogeneity of voices, genres, frames, practices, and discourses in schools and classrooms and its implications for learners’ meaning making and identity work. In this context, a number of recent studies have explored the intersection of learners’ expressive repertoires, including various forms of playful talk, the values attached to their linguistic resources and their multiple and often conflicting identity negotiations (e.g., Blackledge and Creese 2010; Jaspers 2011; Møller and Jørgensen 2011; Poveda 2011). These studies have highlighted the role of learners as social actors, the complexity of their communicative repertoires as well as the different ways playful talk and identity construction are embedded in broader social, historical, political, and ideological contexts and discourses and can be mobilized to contest but also reproduce dominant linguistic hierarchies and social stratification. Concurring with Blackledge and Creese (2010), these studies have allowed us to “go beyond a simple dichotomy of ‘micro and macro,’ or ‘structure and agency,’ to understand the structural in the agentic and the agentic in the structural; the ideological in the interactional and the interactional in the ideological; the ‘micro’ in the ‘macro’ and the ‘macro’ in the ‘micro’” (Blackledge and Creese 2010, p. 125). These recent studies can provide a promising direction for work in progress in the investigation of learners’ playful talk, play frames, and identity construction in schools and classrooms.

An area of work in progress that has thus far received limited attention is the investigation of teacher’s playful talk and social affiliation in schools and classroom. Jaspers (2014) discussed how educational and sociolinguistic research has tended to prioritize pupil’s talk. With notable exceptions (e.g., Rampton 1995, Piirainen-Marsh 2011), “teacher’s off-task, playful or non-standard language use is not very

often in the scientific radar” (Jaspers 2014, p. 373). In his study of heteroglossic teacher practices in a Dutch-medium vocational secondary school in Bruxelles, Jaspers (2014) illustrated how the bilingual French-Dutch teacher used linguistic stylizations in playful and nonstandard talk to carve spaces for the students' full range of linguistic resources, negotiate social and institutional positioning, and build interpersonal relations. At the same time, the teacher's heteroglossic practices assigned the use of these linguistic resources to the margins of classroom talk, thereby reproducing language boundaries and imposing the normative use Dutch.

Problems and Difficulties

While the increasing attention to learners and teachers' heterogeneity of resources, genres, styles, registers, and frames cannot be denied, more research needs to be done in this direction. The privileging of whole class instruction over, for instance, undirected informal talk among learners and small group instruction and the corresponding focus on unified floors, sequential turn-taking, and the conventional IRE structure of classroom discourse have influenced the extent to which learners' playful talk and play frames have been examined as discursive phenomena in their own right. As a result of the focus on particular types of talk, practices, and resources, playful talk, play frames, and their producers continue to be consigned to the margins of educational and sociolinguistic research. Moreover, when they do become the focus of research, these discursive phenomena have often been associated with noisier, more unruly classrooms and have been seen as undermining traditional teacher authority and power and disrupting content transmission (cf. Rampton 2006; Jaspers 2014). The fact that these phenomena remain by and large underresearched may be linked to broader questions concerning what counts as legitimate knowledge in educational settings and what kind of linguistic resources and practices are relevant in supporting it (Maybin 2009; Heller and Martin-Jones 2001).

Future Directions

Maybin (2009) has argued for “a broader view of language in school,” a view that “combines close attention to children and teachers' language use with an analysis of context and social practice” (p. 70). This broader view of language can be also enhanced by exploring the possible contribution of other research perspectives in examining the intersection of playful talk, learners' play frames, and social identities in schools and classrooms; for instance, engaging with research on learners' playful, humorous, and creative uses of language within second language acquisition (SLA) research and applied linguistics (see Cook 2000; Bell and Pomerantz 2014; and for an overview, Bell 2012), or at the crossroads of the arts and second language learning (Chappell and Faltis 2013). Moreover, it can draw valuable insights from studies of children's language use and pretend play across settings (García-Sánchez 2010;

Gregory et al. 2015; Kyratzis 2010). Finally, while the fine-grain analysis of learners' playful talk in schools and classrooms can yield important insights into how they manage their semiotic resources and identity negotiations, future research can adopt a multimodal lens to combine a focus on language with other modes, such as image, writing, speech, moving image, action, and artifacts. As Kress et al. (2005) have maintained "looking at language in the context of other means of meaning making gives the possibility of a much sharper, more precise and more nuanced understanding both of the (different) potentials of speech and of writing, and of their limitations" (Kress et al. 2005, p. 2).

Cross-References

- ▶ [Classroom Discourse and the Construction of Learner and Teacher Identities](#)

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

- Anne-Brit Fenner: [Cultural Awareness in the Foreign Language Classroom](#). In Volume: Language Awareness and Multilingualism
- David Bloome: [Literacies in the Classroom](#). In Volume: Literacies and Language Education
- Jabari Mahiri: [Literacies in the Lives of Global Youth](#). In Volume: Literacies and Language Education
- Kwesikwaa Prah: [Language, Literacy and Knowledge Production in Africa](#). In Volume: Literacies and Language Education
- Pedro Garcez: [Microethnography in the Classroom](#). In Volume: Research Methods in Language and Education

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Classroom Discourse and the Construction of Learner and Teacher Identities

Jasmine Ching Man Luk

Abstract

Classroom discourse refers to contextualized or situated language use in classrooms as a specific interactional context that reflects cultural and social practices. Interest in classroom discourse analysis has grown with an enhanced understanding of the mediating role of talk in learning as a high-level mental activity (see review by Green and Dixon). From a sociocultural point of view, a person's speech is a marker of identity. The interweaving between identity and the contextualized use of language in the classroom has been brought to our attention by poststructuralist and social constructivist researchers, who view classrooms as a social and cultural space where power politics and ideological conflicts are in constant interplay (e.g., Kumaravadivelu 1999). An understanding of how such politics and conflicts come into being requires an understanding of teachers' and students' identities as a dynamic, (re)negotiable, and powerful factor in the process of interaction, which in turn affects ways of teaching and learning. In this review, I shall identify major developments and themes in classroom discourse analysis pertaining to teachers' and students' identity construction and how these contribute to our understanding of teaching and learning.

Keywords

Classroom discourse • Teachers • Learners • Identity construction

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Classroom discourse refers to contextualized or situated language use in classrooms as a specific interactional context that reflects cultural and social practices. Interest in classroom discourse analysis has grown with an enhanced understanding of the mediating role of talk in learning as a high-level mental activity (see review by Green and Dixon). From a sociocultural point of view, a person's speech is a marker of identity. The interweaving between identity and the contextualized use of language in the classroom has been brought to our attention by poststructuralist and social constructivist researchers, who view classrooms as a social and cultural space where power politics and ideological conflicts are in constant interplay (e.g., Kumaravadivelu 1999). An understanding of how such politics and conflicts come into being requires an understanding of teachers' and students' identities as a dynamic, (re)negotiable, and powerful factor in the process of interaction, which in turn affects ways of teaching and learning. In this review, I shall identify major developments and themes in classroom discourse analysis pertaining to teachers' and students' identity construction and how these contribute to our understanding of teaching and learning.

Early Developments

In its most basic form, identity refers to our sense of self or who we are. Since birth, every person is subject to a set of "ascribed" identities usually associated with biological characteristics. For example, on our identity cards and passports, there is information about our nationality and/or ethnic origin, age, and gender. All these forms of identities are given to us and enable us, as we move along different social planes, to perceive how we are the same or different from "others". In the field of applied linguistics, different disciplines offer different ways of talking about identity, often without agreement about their distinctive features. Some terms commonly used to express different aspects of the concept of identity include "self," "role," "positioning," "subject position," and "subjectivity." Basically, "self" is associated with an individual's feeling, whereas "role" highlights the more static, formal and ritualistic aspect of identity. Subject positions/subjectivity, on the other hand, imply agency, conscious action, and authorship. In the following paragraphs, I will discuss how the concept of teachers' and students' identity was presented in some of the early research on classroom discourse analysis.

Despite its weaknesses, Flanders' (1970) interaction coding scheme offers the first widely known systematic method of analyzing classroom speech data. His scheme employs a finite set of predetermined categories to identify and code the ongoing speech acts of teachers, and attempts to establish a link between teacher behaviour (e.g., praising, questioning, responding) and student academic achievement outcomes. In Flander's coding scheme, terms such as "teacher" and "pupil" appear in the coding categories as fundamental, given, referential labels denoting the two types of participants inside the classroom.

In the spirit of Flanders' coding taxonomies, another line of research that aims to explain second language acquisition through insights from discourse and social interaction draws an analogy between "foreigner talk" and "teacher talk" (see Ellis 1994). These studies focused on input and interaction modifications (e.g., comprehension checks, requests for clarification) when miscommunication arises. Findings from these studies seemed to suggest a connection between teachers' discourse features and how they perceive their relations with the interlocutors (e.g., native versus nonnative speakers, experts versus novices). *Who* we are seems to be determining or affecting *how* we talk.

A coding-scheme analysis of classroom discourse has been criticized by various classroom researchers as inconsistent, limiting, unreliable, and failing to account for how classroom interactions take place in a specific context and *why* certain verbal acts dominated. As a consequence, a more *qualitative* discourse analysis approach to classroom interaction studies has been developed. Emphasis has been placed on the *sequential structures* of teachers' and students' turns at talk, the contextual features of the interactions, and ethnography as a data collection method. A representative outcome of this approach is the three-part I(nitiation) – R(esponse) – E(valuation)/F(eedback) sequential discourse format, with a dyadic participant structure, identified by Mehan (1979) through his ethnomethodological work in a mainstream, mixed-ethnic third-grade classroom in USA. A similar classroom interaction pattern was described by Sinclair and Coulthard in 1975, in their linguistic study of teacher-pupil interactions and the functions of linguistic structures.

The basic IRE/IRF classroom interaction sequence identified by Mehan and Sinclair and Coulthard has been widely used in other classroom analyses, and it seems to contribute more to the *interpretation of meanings* in interactions than the frequency count approach. It enables readers to see what has actually happened, how it happened, and possibly why it happened that way. Researchers can also distinguish the norms of interaction from the turn-taking and organization patterns. Even though identity did not feature as a key concern for these researchers, there were clear tendencies to acknowledge the role implications of the labels "teachers" and "students," and the corresponding institutional rights and obligations associated with them. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), for example, highlight the need to address questions such as "who controls the discourse?" and "how do the roles of speaker and listener pass from one participant to another?" Heap's (1992) analysis illustrates this point well. By looking at the sequential arrangement of turns of talk in a series of classroom episodes, Heap is able to explain how and why a student's attempt to act in a turn was snubbed by the teacher. The student was considered a *rule violator*

(an identity constructed through the interaction) because s/he mistook the teacher's informative statement in the preceding turn as a directive and acted accordingly. Heap (1992) draws the conclusion that, in understanding why something is done, speakers' roles and identities within the context often have a role to play. In Heap's microanalysis, we see an emerging concern and awareness about the impacts of institutionalized power relations on the enactment of roles and obligations attached to social classifications such as "teachers" and "students." Despite this awareness, identities and discourse in these studies are generally viewed as having a more or less universal and predictable linear relationship.

Major Contributions

Subsequent developments in classroom discourse analysis generally problematize the notion of identity as a set of ascribed attributes with biological referents. This newer perspective on the notion of identity has brought forward research that treats identity as more dynamic and less deterministic, particularly among postmodernist researchers.

Changing Perspectives on the Notions of Identity

There has been a fundamental shift away from a unified, stable, prelinguistic, and essentialist notion of identity towards viewing identity as socially constructed, undergoing a process of continual emerging and becoming. Identity concerns not just "who we are," but "what we might become." This is particularly important when studying changing discourse patterns that involve the acquisition of a new form of literacy such as learning a new language or when a different language is used as the medium of learning (Gee 1996). New forms of personal and cultural identities are constructed and performed as the person tries to come to terms with new sets of ideologies and worldviews and establish social membership in a new community (Norton 2000). Thus a person's identity can be achieved, transformed, subverted, and negotiated across time and space through the way they speak.

That people create linguistic systems so as to resemble those of the groups with which they wish to identify is a seminal hypothesis about speech and identity that was proposed by Le Page (1986). Le Page found that children in Belize developed various forms of Creole English after independence from British rule as a vehicle to display Belizean identity. The work of Le Page (1986) has drawn people's attention to the fact that language achieves more than communicative functions. It is a major vehicle through which we make acts of identity that bear social meanings.

In social contexts with an asymmetrical power structure, a person's identity may not always be constructed through their own acts. For example, Philips (1983) shows us how, in some teaching contexts, teachers' institutional authority in assigning roles and validating comments from students may consciously or unconsciously position

students in awkward ways and deprive them some of their learning opportunities. Philips' study thus reveals how identity can be locally constructed in interaction by an external force.

The dynamic and interpenetrating relationship between discourse and identity construction is often effectively revealed through an analysis of *code-switching* and *code-mixing* practices, multiple *discourse frames*, and *participant voices* within a basic IRF/IRE framework.

Code-switching and Code-mixing

In classrooms with speakers from diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, early work suggested that teachers' and students' switching between and mixing of codes in their interactions produce social and political meanings, apart from linguistic aspects. One line of thinking posits that code-switching may be participant oriented. For example, in a second language classroom, the teacher may switch to the students' L1 to enhance comprehension and to establish solidarity and foster affective connections with the students through adopting the "we code" (the shared L1), versus the "they code" which is the target language (Guthrie 1984).

However, as pointed out by Martin-Jones (1995), it may be overly simplistic to claim that a bilingual teacher switching into the learners' L1 is invariably expressing solidarity with the learners. When the two codes are of asymmetrical social status (for example, one being a socially dominant language such as English and the other one being an indigenous language), code-switching often produces highly sociopolitical meanings. Often, the teachers switch between the codes to fulfil, on one hand, their institutional role by exposing students to English as a highly valued social commodity and, on the other hand, their professional role by ensuring that students' comprehension of the lesson content is not impaired by the use of an unfamiliar and alienating language. Such code-switching practices, as observed by Arthur (1996), reveal subtle identity construction at work. By making students' "on-stage" performance in English (the L2) the ritualized and routine recitation of question and answer, while reserving the shared L1 for clarification, explanation, and correction as the 'backstage' code, the teacher and students in the Botswana primary classroom colluded to keep up the appearance of effective activity and fulfilment of their respective roles, thus allowing mutual face-saving (also labelled as "safe talk" by Hornberger and Chick 2001).

The use of mixed code as a coping strategy to deal with learning difficulties arising from the need to use the former colonial language to learn in postcolonial settings has also been reported in Lin (2000). It was shown that L1-Cantonese-speaking Hong Kong students employed hybridized discourses (L1 mixed with English words or L1 spoken with an Anglicized tone) apart from their L1 to respond to the teacher's formal initiation in English to assert a "local Cantonese-based Chinese cultural identity" in the face of the sociopolitically dominant but alienating English. Findings of these studies show that a microanalysis of classroom interaction data may not be complete without making reference to the macro social contexts within which the school is located.

Multiple Discourse Frames and Participant Voices

The plurality of discourses in the classroom is captured by Bernstein's (2000) distinction between an official "vertical discourse" and a local "horizontal discourse."

While "vertical discourse" takes the form of a coherent, explicit, and systematically principled structure, "horizontal discourse" "entails a set of strategies which are local, segmentally organized, context specific and dependent" (p. 157), and represents the users' everyday lived experiences. These two forms of discourse resemble Gee's (1996) primary (or home) and secondary (or institutional) discourses, as well as Bakhtin's (1986) "authoritative discourse" and "internally persuasive discourse." Authoritative discourse is the discourse of the teachers and the father, people who wield power. It demands our acknowledgment and appropriation. We encounter it with its authority already fused to it. However, we can transform the authoritative discourse of others into our own words, reconsider it with other ideas, and in Bakhtin's term, "reaccentuate" it so that it may start to lose its authority and become more open (see Cazden 2001, p. 76).

To counteract the alienating effects of the authoritative discourse, students sometimes insert horizontal and often surreptitious layers of talk of their own initiation within the vertical sequential participation structures of the IRF/IRE, which are more or less controlled by the teacher. Pennington (1999) was among the first to employ a frames approach to reveal the coexisting but often conflicting layers of talk in a typical Hong Kong EFL classroom, showing how students contested to have voice and to achieve a balance between structure (which exercises control and constraint over talk) and agency (which emphasizes freedom of choice and consciousness). It was found that apart from official *lesson frame* and *lesson-support frame*, there exists side by side a *commentary frame* as the outer layer that features students' L1-dominated discourse. The students' commentary talk shows that they are trying to employ L1 to move away from the set classroom roles, assert their comments and opinions on issues they find interesting, and reproduce the culture *outside* the institution *within* the classroom. Pennington (1999) suggests that opportunities for students' spontaneous commentary talk in their mother tongue could be strategically planned and structured into the lesson frame and transformed into English so as to increase students' participation in the lesson. Whether students' interactive practices can be manipulated structurally needs further investigation, but Pennington's (1999) findings reveal that researchers may lose potential insights into discourse and identity construction if they only focus on official IRF interaction patterns.

The existence of horizontal discourse alongside the vertical draws our attention to students' agency and power in classroom discourse, which often emerge as forms of resistance to authoritative and socially valued institutional discourse. Student resistance is a core topic for investigation in the field of Critical Classroom Discourse Analysis (CCDA) (see Kumaravadivelu 1999). Playful and parodic discourses involving code-switching and code-mixing are often vehicles through which multilingual children display creativity and criticality (Li 2011). These features are responses to conflicting discourse communities (e.g., Canagarajah 2004) and/or uninteresting and unimaginative pedagogical discourse (e.g. Luk and Lin 2007).

To counteract alienating authoritative pedagogical discourse, students tend to look for “safe houses” in the classroom, hidden spaces for them to assert their preferred identities, often with a view to turning authoritative discourse to internally more persuasive discourse of a horizontal nature. Classroom ethnographers need to look beyond surface-level interactions and go deep into the underlife of classroom communication to discern the agency of the students in creating new, alternate, and hybrid identities in complex ways.

While some students may assert identities through certain forms of discourse, there are also times when students may exercise their *agency* through a refusal to talk. The study by Duff (2002) in a multilingual and multicultural classroom context found that some students might refrain from taking up a turn directed to them by the teacher in order to avoid publicly identifying themselves with practices of their home culture that they feel uncomfortable with. Duff concludes that such contradictions and tensions in classroom discourse can be most effectively revealed through “ethnography of communication” as a context- and culture-sensitive method for conducting research in classroom discourse.

In general, research on student resistance, playful multimodal discourse, and hybrid identities tends to accentuate the importance of language educators developing intercultural communicative resources in order to be responsive to students’ pluralistic discourse and identities (see the review on chapter “► [Playful Talk, Learners’ Play Frames, and the Construction of Identities](#),” by Vally Lytra, this volume).

Intertextuality, Intercontextuality, and Interdiscursivity

The concurrent existence of multiple voices and multiple identities demands that classroom discourse analyses attend to multiple perspectives emerging from the heteroglossic discourses, texts, and contexts, across multiple dimensions.

Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto, and Shuart-Faris’ (2005) book on classroom discourse uses a microethnographic approach to explore how teachers and students make intertextual, intercontextual, and interdiscursive connections during interactions and how these reveal multiple identities. By using the concept of intertextuality which refers to how readers shape meanings of texts through mediation of “codes” and meanings acquired by readers from other texts, Bloome and his coauthors illustrate how one discourse can penetrate into another discourse, or one context into another context, in classroom interaction. Their theoretical orientation is closely related to Bakhtin’s (1986) concept of dialogicality. According to Bakhtin, all our utterances come to us already filled with others’ words, with varying degrees of awareness and detachment. These words of others carry with them their own expression and evaluative tone, which we “assimilate, rework and reaccentuate” (p. 89). Speakers engaging in talk-in-interaction are always also engaged in a dialogic process with former users of the language in similar contexts. An understanding of a person’s speech requires a corresponding understanding of other texts and other contexts and sometimes other discourses that are drawn into the speech by the speaker.

Bloome et al. (2005) illustrate this theory by analyzing a classroom story-telling activity involving a young student. They demonstrate how the young girl shifts between a series of social identities and roles (e.g., a reporter, a gatekeeper, a daughter, a student, a friend, and a moral commentator) she created for herself in storytelling and how she enacts and assigns different voices for herself and for others. For example, by assigning some of the students in the story gendered and sexual social identities (e.g., “being easy” with the opposite sex) while keeping herself distant from such identities, she created for herself an identity as a good daughter and a good student. An understanding of the reasons behind the student’s construction of such an identity for herself requires an understanding of what counts as taboo in the society, at least among young school children. The need to consider intertextual, intercontextual, and interdiscursive resources complicates the work of classroom discourse analysis, but on the other hand, it also enriches the findings and insights.

Work in Progress

Recent work on classroom discourse and identities continues to reveal the socially constructed and multilayered nature of identities as discursively constructed. There is a growing interest among researchers from a sociocultural and sociopolitical perspective to investigate the situationally constructed nature of identities and the interconnections between social identification and academic learning in schools. Wortham (2006), for example, argues that models of identity are not simply social categories that emerge and become naturalized from longer timescale sociohistorical conventions, but can also be contingent local categories emerging from event-level social interactions. Such locally constructed models of social identification have been shown to constitute nonacademic resources that can be deeply implicated in academic learning. A related body of research led by Hall (e.g. Hall et al. 2010) has revealed how teachers’ and students’ construction of identities for themselves and for each other (e.g., what it means to be a reading teacher, a “good reader” or a “bad reader,” etc.) can promote or inhibit literacy teaching and learning.

Another line of research takes up the challenges created by Bakhtin’s authoritative versus internally persuasive discourses, Gee’s primary and secondary discourses, and Bernstein’s vertical versus horizontal discourses. Though not exactly the same, all three sets of discourses reveal the coexistence of forms of talk that are often not congruent. At a time when the plurality of identities and differences are celebrated, teachers and students draw on different forms of discourse, use contested voices, and create tensions and conflicts. Power relations and student resistance thus become two major issues that classroom discourse analysts, particularly those using a critical approach, need to address further. This need is particularly strong in language learning classrooms where discourse is both the medium and the object of study. Kumaravadivelu’s (1999, pp. 477–479) TESOL Quarterly article on Critical Classroom Discourse Analysis raises a list of suggestions for further exploration. The following three questions are particularly relevant to the current review:

1. How can we reconcile learners' voices with classroom rules and regulations and with instructional aims and objectives?
2. How can we make sure students' own forms of cultural capital are recognized, rewarded, and enriched?
3. How can we reconcile the relationships between learners' linguistic needs and wants and their sociocultural needs and wants?

The three questions address how we can accommodate, if not incorporate, students' everyday discourses and identities from outside the classroom into official mainstream classroom discourse, if the two are incompatible (also see Cazden 2001). They call for teachers' and researchers' attention to the differentiated social value of different discourse and identity resources brought to the classrooms by students from different sociocultural backgrounds.

Various classroom researchers draw insights from Bakhtin's (1986) theory of dialogicality, addressivity, and heteroglossia to address these questions (see the book edited by Hall et al. 2005). They have called for pedagogical innovations to transform and (re)imagine traditional practices of language and literacy learning to accommodate intercultural innovations in meaning- and identity-making through the learners' hybrid discourses. Drawing on insights from Bakhtin's dialogicality, Luk and Lin (2007) propose a "pedagogy of connecting" to bring into articulation students' local linguistic and cultural resources and the forms of knowledge and norms of interaction sanctioned by the school institution. A "pedagogy of connecting" requires teachers to proactively engineer learning activities to enable students to see how their desire to release and assert local or home identities can be capitalized on to develop socially valued linguistic and cultural resources. While these studies have established an ideological roadmap concerning discourse, identity, and learning that can guide further investigations, more classroom-based ethnographic studies are needed to show how these pedagogical conceptualizations can be translated into everyday classroom practices and to demonstrate their effectiveness.

Problems and Difficulties

The increasingly complex nature of classroom discourse and identity construction has induced some methodological concerns. The first involves increased difficulties with data collection and interpretation due to the multiple layers of talk and the need to attend to intertextual, intercontextual, and interdiscursive connections within the talk. The various layers of talk often interweave with multilingual teacher-student and student-student semiotic practices inside the classroom that create tremendous difficulties for transcription. Further complicating the scenario is the increasingly multimodal nature of classroom talk, which brings forth methodological challenges for multimodal transcription (e.g., Bezemer and Mavers 2011). Not only is it difficult for transcribers to present the multiple layers and multimodality of talk on paper but

they also have difficulty deciphering latching utterances despite advancements in recording technology.

Due to an increasing awareness that teachers' emic perspectives, as well as students' everyday lifeworlds and home and street cultures, must be taken into account in the analyses, it seems that it no longer suffices to view meanings as totally situated in moments of interaction. As indicated by Bloome et al. (2005), the problem is that the data needed for an analysis are sometimes recognized only after data collection has been completed, as well as the fact that the needed data can only be collected in different contexts that are not easily accessible to the researchers. This sometimes results in analyses conducted with partial contextual information. To address this problem, researchers can seek to conduct classroom research *with* the teachers, rather than *on* them or *for* them. Teachers should be empowered to become miniethnographers to conduct classroom discourse analysis research collaboratively with researchers, so that the researchers can benefit from the teachers' insider knowledge and experiences with the pedagogical setting, while the teachers can draw insights from the researchers' etic perspectives that have been synthetically formed through observations of a wide range of classrooms.

As for the choice of research methodology, although the ethnography of communication is often considered the best methodology for investigating the discursive construction of identities, due to its culture- and context-sensitive nature, Bloome et al. (2005) highlight the need for a dialogic approach to building relationships among research perspectives. An ethnographic or microethnographic approach to classroom discourse analysis could draw strengths from other methodological frameworks such as conversation analysis, interactional sociolinguistics, and systemic functional linguistics (see reviews in Hornberger and Corson 1997). Bloome et al. (2005) also point to the importance of locating discourse analytic studies, connecting these with other disciplines or lines of inquiry such as New Literacy Studies (see "Related Contributions"), and Critical Pedagogy, in which identity construction and negotiation have a key role to play. We might productively consider classroom discourse analysis to be an eclectic pool of resources to be drawn from for a variety of research issues.

Future Directions

I have traced in this review one distinctive line of inquiry in classroom discourse analysis that has gradually moved from investigating structural organization and linguistic categories of teacher-student talk to issues concerning how ways of teaching and learning are closely intertwined with a sense of self, and how these identities are constructed, enacted, contested, and transformed through discourse. For future directions for research, I will highlight two main areas.

First, researchers should continue to investigate how teachers' and students' identities impact teaching and learning. In particular, we need more studies to explore how teachers' and students' identities could interconnect and mutually

influence each other. For example, as pointed out by Hall et al. (2010), while some students may feel comfortable with certain new literacies practices, teachers may find it difficult to identify with such practices. The continuity and change of identities in the course of teaching and learning can be tracked. For example, how teachers transition from a learner identity to a teacher identity and how they discursively construct such change should be significant for their choice of language and pedagogical practices.

Second, the proliferation of multimodal resources in learning contexts calls for an expanded conceptualization of discourse not only as verbal talk but also as embodied performance. Luk (2013), for example, shows how a low-English proficiency student managed to enact a teacher-assigned participation role in a group activity through active deployment of bodily movements and physical artifacts, supplemented with occasional linguistic utterances. The contributions of non-linguistic semiotic practices (e.g., gestures, facial expressions, and silence) to meaning-making and identity performance in moment-to-moment classroom interaction merit further attention.

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Discursive Perspectives on Language Policy and Planning

Katherine S. Mortimer

Abstract

This chapter examines language policy and planning (LPP) scholarship that takes a discursive perspective on its object of study, either examining LPP as language-in-use (policy texts, talk about policy, and language practices, themselves) or as normative discourses or as both. This growing body of work using discourse analytic conceptual and methodological tools to analyze LPP brings focus upon the nature of language policy itself, on the locations and actors of LPP and relations among them, and on the roles of structure and agency in policy activity.

Keywords

Language policy • Discourse analysis • Recontextualization

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Introduction

Much analysis of language policy and planning (LPP) is inherently discursive, as Johnson (2013) notes, since the objects of study comprise discourse of various kinds. LPP scholars examine policy texts, talk about policy, and language practices themselves – all forms of discourse or language-in-use. They also examine within these objects discourses in the sense of normative frames through which experience can be understood and constituted (Foucault 1972). This entry examines LPP scholarship that takes either or both of these perspectives on the object of study, focusing on that which does so explicitly but also including some work in which the discursive perspective is more implicit. The growing body of work that uses discourse analytic conceptual and methodological tools to analyze LPP brings a focus in LPP scholarship upon the nature of language policy itself, on the locations and actors of LPP and relations among them, and the roles of structure and agency in policy activity.

Early Developments

What can be seen as a discursive turn in LPP scholarship built upon shifts toward discourse in and across related disciplines. A general trajectory in the LPP field is well documented (see, e.g., descriptions in Johnson 2013; Ricento and Hornberger 1996): as LPP scholars moved from early work on official decision making in postcolonial nation building to work on increasingly diverse contexts of language contact, and more recently on movement and globalization, we have moved from conceptualizations of language and policy as bounded, neutral, and decontextualized objects to views of language and policy as ideologies, processes, practices, and discourses. This trajectory has been part of the interdisciplinary trajectory in social sciences and humanities from classical rationalism, modernism, and positivism to critical social theory, decolonialism, postmodernism, and to more recent conceptualizations of movement, diversity, and complexity. Particularly important in the groundwork for a discursive approach to LPP have been postmodernism and critical social theory. Postmodernism entailed the interrogation of taken for granted concepts like language and policy. It implied for LPP concerns with how governmentality (Foucault 1972) operates through language and with local, situated, contingent understandings of language policy that would replace the grand narratives about how language and policy work in “development,” in education, in social life. These concerns motivate the need for approaches that operationalize situatedness and contingency, and critical social theory provided an understanding of discourse that does that (Foucault 1972).

In the broader field of policy studies, Ball (1993) laid out a postmodern reconceptualization of policy as text and as discourse upon which many contemporary discursive approaches to LPP have built. For Ball, policy as text drew on the notion of text in literary criticism as representations subject to changing and contested interpretations over time and social space – situated constructions – while policy as discourse drew on the notion of discourse as powerful framings that help to create realities and constrain

possibilities for action. Describing how this latter frame was being taken up in policy studies, Bacchi (2000) saw some analysts as focusing on how power operates in the creation of texts with others focusing on how power operates in the interpretation of texts – these two emphases corresponding roughly to differing foci on structure and agency in policy activity. Bacchi tied these two emphases to the traditions of social deconstruction – focusing on structure – and literary deconstruction – focusing on agency. She called for more balance in attention to agency in policy analysis, a call parallel to that made in early critical language policy work (e.g., Tollefson 1991) to pay more attention to agency and to processes of interpretation at multiple layers (Ricento and Hornberger 1996).

In language-related fields, the field of ethnography of communication (Hymes 1964) developed a focus on the situatedness of language use, processes of meaning making, and methods to account for them that LPP researchers began to take up. Similarly, conceptual and analytical tools developed early in the field of critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Fairclough 1995) have been central to contemporary discursive LPP work.

Within language policy research itself, work that shifted attention to power and ideologies (e.g., Tollefson 1991), while not specifically discursive, motivated a need for ways to find and analyze power and ideology that discursive work has come to address. Ruiz's (1984) seminal analysis of language orientations in educational policies offered the terms language-as-problem, language-as-right, and language-as-resource; and while he called them orientations, they have been widely taken up as discourses in contemporary work. The use of ethnography of communication to analyze language policy and Ricento and Hornberger's (1996) conceptualization of language policy as layered have been foundational to discursive work in how they located language policy activity as occurring in multiple sites, as practices in context. Blommaert (1996) made an early call for a specifically discourse-centered view of language planning work and scholarship, that is, a view of LPP as a discourse on language and society, pointing to historiographical and ethnographic methods as ways to take up this discursive focus.

Major Contributions

Building upon these early developments, discursive approaches to language policy and planning have become a significant part of contemporary LPP scholarship (see for example Barakos and Unger 2016). Significant contributions of these approaches in which discourse is a central focus and frame include advances in our understanding of what language policy is, where it happens, and who does it.

Expanding Conceptualizations of Language Policy Itself

Discursive approaches have helped us to expand our understandings of the object of study itself. Language policy was seen in early work as primarily the actions of official bodies, especially written texts at the national level, and implementation was

seen primarily as what those official bodies did to ensure people used languages according to the government's plans. For example, Karam (1974) wrote,

planning includes all the data collection, linguistic and sociolinguistic surveys (Ferguson 1966; Ohannessian 1971), and preliminary and feasibility plans that are necessary for the decision-making regarding language selection and language policy...Implementation includes all the activity necessary for the execution of the plan, such as the codification of the norm and the many tasks that are accomplished by the educational institutions in disseminating the codified norm (109).

Implementation was seen as activity separate from decision making and a matter of execution and dissemination. While it was argued that implementation does not always go according to plan (e.g., “uncontrollable social forces” that impede implementation as in Karam [1974]), decisions, dissemination, and execution were generally seen as rational and neutral activities carried out by official bodies and were not generally seen to include actions by everyday people.

More recent definitions of LPP, however, have expanded the object of study to include, for example, in Spolsky's (2004) definition, actual language practices and language ideologies, in addition to “any specific efforts to modify or influence that practice by any kind of language intervention, planning or management” (5). Johnson (2013) defines language policy as a mechanism that includes official regulations, unofficial mechanisms, processes, texts, and discourses (9). The nature of language policy itself is increasingly seen as practices and processes more than discrete objects, drawing upon anthropological views of policy as sociocultural practice and of implementation as appropriation (Johnson and Freeman 2010; McCarty 2011). While not always specifically discursive, these expanded conceptualizations of LPP as practice and ideologies undergird most work that is explicitly discursive. Language practices are discourse, ideologies are normative discourses, and both are primarily accessible through some form of discourse analysis.

LPP work now generally sees as its object(s) of study discourses and practices in a wide range of locations – in school curricula, classroom discourse, language advocacy work, newspapers, other public media, academic journals, standardized testing, social media – by a wide range of actors – colonial governments, teachers and students, academics, newspaper reporters and editors, the general public, internet users, people involved in standardized testing. For example, Pennycook (2002) examines forms of governmentality (Foucault 1972) beyond official language policies in colonial and postcolonial Hong Kong, showing that control exercised through curriculum, educational practices, and other diverse means of surveillance and knowledge production. Bonacina-Pugh (2012) uses conversation analysis of classroom discourse to show how norms of interaction in a multilingual classroom come to function as language policy, and she argues explicitly for a conceptualization of practiced language policy. Scholars are also addressing language policy as it occurs in social media (see, for example, a 2015 special issue of *Language Policy* on this topic edited by Julia de Bres). And Menken (2008) shows that policy of other kinds – educational testing policy in this case – functions as language policy even though it is not recognized as such. These studies among others show the broadening conceptualizations within LPP scholarship of what

language policy is as these conceptualizations are fostered by attention to language and policy in their various discursive forms.

Expanding Accounts of the Contexts of LPP and Connections Across Them

A second major contribution of discursive perspectives on LPP has been increasingly complex and nuanced accounts of the contexts of language policy activity and how we understand connections across those contexts. Emerging from Ricento and Hornberger's (1996) call for more attention to multiple layers of language policy, especially to educators' decisions and language practices in classrooms, much current scholarship explores contexts conceived of as macro, meso, and micro. Attending closely to bottom-up in addition to top-down policy (e.g., Hornberger 1996), this largely ethnographic work sometimes focuses on discourse in face-to-face interaction in classrooms and/or communities (see, e.g., a special issue of *Language and Education* edited by Saxena and Martin-Jones 2013). Jaffe (1999) uses analysis of discursive interaction in bilingual Corsican classrooms to show how face-to-face practices interrelate with broader language planning efforts, constituting new kinds of Corsican speaker subjects and different kinds of linguistic competence. Johnson (2011) analyzes discourse in policy making at the meso level of a local school district, showing how widely circulating discourses are recontextualized (Wodak and Fairclough 2010) in district-level planning and how decisions at such meso levels can have effects different from those made at higher and lower levels.

In advancing our understanding of the multiple, layered contexts of LPP, discursive approaches have also made significant headway in addressing a question that has long been central to educational policy: how do we empirically recover connections across contexts? How do we know when events or actions at one level, for example, a national legislature, are related to events at another level, like a school? Most of this work is ethnographic and much of it uses critical discourse analysis to reveal links across texts and contexts. Johnson (2011) describes the intersection of these two sets of methodological tools, with ethnography describing and establishing relevant contexts and CDA revealing intertextual and interdiscursive links across contexts and the ways that policies move across contexts through recontextualization. Building upon Bakhtinian dialogism, the concepts of intertextuality and interdiscursivity describe how meaning of a particular text is constituted through relationships to other texts that form lexical/grammatical and discourse patterns (Fairclough 1995). They are used to show how features, discourses, and ideologies found in policy at one level occur in policy at other levels, and how as a policy text moves from, for example, a state legislature into a school district and into a school, it is recontextualized, a process in which the meaning of policy remains stable and is also transformed as it moves into new contexts (Wodak and Fairclough 2010).

Intertextuality and recontextualization are also developed in linguistic anthropology (e.g., Silverstein and Urban 1996) as ways of understanding how language

comes to have meaning across contexts and especially how certain linguistic features signal relevant context through indexicality. While Wodak and Fairclough (2010, citing Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999) describe recontextualization as a dialectic of colonization and appropriation, Agha (2007) calls it a dialectic of norm and trope. Blackledge (2006) uses CDA to focus on textual chains within political speeches and media coverage of the requirement of English language proficiency for UK citizenship, tracing discourses as they get repeated and recontextualized in increasingly authoritative contexts, ultimately becoming law. Johnson (2011) traces the argumentation strategies, or *topoi*, of accountability and flexibility as they are recontextualized from national policy into state- and district-level policies.

Hult (2010) uses nexus analysis (Scollon and Scollon 2004) to trace patterns of discourses across national-level legislation and classroom-level interaction in Sweden. He describes nexus analysis, which draws on methods from ethnography of communication, interactional sociolinguistics, and CDA to analyze how multiple discourses intersect to mediate a single social action, as particularly well suited to address the complex connections across contexts, or scales, of policy activity. Mortimer (2013) takes a linguistic anthropological approach to the analysis of connections across contexts of LPP activity, framing interdiscursive links as speech chains (Agha 2007) through which actors in different contexts share a discursive history. Analysis of these chains shows how actors recontextualize (Silverstein and Urban 1996) policy by making relevant particular aspects of context at various scales.

Expanding Conceptualizations of Language Policy Actors

A third major contribution of discursive approaches to our understanding of LPP as well as language educational practices is an evolving conceptualization of who makes policy, particularly the conceptualization of teachers as policy makers. The advancements described above – a greater understanding of policy as practices that occur in multiple, layered contexts that are connected by discursive and cultural processes – are closely related with the idea that it is not just government officials or actors specifically charged with and publicly acknowledged as policy makers who make policy, but also anyone charged with implementation and even people who have no formally recognized role in policy at all (e.g., parents, children, and youth). Ricento and Hornberger (1996) originated this idea, and its explicit development and application did not accelerate until a little more than a decade later, although expanding scholarship in that time on LPP decision making in, particularly Indigenous, communities is closely related (see for example Hornberger 1996). In the introduction to their edited book that assembles work specifically on teachers as policy makers, Menken and García (2010) trace the absence of the role of the educator in language policy in LPP scholarship and theory across the evolution of the field, and they argue that attention to this role is important for both our understanding of language policy and for the preparation of teachers for their roles as decision makers.

Not all studies that focus on unofficial stakeholders as policy makers are explicitly discursive, but most analyze ideologies – as evident in text, interview, or interactional discourse – and/or face-to-face discursive interaction. Much of this work shows how teachers often support and develop multilingual practices in classrooms even within the broader context of restrictive language policies. For example, within the context of some of the most restrictive English-only policy in the USA (in the state of Arizona), Combs and colleagues (Combs, González, and Moll 2011) examine bilingual classroom discourse and teachers' discourse to show how teachers help to construct a bilingual "third space" within the larger English-only context. D. Johnson and E. Johnson (2015) theorize the role of language policy arbiters, who may not be recognized as policy makers but who at the same time hold a disproportionate amount of power to affect practices in a range of locations. Additional work also shows that youth as students and language users are also engaged in policy making (e.g., Phyak and Bui 2014).

Expanding the Relationship Between Structure and Agency

To some extent a rephrasing of contributions discussed above, a fourth major contribution of discursive perspectives on LPP is a more complex account of the relationship between structure and agency in language policy process and activity. In expanding our understandings of what policy is, where it happens, and who does it, discursive work grapples with distinctions and connections – the dialectic – between what has been called the macro- and the micro-, larger scales and smaller scales, constraint and emergence. Much like more complex accounts of "culture," these more complex accounts of policy help to explain how policy works in ways that preserve patterns and also change them. While early LPP work did tend to focus on official texts, national scales, and authoritative actors, the structure-agency dialectic was on the radar of early LPP scholars as a core problem (see, e.g., Karam 1974), and work viewing policy – in all its forms and locations and by all of its actors – has made significant progress in addressing that ultimate problem. Growth in the use of ethnography to study language policy (e.g. Hornberger and Johnson 2007; McCarty 2011) has played an important part in that progress. Not all ethnographic studies of LPP are necessarily discursive but many are, and those that do not use explicitly discursive methods or perspectives, often examine language ideologies as they manifest in discourse within and about language policy. But as a method designed for the study of cultural activity in multiple contexts and of both enduring cultural patterns and cultural innovation, ethnography brings out these processes as they occur in LPP activity. Most of the conceptual tools employed by or developed in discursive studies of LPP address the relationship between structure and agency: appropriation (Johnson and Freeman 2010; McCarty 2011), top-down and bottom-up LPP (Hornberger 1996), ideological and implementational spaces (Hornberger and Johnson 2007), LP as instruments of control and instruments of empowerment (Johnson 2013); recontextualization (Wodak and Fairclough 2010), and timescales (Hult 2010; Mortimer 2016).

Work in Progress

Two areas of discursive LPP work in progress are further developing how we understand the contexts of LPP activity and the nature of language. In the first, scholars are using the concept of spatiotemporal scales and complexity as a way to conceptualize the contexts of language policy discourses and connections across them. This work draws upon the use of scales in broader sociolinguistics (see, e.g., Canagarajah 2013; Collins, Slembrouck, and Baynham 2009) and in linguistic anthropology, which in turn adapted the notion of scales – or stratified locations with both time and space dimension – from cultural geography and world systems analysis. Spatiotemporal scales are a way of seeing context that goes beyond macro, micro, and meso; that incorporates both time as well as space; and that accounts for context as not a priori, but rather produced in interaction through indexical relationships that are subject to both normative regularities and agentive contingencies. As a representation of context that can account for these complexities, scales are useful to LPP analysis. Hult (2010) uses scales to analyze how patterns of discourses are repeated at different scales, as well as how participants make national policy relevant in a moment of interaction, bringing in resources from other scales to make sense of immediate content. Mortimer (2016) uses the concept of spatiotemporal scales as a way of combining attention to space, time, and power in contextualization of policy and to the heterogeneity of resources used in making sense of policy as it is appropriated.

Another area of work in progress addresses the intersection of how we think of language(s) and LPP, combining interest in reconceptualizations of language such as translanguaging (Canagarajah 2013), translanguaging (García 2009), plurilingualism, heteroglossia, and others with examinations of language policy process and activity. These reconceptualizations take on to some extent the “reconstitution of language” called for by Makoni and Pennycook (2007), a revision of the modernist conceptualization of different languages as discrete, bounded things in favor of a more fluid, dynamic conceptualization of speakers’ or communities’ “languages” as comprising elements from what have been thought of as different languages, but now are seen as parts of whole communicative systems employed flexibly in context. By the very nature of language policy, LPP research is necessarily concerned with the multiplicity of language forms and often with how policy supports multilingualism or interacts with linguistic hybridity and attempts to reduce it through standardization, purism, and the nation-language metonymy. But examining how policy supports or interacts with reconstituted notions about language itself is more recent. In addition to drawing upon discourse analytic methods, this work is discursive in its examination of dominant discourses of the nature of language itself. Abdelhay (2010) argues that Sudanese policy for mother tongue education as a human right is alienating and ineffective unless “the current practical, hybrid, and dynamic character of the linguistic habitus (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, as cited in Abdelhay 2010, p. 26) of members of the community should be validated as a valuable form of knowledge” (38). Jaffe (1999) posits a goal of Corsican language policy as not necessarily to produce speakers of bounded

Corsican language, but perhaps to produce people with flexibility of disposition, metalinguistic awareness, fluid practices. Canagarajah and Ashraf (2013) examine practical problems with three-language policies in India and Pakistan as in part stemming from the way languages are conceived of as discrete, and they highlight proposals for policy based instead on traditional plurilingual understandings of language in the region. More research on what more heteroglossic policies themselves look like is needed.

Problems and Difficulties

Two significant difficulties for discursive studies of language policy, in particular those that incorporate complex contextualization of policy through ethnography or a discourse-historical approach (Wodak 1996), stem from the very multiplicity of policy, contexts, and actors that discursive approaches have illuminated. Alluded to in the last section, if we are to advance studies of language policy that start from fluid, dynamic, holistic conceptualization of language (rather than languages) – a view of people as lingual rather than monolingual or bilingual (Flores 2013) – and especially if we are to advance the applications of such a perspective to policymaking itself, then we must wrestle with what language policy would look like without “language.” Additionally, when policy occurs everywhere and is practiced by almost everyone, it is very difficult to study comprehensively, especially by individual researchers with timing and resource constraints. Team-based and multisited approaches like those put forth by Johnson and Freeman (2010) and Bartlett and Vavrus’ (2014) vertical case study offers possible ways of addressing this problem, and more work on this will be needed.

Future Directions

Discursive approaches to the study of LPP will continue to grapple with the issues of multiplicity and complexity of policy, language, context, and actors. One area of research in which this is and will continue to be evident is in language policy on the Internet, for example, studies of language policing on social media sites in a 2015 special issue of *Language Policy*. In that issue, Yazan (2015) examines discursive strategies used to police users’ language on Facebook groups that promote the use of Ottoman Turkish script. In de Bres’ (2015) introduction to this issue, she calls for further conceptual and methodological development of ways to trace the digital trajectories and viral flows of discourses across social media and other online settings.

Another worthy direction for coming work is toward specific articulations of the role of discursive interaction (and ideologies circulating therein) in what Davis (2014) calls engaged language policy scholarship and what Johnson (2013) calls educational language policy engagement and action research (ELPEAR). These forms of engaged language policy research involve collaboration between researchers and communities in decision-making processes and “attempt to address

the epistemological tension and positionality dilemmas engendered when working with marginalized groups. . . [with the goal] to challenge deficit discourses and promote social justice in education” (Johnson 2013, p. 170). Such an approach entails “critically informed and informing transformative dialogue within and across ideological, institutional, and situational spaces” (Davis 2014, p. 84). Given scholars’ now deep understanding of the importance of language ideologies – often as Foucauldian discourses – to any emancipatory effect of language policy, and given the primacy of discursive interaction as empirical evidence of ideologies and a means of their circulation, production, and recontextualization, specific articulations of the role of discourse in engaged language policy work seem critical to our ability to do it. Questions include,

- In what ways can marginalized communities in collaboration with researchers circulate discourses that will support the appropriations of language policy that best serve those communities?
- How do those discourses interact with other discourses that may undermine ELPEAR efforts?
- What kinds of explicit attention must engaged LP actors devote to discursive patterns?
- Even in discourses of resistance, new hierarchies are often reinscribed. What role should identification of these processes play in engaged policy work? What role should researchers specifically play in identifying these processes?

Cross-References

- ▶ [Critical Discourse Analysis in Education](#)
- ▶ [Discursive Approaches to Policy](#)
- ▶ [Linguistic Anthropology of Education](#)

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

Bernard Spolsky: [Investigating Language Education Policy](#). In Volume: Research Methods in Language and Education

Teresa L. McCarty: [Ethnography of Language Policy](#). In Volume: Research Methods in Language and Education

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Part III

Discourses, Pedagogy, and Learning

Guided Co-Construction in Classroom Talk

Jan Hardman and Frank Hardman

Abstract

Enabling students to become more adept at using language is seen as one of the major goals of education: firstly, so they can express their thoughts and engage with others in joint intellectual activity to develop their communication skills; secondly, so as to advance their individual capacity for productive, rational, and reflective thinking. Within classrooms, students can develop their proficiency in the use of spoken language through teacher-student and student-student interactions. As will be argued, the first involves teacher use of spoken interaction with students as a means for promoting guided participation and the development of their knowledge and understanding by providing the intellectual support of a relative “expert” engaging with a “novice” in a given learning task. The second involves peer group interaction and dialogue as a means of promoting learning by providing a more symmetrical environment for the co-construction of knowledge in which the power and status differentials between expert and novice are less likely to apply. The current chapter focuses on the first of these educational approaches with regard to classroom talk: teacher-student interaction in the guided co-construction of knowledge.

Keywords

Classroom interaction • Classroom talk • Co-construction • Recitation • Socio-cultural theory • Zone of proximal development

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Enabling students to become more adept at using language is seen as one of the major goals of education: firstly, so they can express their thoughts and engage with others in joint intellectual activity to develop their communication skills; secondly, so as to advance their individual capacity for productive, rational, and reflective thinking. Within classrooms, students can develop their proficiency in the use of spoken language through teacher-student and student-student interactions. As will be argued, the first involves teacher use of spoken interaction with students as a means for promoting guided participation and the development of their knowledge and understanding by providing the intellectual support of a relative “expert” engaging with a “novice” in a given learning task. The second involves peer group interaction and dialogue as a means of promoting learning by providing a more symmetrical environment for the co-construction of knowledge in which the power and status differentials between expert and novice are less likely to apply. The current chapter focuses on the first of these educational approaches with regard to classroom talk: teacher-student interaction in the guided co-construction of knowledge.

Early Developments

Writing in the 1930s, Vygotsky was one of the first psychologists to acknowledge the role of talk in organizing learners’ understanding of the world, particularly through his writings on *Thought and Language* first translated into English in 1962 (Vygotsky 1992). He suggested that cognitive processes interact with social and cultural practices, and learning is a process of participation and engagement in shared activities involving the acquisition of conceptual understanding and discourse practices used by a particular academic community (Daniels 2005).

A similar emphasis on the social origins of the individual’s language repertoire is found in the work of the Russian philosopher Bakhtin on the dialogic nature of language and literature, originally published in Russian in the 1920s and 1930s but not translated in the West until the 1960s (Holquist 1990). Bakhtin argued that dialogue pervades all spoken and written discourse and is essential where meanings are not fixed or absolute. It is therefore central to educational discourse and learning because of the need to consider alternative frames of reference.

From this perspective, knowledge and meanings are “co-constructed,” and language plays a key role as a mediator of the activity. In other words, using language to communicate helps in the development of new ways of thinking: what children learn

from their “inter-mental” experience (communication between minds through social interaction) shapes their “intra-mental” activity (the way they think as individuals). Most importantly, Vygotsky argued that the greatest influence on the development of thinking would come from the interaction between a learner and a more knowledgeable, supportive member of a community, such as a parent or teacher. In what became known as the zone of proximal development (ZPD), the zone between what learners can do unaided and what they can manage with expert assistance, language was seen as being central to instruction.

Out of this early theoretical work developed the sociocultural theory of learning which posits that intellectual development is achieved through dialogue and discussion (Wells 1999). Education is enacted through the interactions between students and teachers, and that they are embedded in the historical development, cultural values, and social practices of the societies and communities in which schools exist. Education and cognitive development are therefore seen as cultural processes, whereby knowledge is not only acquired individually but also shared among members of a community, through their involvement in events which are shaped by cultural and historical factors.

Closely related to Vygotsky’s work was Bruner’s (1985) concept of the “scaffolding” of learning to describe certain kinds of support which learners receive in their interactions with teachers and peers. Through such interactions, students are helped to move towards new skills, concepts, and ways of using language and acquire new frames of reference to interpret observations, information, and events. The concept of scaffolding led to a series of educational interventions designed to facilitate the guided construction of knowledge. For example, Tharp and Gallimore (1988) developed a mode of pedagogical interaction which they called “instructional conversation” allowing for a range of instructional conversations in whole class, paired and group situations.

Similarly, Brown and Palincsar (1989) developed a co-operative learning system for the teaching of reading which they termed “reciprocal teaching” to improve reading comprehension by teaching students strategies to obtain meaning from texts. Teacher and learners work in group to interrogate a text using questioning, predicting, clarifying, and summarizing techniques. During the early stages, the teacher assumes primary responsibility for modeling how to use the strategies. Gradually, as the students become familiar with the strategies they take over responsibility for talking through the application of the strategies to the text.

Major Contributions

Building on the view that students need to be active participants in the construction of knowledge through classroom talk, research set about investigating ways in which they could play a greater role in teacher-fronted talk. This was in response to systematic observational studies of the classroom interaction dating as far back as the early twentieth century (Hardman and Hardman 2015). One of the best known observation schedules was the Interaction Analysis System developed by Flanders in

the 1960s, which allowed for multiple coding using the ten categories of behaviors to record the interaction sequences of a lesson (Flanders 1970). Out of Flanders' systematic observations of classrooms work in the USA, there developed the "two-thirds" rule: about two-thirds of classroom time is devoted to talking; about two-thirds of this time the person talking is the teacher; and two-thirds of teacher talk is made up of opinions, directing, and criticizing students.

Similarly in the UK, in 1975 the Observational Research and Classroom Learning Evaluation (ORACLE) project was launched consisting of two main studies: a longitudinal process-product study over a period of 5 years of teaching and learning in the junior age (7–11) classrooms, and a second study focusing on the use of collaborative group work (Eggleston et al. 1976). The research found that classroom interaction between teachers and pupils was largely asymmetrical, with teachers typically spending 78% of the time interacting with pupils, whereas a pupil, on average, spent 84% of the time working on his/her own without interacting with either the teacher or another pupil (Galton 1987).

Twenty years on, Maurice Galton and his colleagues replicated the 1976 ORACLE study (Galton et al. 1999). In 1976 the ORACLE findings loosely followed Flanders' two-thirds rule, whereas in 1996 around three-quarters of all classroom activity involved talk made up of either questions or statements, the consequence of a 16% increase in the proportion of whole-class teacher-pupil interaction. However, while there had been an increase in the overall proportion of time spent on whole class teaching, there had not been a radical shift in the pattern of teacher-pupil interaction, suggesting a considerable degree of consistency in the underlying pedagogy across the two decades. It was found primary school pedagogy in the UK was largely made up of teacher explanation and closed questioning, with little in the way of authentic questions allowing for more than one answer, where the students were mainly expected to be passive and to recall, when asked, what they have learned and to report other people's thinking. The social constructivist theory of learning therefore questions the value of the linguistic and cognitive demands made on students within the traditional teacher-led question-answer recitation format.

The difficulty of managing the turn-taking of a large numbers of students in teacher-fronted talk led to the questioning of the effectiveness of teacher questioning and the development of group-based learning. For example, the work of Barnes and Todd (1995) explored the promotion of student talk through the use of collaborative group work as a way of "decentralizing" classroom communication, so as to encourage more students to participate in, and practice of, academic forms of discourse normally dominated by the teacher, and allow for alternative frames of reference. In this way, students could explore, share in, and practice forms of academic discourse of the classroom normally inhabited by the teacher: that is, sharing, comparing, contrasting, and arguing from different perspectives, providing opportunities for instructional conversation or the shared construction or negotiation of meaning. However, research into the relatively low educational value of much of the paired and group talk found in schools suggests that children need to be trained about the ways of talking effectively together or helped to develop specific dialogic strategies for thinking collectively (Mercer and Littleton 2007).

Research into the linguistic patterning of teacher-fronted talk conducted in the 1970s revealed the ubiquity of the initiation-response-follow-up (IRF) exchange being central to teacher-pupil interaction. In its prototypical form, the IRF exchange consists of three moves: an *initiation*, usually in the form of a teacher question, a *response* in which a pupil attempts to answer the question, and a *follow-up* move, in which the teacher provides some form of feedback (very often in the form of an evaluation) to the pupil's response (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975). Similar in a study in the USA, Mehan (1979) used "evaluate" (abbreviated as IRE) to designate the third move because it was found that this move in the exchange was often used to provide an evaluation of a student's answer.

Building on this work, international research suggests there are five main types of talk found in classrooms around the world (Alexander 2008). They include traditional rote (drilling, facts and routines through repetition), recitation (using short question/answer sequences to recall or test what is expected to be known), instruction (telling children what to do and how to do it) and exposition (imparting information and explaining things), discussion (open exchange of views and information and problem solving), and dialogue (co-construction through open questions, probing pupils' responses and the thinking which lies behind them, and building on their contributions). However, the classroom talk repertoire is often limited to the first three, making them a universal feature of classroom interaction (Tharp and Dalton 2007). Research into classrooms where English is not the first language also raises doubts over the effectiveness of such a narrow repertoire of approaches in situations where teachers and students from different ethnic groups have different cultural expectations about how to use language in the classroom (Hornberger and Chick 2001).

Far from encouraging and extending student contributions to promote higher levels of interaction and cognitive engagement, it has been found that most of the questions asked by teachers and evaluations of student answers were of a low cognitive level designed to funnel responses towards a required answer (Edwards and Westgate 1994). In an attempt to open up the classroom discourse to students, research focused on the promotion of "higher-order" questioning techniques to promote reflection, self-examination, and enquiry through the use of "open" questions which invite students to speculate, hypothesize, reason, evaluate, and to consider a range of possible answers (Wragg 1999). It also led to the researching of a range of alternatives to teacher questions, including the use of provocative, open-ended statements, encouraging students to ask their own questions, and maintaining silence so that students have thinking time before they respond (Dillon 1994).

Similarly, Nystrand et al. (2003) found that when teachers paid more attention to the way in which they evaluate student responses, there was more "high-level evaluation" whereby teachers incorporated student answers into subsequent questions. In this process, which they termed *uptake*, teacher's questions were shaped by what immediately preceded them so that they were genuine questions. When such high-level evaluation occurred, the teacher ratified the importance of a student's response and allowed it to modify or affect the course of the discussion

in some way, weaving it into the fabric of an unfolding exchange, thereby encouraging more student-initiated ideas and responses and consequently promoting more of a dialogic pedagogy and higher-order thinking on the part of the students.

Nystrand and his colleagues found that when dialogic episodes did occur, teachers often opened up space in the classroom discourse by explicitly encouraging students to review one another's contributions. The teachers also encouraged more symmetric interaction by demonstrating reciprocal engagement with student responses through exclamations of interest often combined with statements relating the student's response to their own personal experience or opinion. Some of the teachers also demonstrated a more flexible approach to unpredicted student responses by turning the follow-up move into another question by asking for clarification. Such questions were authentic in the sense that they were asking about something genuinely unknown to the teacher, thereby ratifying the importance of the student's original response, while also creating an opportunity for the student to expand upon their original response. Nassaji and Wells (2000) also found that teacher feedback could extend and draw out the significance of the answer. From their research, they advocated that teachers use comments and probing questions to open up the follow-up move so as to invite further student elaboration and create a more equal mode of participation.

Through his comparative research into classroom talk in primary school classrooms in five countries (England, France, India, Russia, USA), Alexander (2001) found that although the IRF/E exchange is ubiquitous, it can be used in different ways to organize the communicative process of teaching and learning. While in most of the classrooms he observed teachers spoke for the majority of the time, the contribution of the students varied considerably across the different cultures, leading to different levels of student participation and cognitive engagement. For example, in Russian and French classrooms, teachers were more likely to probe a student's response. This was found to promote a higher level of student engagement and longer stretches of discourse conducted through a more formal academic discourse when compared to British and American classrooms. Alexander argued this reflected a greater cultural commitment in French and Russian schools to collective/public, rather than individualized, learning.

From this work, Alexander (2014) developed the concept of "dialogic talk." He argued that the essential features of a dialogic classroom are that it is collective (teachers and students address the learning task together), reciprocal (teachers and students listen to each other to share ideas and consider alternative viewpoints), supportive (students articulate their ideas freely without fear of embarrassment over "wrong" answers and support each other to reach common understandings), cumulative (teachers and students build on their own and each other's ideas to chain them into coherent lines of thinking and enquiry), and purposeful (teachers plan and facilitate dialogic teaching with educational goals in mind). Alexander also argued that the term dialogic teaching should replace the organizational restrictiveness of "whole-class teaching" as teaching can be dialogic when teachers are interacting with individuals, groups or the whole class.

Work in Progress

Recent developments of computer-based software for observing classrooms and for analyzing large databases of spoken language that can be subjected to statistical analysis have greatly facilitated sociocultural research into classroom interaction and discourse practices. Such software is a powerful tool for sorting, storing and organizing, and systematically analyzing a large set talk data. Linguistic ethnographic and conversation analysis approaches to the study of classroom talk is also starting to reveal in greater depth how language and social life are mutually shaping.

Research by Lefstein and Snell (2014) integrating linguistic ethnographic approaches, using lesson transcription and micro-analysis of selected episodes, with computer-assisted systematic classroom observation focusing on whole-class teaching, has enabled a more nuanced interpretation of teacher pacing in lessons. It demonstrates how systematic observation and micro-ethnographic approaches can be combined leading to the generation and testing of hypotheses and more generalizable findings while maintaining qualitative and ethnographic insights.

Similarly, Molinari and colleagues used computerized corpus data software to analyze micro-transitions occurring within IRF exchanges in Italian primary school lessons (Molinari et al. 2012). They used the sequential analysis of the links between teaching exchanges to explore whether the form of a question, either open or closed, triggers differently interactive sequences. They found that while the IRF sequence is a pervasive linguistic feature of classroom discourse, and that in most cases teachers firmly control the interaction, the use of authentic questions often led to bound exchanges in which a more dialogic interaction between teachers and students was possible.

Authentic or open-ended questions were significantly followed by complex answers and the re-initiation of the same question to different pupils. Teacher follow-up was also found to be important in extending the teaching exchanges. Where teachers accepted or rejected an answer, the sequence was often short, but in cases where the teacher followed-up an incorrect answer through a probe to help the student reformulate it in a more appropriate way, the exchanges became more extended and dialogic in nature. At the third turn, the teacher might also elaborate on the response by reformulating it, or adding details and information in order to improve the quality of the answer. They would also extend the turn with requests for clarification, use of examples, and solicitation of reformulations or reflections to co-construct and guide the development of deduction skills, reasoning, and thinking. These sequences were, therefore, found to be fruitful occasions for co-constructing knowledge and encouraging student active participation in the discourse.

Recent work in primary science in the USA has also identified a small group of talk moves that have been identified as academically productive by opening up the third move in the IRF exchange (Michaels and O'Connor 2015). For example, some of the moves prompt students to share and expand upon their ideas (e.g., "Can you say more about that?"), others help them listen carefully to one another (e.g., "What do you think of what X has just said?"). Others help students dig deeper as they provide evidence to support their claims (e.g., "Why do you say that? What's your

evidence?"), and some help students think with the reasoning of others to build on, elaborate, and improve the thinking of the group (e.g., "Who can add to what X has just said?"). By establishing clear ground rules for class discussion alongside the introduction of the talk moves – e.g., students are expected to listen to one another attentively and respond respectfully, to feel a sense of trust that their ideas will be taken seriously and that disagreements will be handled respectfully, to understand that this kind of talk is expected of everyone, and everyone will have a chance to participate and express their ideas – a culture of productive talk is established.

Problems and Difficulties

While the research reviewed in the previous section suggests classroom discourse can take on a more dialogic function, the persistence of rote and teacher-led recitation in many classrooms around the world suggests the need for different approaches to professional development in order to change habitual classroom behaviors and traditional discourse patterns, and secure improvements in student engagement and learning through the guided co-construction of knowledge.

Much of the evidence on effective teaching and learning practices using reciprocal forms of teaching and learning comes from high-income countries. For example, Hattie's synthesis of 800 meta-analyses involving over 50,000 studies related to achievement in school-aged children shows that high-quality classroom talk enhances understanding, accelerates learning, and raises learning outcomes (Hattie 2009). Such interactive approaches make the learning visible for both teachers and students allowing for the monitoring of learning and formative evaluation.

While much of the evidence on effective teaching and learning processes has come from high-income countries, a substantial body of evidence based on observation studies from low- and middle-income countries is emerging (Westbrook et al. 2013). In an extensive review of low-income countries, it was found that teachers who promoted an interactive pedagogy also demonstrated a positive attitude towards their training and the students and saw teaching and learning as an interactive, communicative process. Four specific strategies that promoted an interactive pedagogy and visible learning from students were identified: providing formative feedback; sustained attention and inclusion in the classroom; creating a safe environment in which students felt supported in their learning; and drawing on students' backgrounds and experiences. From the four strategies, six effective teaching behaviors were identified: frequent and relevant use of visual aids and locally produced learning materials beyond the use of textbooks; open and closed questioning; expanding responses; encouraging student questioning; demonstration and explanation, drawing on sound pedagogical content knowledge; and use of local languages.

Westbrook and colleagues concluded that educational quality is largely obtained through pedagogical processes in the classroom. What students achieve is heavily influenced by the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and commitment of the teachers in whose care students are entrusted. They also found that an interactive pedagogy could have a considerable impact on learning if it was supported by relevant school-

based professional development. Such school-based teacher development had to be aligned with teachers' needs, have the support of the head teacher and involve teachers working together at school and cluster level, with follow-up in the classroom involving observation, coaching, and feedback.

Similarly, in its most recent review of teacher education covering 65 countries from around the world, the OECD argued that much can be learned from high-performing countries in terms of offering a quality education for their pupils (OECD 2011). Countries like Finland, South Korea, Canada, and Cuba place a high value on teacher education at the initial stage and through the provision of school-based professional development. It was found the most effective professional development programs provide high-quality initial and continuing professional development that upgrades teacher pedagogic knowledge and skills over a sustained period of time rather than through disjointed one-off courses. In this way, they provide opportunities for teachers to work together on issues of instructional planning, to learn from one another through mentoring, peer observation and coaching, and by conducting research on the outcomes of classroom practices using talk data to collectively guide curriculum, assessment, and professional learning decisions. There is, therefore, growing recognition among governments around the world of the need to change underlying pedagogic practices that lead to the transmission of knowledge through teacher-led recitation and rote learning (Resnick et al. 2015).

Future Directions

The research findings reviewed above suggest major challenges have to be overcome if classroom talk is to be transformed from recitation into dialogue so as to promote the co-construction of guided knowledge between teachers and students. They suggest the need for the exploration and researching of alternative teaching and learning strategies to raise the quality of teachers' interactions with their students and promote broader participation beyond the role of listeners or respondents. If classroom discourse is to take on a variety of forms and functions as suggested by advocates of a dialogic pedagogy, teachers will need to pay close attention to their use of questions and feedback strategies to promote the use of alternative discourse strategies (e.g., probing, re-voicing, student questions, uptake questions, teacher statements).

In higher education, online learning is increasingly being seen as a way of promoting the co-construction of learning (Prestridge 2014). Asynchronous discussion groups supported by tutor input are seen as an ideal tool for supporting the co-construction of learning. In these learning environments, students can work together, achieve shared understanding, and solve problems collaboratively. Discussing online is seen as an excellent activity for co-constructing knowledge, since explaining, elaborating, and defending one's position to others prompts learners to integrate and elaborate knowledge in ways that facilitate higher-order learning. However, research has found grouping students in asynchronous discussions does not necessarily lead to effective interaction and the co-construction of knowledge. Collaborative knowledge construction in asynchronous discussion

groups may need additional support through carefully structured online materials and the assigning of roles to students to support the process of social knowledge construction. Most importantly it needs a blended approach, with guidance and support from tutors trained in the use of online teaching and learning.

Research into the professional development of teachers suggests monitoring and self-evaluation will need to become a regular part of school-based professional development so as to give teachers a degree of ownership of the process of school improvement (Kennedy 2014). It will also be important to involve teachers in the analysis of classroom talk and interaction to help in the transforming of beliefs, knowledge, understandings, skills, and commitments, in what they know and able to do in their classroom practice with regard to teaching and learning. The school and classroom need to be the focus of interventions for improving the quality of teaching and learning, involving the school head and all the teachers in creating a genuine teaching community through ownership of the process. School-based teacher development and research programs building on existing systems and structures, and linked to study materials, coaching, observation, and feedback by colleagues, can help teachers explore their own beliefs and classroom practices as a way of bridging the gap between theories and pedagogical practice and to explore alternative classroom interaction and discourse approaches.

Reflection on teachers' intentions and beliefs about their practice is seen as a way of enhancing expert thinking and problem solving. The research suggests teachers should be encouraged to theorize their teaching so as to make confident and professionally informed decisions about the way they interact with students so as to encourage greater participation and higher levels of cognitive engagement. Video clips of lessons selected by the teacher have been found to be a powerful way of promoting critical reflection on professional practice. Such stimulated professional dialogue can encourage teachers to articulate and demonstrate their own understanding of their interactive styles and provided opportunities for monitoring and self-evaluation (Flitton and Warwick 2013).

In addition to the provision of more powerful professional development programs, there is the need for more research to provide comprehensive evidence, for both teachers and policy makers, that a dialogic pedagogy encouraging more active student involvement in the guided co-construction of knowledge can produce significant gains in learning. No research approach by itself, whether it uses qualitative or quantitative methods, or an experimental design or naturalistic observation, will adequately capture the complexity of classroom life (Mercer 2010). Each will have its strengths and weaknesses, suggesting the need for mixed-method approaches that combine two or more methods drawing on both quantitative and qualitative analysis so that weaknesses are counterbalanced, and evidence of more than one kind is generated to address concerns about validity and methodological consistency. There is also the need to conduct more rigorous research to investigate how different forms of classroom talk impact on learning outcomes. More large-scale, longitudinal studies which use systematic quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis to conduct impact and process evaluations to consolidate and extend the evidence base are needed.

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Discursive Perspectives on Learning and Teaching Mathematics

Kara Jackson and Hannah Nieman

Abstract

This chapter traces the development of mathematics education research that investigates learning and teaching mathematics in classrooms from a discursive perspective. By discursive perspective, we intend research that views participating in mathematics as entailing particular ways of communicating about mathematical ideas, including inscribing, symbolizing, and representing mathematical ideas and concepts with tools. Further, those ways of communicating are situated in particular social, cultural, historical, and political contexts. Discursive perspectives emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The turn to discourse was precipitated by questions regarding how instruction might be organized to support students to develop deep and enduring understandings of mathematics. Early influences included studies of social interaction in education, developments in linguistics, and sociocultural theories of learning. Major contributions include established lines of inquiry focused on how school mathematics discourse can better approximate disciplinary mathematics and support enduring learning. More recent lines of inquiry concern equity in participation in disciplinary forms of discourse and multisemiotic perspectives on learning and teaching mathematics. Key problems and difficulties within the field include the conceptualization of discourse more generally and of mathematics specifically, and of what counts as relevant context in studies of discourse. Future directions for research include how to enable historically disadvantaged groups of students to participate substantially in mathematically rich discursive activity and how teachers learn to develop such forms of practice.

Keywords

Mathematics • Discourse • Teaching

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Introduction

Although the study of mathematics is ancient and the practice of organizing students in classrooms to learn mathematics is centuries old, research on the learning and teaching of mathematics developed around the turn of the twentieth century (Kilpatrick 1992), with a focus on discourse emerging in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Kieran et al. 2001). There certainly was prior research focused on issues of language – particularly the relationship between students’ everyday and mathematical vocabulary, and especially in educational systems in which students were learning mathematics in a language other than their native language (Austin and Howson 1979). However, it was not until the late 1970s that there was a concerted effort to investigate mathematics learning and teaching from a discursive perspective; it is that literature on which this chapter focuses. By discursive perspective, we intend research that, broadly conceived, has approached the learning and teaching of mathematics as a fundamentally social phenomenon. That is, we intend research that views participating in mathematics as entailing particular ways of communicating about mathematical ideas, including inscribing, symbolizing, and representing mathematical ideas and concepts with tools. Further, a discursive perspective signals that ways of communicating are situated in particular social, cultural, historical, and political contexts (Kieran et al. 2001).

In what follows, we trace the development of major contributions central to the study of discourse and mathematics learning and teaching. There is a rich body of scholarship that applies discursive perspectives to mathematics learning outside of classrooms; however, given space limitations, we restrict our focus to classroom learning and teaching. An established line of inquiry entails understanding how school mathematics discourse can better approximate (at least certain aspects of) disciplinary mathematics discourse and support enduring, conceptual understandings of mathematics. More recent lines of inquiry concern equity in participation in disciplinary forms of discourse and multisemiotic perspectives on learning and teaching mathematics. Having discussed these and related ideas, we conclude by considering some key problems and difficulties as they relate to the study of discourse in mathematics classrooms and suggest future directions for research.

Early Developments

The turn to discourse was prompted, in part, by abundant evidence in the late 1970s and early 1980s that most students tended to apply procedures to solve problems with little sense of mathematical reasonableness or why a particular procedure worked. More remarkable, it appeared that students were comfortable with the idea that school mathematics need not make sense. There was consensus among researchers that the problem of students' poor understandings was, in fact, a problem of instruction. Teaching tended to emphasize memorizing sets of procedures to apply to problems, and, on the whole, students were not provided opportunities to engage in authentic mathematical activity, such as solving genuine problems, posing and testing conjectures, debating solutions, revising thinking, or proving why a rule worked. Findings like these gave rise to the question of how instruction might be organized to support students to develop deep and enduring understandings of mathematics. Researchers turned their attention to classroom discourse, both as a means of understanding how students learned mathematics and as a key lever for engaging students in more authentic mathematical activity.

One early influence on the turn to discourse concerns the then-contemporary work in sociology of education that, using linguistic methods, showed how interaction between teachers and students produced and reproduced particular patterns of educational outcomes, including inequities. In 1980, Bauersfeld published the influential article, "Hidden dimensions in the so-called reality of a mathematics classroom." Drawing on interactionist frameworks and the findings of such studies, Bauersfeld explicitly called for increased attention to the study of social interaction in school mathematics in an effort to improve the teaching and learning of mathematics.

Another early influence concerns the application of linguist Halliday's work to mathematics teaching and learning. In *Language as Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language*, Halliday (1978) emphasized the value in treating mathematics as a language. Specifically, he put forth the concept of a mathematics register, which refers to "a set of meanings that is appropriate to a particular function of language" that "belong to the language of mathematics . . . together with the words and structures which express these meanings" (p. 195). A number of prominent scholars have since adapted Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics to investigate the role of language in making meaning in the context of mathematical activity. For example, Pimm's (see, e.g., 1987) career has focused on exploring the implications of viewing mathematics as a language in the context of school mathematics. In Pimm's terms, learning the language of mathematics requires "learning to speak, and more subtly, learning to 'mean' like a mathematician" (p. 207). More recently, Morgan (see, e.g., 1996) and Herbel-Eisenmann (see, e.g., 2007) adapted Halliday's three metafunctions of language to analyze the role of written texts (e.g., written student explanations, textbook) in the social construction of meaning in mathematics classrooms. They provide rigorous accounts of the role of such written texts in constructing: (a) views of the nature of mathematics (ideational function);

(b) relations of authority between teacher, students, and text (interpersonal function); and (c) the purpose of the text as a whole (textual function).

The field's attention to discourse has also been influenced by developments in the theorization of learning more generally, particularly the increase in application of sociocultural theories of learning to education during the 1980s and early 1990s (cf. Kieran et al. 2001). From a sociocultural perspective, learning is evidenced by change in participation in a community of practice, and such participation is primarily discursive. As Forman (1996) argued, given that mathematics educators identified the importance of altering the forms of activity and the nature of the discourse associated with typical instruction, sociocultural theories made sense as a useful lens to analyze classroom activity.

Major Contributions

Whereas there was considerable press to alter the activity of mathematics classrooms such that they might more resemble (at least some aspects of) the practices of mathematicians, there were minimal, if any, representations of such classrooms in the existing research literature. Thus, a key contribution to the study of discourse in mathematics education includes a set of studies that served as crucial existence proofs that, indeed, it was possible to engage students in discourse practices associated with the discipline of mathematics – and that in such settings, students developed robust understandings of mathematical concepts and the ability to reason mathematically.

Seminal studies include Lampert's study of her fifth grade classroom and Ball's study of her third grade classroom. For example, building on mathematicians Polya's and Lakatos's writings regarding the practices of problem solving and proof, Lampert (1990) successfully designed and enacted classroom instruction in which she posed problems and led discussion that engaged students as a community in making mathematical arguments. Discursive activity included identifying the mathematical assumptions of a given problem, putting forth conjectures, testing those conjectures, revising thinking, and debating and defending lines of reasoning to determine mathematical validity. Importantly, the forms of discourse that characterized both Lampert's and Ball's classrooms were in stark contrast to the "cultural assumptions" of conventional mathematics instruction, in which "*doing* mathematics means following the rules laid down by the teacher; *knowing* mathematics means remembering and applying the correct rule when the teacher asks a question; and mathematical *truth is determined* when the answer is ratified by the teacher" (Lampert 1990, p. 32, italics in original).

Arising from studies like those of Lampert and Ball was the tenet that learning to communicate about mathematical ideas could not be separated from the means by which students develop mathematical understandings (Kieran et al. 2001; Lampert and Cobb 2003). Sfard's theorizing of the relationship between what she termed "learning to communicate" and "communicating to learn" is particularly noteworthy

(see Kieran et al. 2001). In articulating her commognitive theory of learning (which, although focused on mathematics, is intended as more general), Sfard (2008) argued that learning mathematics is a process of increasing participation in the discourse of mathematics, which itself can change. Such a view is in contrast to what Sfard termed “acquisitionist” theories, in which it is assumed that learning mathematics is a process of acquiring some fixed knowledge that exists in the world. One implication of Sfard’s theory is that learning demands for students are conceived of as changes in communicating.

Another major contribution concerns a focus on argumentation in the mathematics classroom, which refers to the practices of explanation, justification, and critique of ideas, as governed by what counts as valid and true according to the discipline of mathematics. Krummheuer (1995) specified the components of linguist Toulmin’s model of argumentation – comprised of claim, data, warrant, and backing – for mathematics classroom discussions. In particular, Krummheuer expanded on Toulmin’s conceptualization to consider collective argumentation, or the way in which argumentation is accomplished interactively as multiple individuals work to establish a claim. Krummheuer’s framework was subsequently taken up by mathematics education researchers seeking to understand patterns of argumentation, to account for collective learning, and to analyze teaching (cf. Yackel 2002).

A key finding of studies of argumentation concerned the crucial role the teacher plays in orchestrating productive discourse, thereby countering a widely circulating assumption that the teacher played a minimal role in supporting learning in inquiry-oriented mathematics. One key contribution concerns Yackel and Cobb’s (1996) identification of the teacher’s role in establishing both social and sociomathematical norms for productive mathematical discourse. Whereas social norms might obligate students to explain and justify their solutions, to explain why they used one particular method rather than another, and to articulate the relationship between different solution strategies, sociomathematical norms refer to “normative understandings of what counts as mathematically different, mathematically sophisticated, mathematically efficient, and mathematically elegant in a classroom” (p. 461).

The negotiation of social and sociomathematical norms was shown to be critical both in small groups and in whole class discussions. Specific to small groups, for example, Wood and Yackel (1990) highlighted the teacher’s role in listening to students’ exchanges and interjecting to maintain the dialogue between students (e.g., making comments or asking questions to support students in verbalizing their solutions, listening to others’ solutions, and reaching consensus about solutions). Kazemi and Stipek (2001) compared whole-class discussions that were governed by similar social norms (e.g., it was expected that students explained their thinking), yet differed in terms of sociomathematical norms and, as such, differed in the extent to which there was what they termed high press for conceptual thinking. They identified four sociomathematical norms associated with high press for conceptual thinking, concerning what counted as a mathematical explanation, the importance of understanding relations between strategies, the role of errors in discussions, and the focus of collaborative work.

Another key contribution regarding the teacher's role in facilitating productive discourse is O'Connor and Michaels's (e.g., 1996) identification of the role of revoicing in productive mathematics discussions. Revoicing refers to "a particular kind of reuttering (oral or written) of a student's contribution – by another participant in the discussion" (p. 71). Building on the work of Goffman, O'Connor and Michaels argued that in revoicing student contributions, a teacher "animates" student ideas, thus marking them as legitimate and as worthy of discussion. Revoicing can also function as a way for teachers to elaborate or refine a student's mathematical idea. Thus, revoicing impacts the quality of the mathematical discourse and how students "see themselves and each other as legitimate participants in the activity of making, analysing, and evaluating claims, hypotheses, and predictions" (p. 78).

More generally, the body of work described above elaborated the teacher's role in altering the rather stable patterns of interactions that characterized conventional mathematics instruction. Voigt (1985) discussed the funneling pattern endemic to mathematics classrooms, in which the teachers guide students, usually through questioning, to state the desired solution method, or the teacher states; in either case, the teacher implicitly or explicitly communicates that there is one sanctioned method, and more so, that mathematical authority rests with the teacher or text. Wood (1998) contrasted this with what she termed a focusing pattern, in which students share their thinking, and the teacher chooses to highlight a particular solution method to help students to notice or consider an important mathematical idea; the teacher then continues to elicit student ideas. Whereas funneling suggests that mathematical authority rests with the teacher, focusing suggests that students can author mathematical ideas.

Works in Progress

The major contributions reviewed thus far, as well as others that space precluded us from including, provided representations of classrooms in which students were successfully engaged in discourse that was akin to the discipline-specific practices of mathematicians. These and other studies illustrated that discursive activity in the classroom shaped what, what is learnable mathematically as well as how students come to understand what mathematics is and how they see themselves and others in relation to the discipline. An underlying assumption of much of this earlier work was that engaging in disciplinary-specific discourse would lead to better access to mathematics for all students (cf. Lampert and Blunk 1998). However, it was unclear to the extent to which this was true, given long-standing patterns of inequity in opportunities to learn mathematics. Beginning in the mid- to late 1990s, a number of scholars began to examine this assumption.

Boaler's work has been seminal in this regard. In her earlier work, for example, Boaler (1997) reported on a comparative, three-year study of majority working-class, white secondary students' experiences and achievement in the United Kingdom who were enrolled in conventional (Amber Hill) or inquiry-oriented mathematics classrooms (Phoenix Park). She found that the Phoenix Park students outperformed

the Amber Hill students on a number of assessments. And, while boys at Amber Hill earned higher grades than girls, there were no gender differences evident among the Phoenix Park students. On the basis of this study, Boaler concluded that enacting discourse-rich mathematical activity has the potential to widen the range of students who succeed in mathematics and identify with the discipline. That said, other scholars (e.g., Lubienski 2000) provided empirical evidence that such discursive practices can be alienating to students from nondominant backgrounds.

On the basis of these findings, a number of scholars have worked to specify forms of teaching that result in equitable participation in disciplinary-specific discursive practices. As one example, Parks (2010) identified the value in posing “explicit” as opposed to “implicit” questions in engaging nondominant students in discursive practices associated with inquiry-oriented mathematics. Another example is the work of Hunter and Anthony (2011) who documented the relational work entailed in supporting Pasifika students in New Zealand to participate in discursive practices that were risky, socially and emotionally.

Related research has focused on how students learning mathematics in a language other than their native language(s) can be supported to participate meaningfully in and learn through mathematical discourse in and learn through their mathematical discourse (Moschkovich 2010). In this line of work, students’ linguistic backgrounds are viewed as resources on which to build. As Walshaw and Anthony (2008) clarify, this is in contrast to earlier work in bi- and multilingualism that tended to focus solely on the challenges such students face in learning mathematical vocabulary and the register of mathematics. For example, Moschkovich (1999) identified the value in students using informal language to explain their reasoning – and in the teacher revoicing their explanations “in ways that are closer to the standard discourse practices of the discipline” (p. 15). Revoicing, she argued, can serve as a bridge between students’ informal, everyday language and more formal mathematical language. Adler (e.g., 1999) highlighted dilemmas associated with “explicit mathematics language teaching” in classrooms serving multilingual students. Based on a study of multilingual South African secondary mathematics classrooms, Adler illustrates how, on the one hand, being explicit about how to engage in mathematical discussions is crucial, if students – especially multilingual students – are to participate in and identify positively with the discipline of mathematics. On the other hand, “it is possible . . . that . . . the discussion itself becomes the focus and object of attention instead of a means to the mathematics” (p. 50).

Another line of equity-focused scholarship has investigated the relation between identity formation – that is, who students are becoming – and the nature of the discursive activity in mathematics classrooms in which they are engaged. A key contribution concerns Nasir and Hand’s (2008) articulation of practice-linked identities. Based on a study that compared African American high school students’ engagement with mathematics in basketball and in the mathematics classroom, Nasir and Hand put forth that “the identities that people come to take on, construct, and embrace . . . are linked to participation in particular social and cultural practices” (p. 147). Related scholarship has focused especially on the identities that students develop through participation in discursive activity in mathematics classrooms. For

example, Martin (2000) developed an empirically grounded framework for making sense of African American students' performance in mathematics that includes a focus on mathematics socialization (e.g., the nature of the mathematical activity in which students are asked to participate) and mathematics identity (e.g., the nature of who students are invited to "be" in relation to those forms of activity). Furthermore, the work of Martin and other scholars illustrated that the mathematical identities that people develop through participation in discursive activity intersect with other identities, including racial, ethnic, gender, and otherwise.

An additional line of emerging scholarship that has implications for equity includes investigations that approach the study of discourse and mathematics from a multisemiotic perspective. The majority of research that has taken a discursive perspective on mathematics learning and teaching has focused primarily on talk (cf. Gutiérrez et al. 2010; Morgan 1996). However, as O'Halloran (2000) clarifies, "Mathematics is not construed solely through linguistic means" (p. 360). Instead, mathematics discourse is characterized by the coordination of and shifting between various semiotic resources – "mathematical symbolism, visual display, and language" (p. 359). O'Halloran and Radford have generated different, yet somewhat complementary, empirically grounded, multisemiotic frameworks to study students' mathematics learning. O'Halloran (e.g., 2000) adapted Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics framework to include a focus on mathematical symbolism and visual display, in addition to language. Drawing on activity theory, Radford (e.g., 2003) developed what he terms a "semiotic-cultural approach," which "focuses on the role that body, discourse, and signs play when students refer to mathematical objects," (p. 37) to study students' understanding of generalization in the context of algebraic activity. Multisemiotic analyses of learning and teaching are especially important in making visible the various kinds of learning demands (i.e., not only linguistic) that are inherent in any form of activity.

Problems, Difficulties, and Future Directions

Over the past several decades, research guided by discursive perspectives on learning and teaching mathematics has, without a doubt, resulted in significant advances in understanding how classroom instruction can be organized such that students participate in and learn through more authentic mathematical activity. That said, it is sobering that in most classrooms in most countries, mathematics instruction still looks much like it has for centuries. A full discussion regarding why this is the case is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, it is important to take into account when considering the problems and difficulties of this body of work as well as future directions for research.

One challenge concerns conceptualizing studies of discursive activity. In conducting a review of the literature, it was often difficult to discern what various researchers intended by the word discourse. Similarly, as noted above, discourse appeared to be, at least implicitly, often equated with talk in the classroom.

Moreover, as both O'Halloran (2000) and Gutiérrez et al. (2010) argue, attending to the multisemiotic nature of mathematics is crucial for considering issues of equity. As such, the field would benefit from more explicit focus on the coordination of talk with participation in representational and symbolic practices (for examples, see Hall and Nemirovsky 2012).

A related challenge regards how mathematics is conceptualized (cf. Herbel-Eisenmann and Otten 2011). Often, in studies of mathematics teaching and learning, mathematics itself – even when conceptualized as a discourse – is presented as static. From a sociocultural perspective, as people's participation in practices changes, so do the practices themselves – and it is the relation between the changing person and context that becomes most salient for what is and can be learned by whom. Attention to this relation in future research would benefit the field, as it would provide insight into how particular kinds of understandings and identities are accomplished in context.

More generally, there is a tendency in mathematics education to study classrooms in isolation, as if they exist independent of a larger context (cf. Evans et al. 2006). Yet, particularly from a discursive perspective, what it means to do mathematics, or to be successful at mathematics, in any one classroom or for any one student is shaped by more widely circulating discourses that have developed across contexts and timescales. Moreover, research often limits investigation of students' participation to a specific classroom. However, students' participation is shaped by their histories of participation in prior classrooms, as well as in other nonschool settings. In our view, part of understanding how and why discursive practices change or remain the same entails investigating how students' patterns of participation develop across settings, including how they mobilize particular resources in certain settings. Attending to students' histories of participation seems especially important for advancing the field's understanding of how to better support nondominant students to participate substantially in rigorous mathematical activity (cf. Gutiérrez et al. 2010).

In addition, while the field has certainly made advances, there remains a lack of research that explicitly focuses on issues of equity in engaging students in disciplinary-specific discourse. The majority of representations that exist have focused on elementary classrooms and, to some extent, the middle grades. There is minimal research focused on discourse and upper secondary schooling (for an exception, see Staples 2007). The field would benefit from more research on secondary instruction, especially given the added challenge that students have had longer time to develop more firmly rooted mathematical identities and views regarding what counts as legitimate mathematical activity; as such, destabilizing patterns of interaction is potentially more difficult than in the earlier grades.

An additional challenge concerns research that focuses on supporting the reorganization of mathematics classroom activity. Engaging students in sense-making that supports them to develop significant understandings of mathematics and the capabilities to participate centrally in disciplinary activity, like mathematical argumentation, is intricate and complex work. For most teachers, it requires a significant reorganization of their current practice. Thus, a key focus for future research entails

explicating how teachers learn to reorganize practice. Hufferd-Ackles, Fuson, and Sherin's (2004) work provides a useful model of what is needed. They offered the field an empirically grounded framework regarding how teachers and students developed a "math-talk learning community" over the course of a year, specific to questioning, explaining mathematical thinking, the source of mathematical ideas, and responsibility for learning. We suggest the need for more research like that of Hufferd-Ackles and colleagues, if the field is to build a deep understanding of how teachers learn to develop the highly complex and sophisticated forms of practice necessary to engage students in meaningful mathematics discourse.

In closing, the task of engaging in research aimed at supporting the reorganization of mathematics teaching and learning remains an ambitious one. However, as illustrated in this chapter, approaching the problem from a discursive perspective has been extremely profitable in a relatively short amount of time, historically speaking. As such, it seems possible that with concerted efforts, the field will continue to make progress toward improving what is learnable and by whom in school mathematics.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Classroom Interaction, Situated Learning](#)
- ▶ [Learning Science: Discourse Practices](#)

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Learning Science: Discourse Practices

Gregory J. Kelly

Abstract

Language and communication are essential for science learning. Learning science entails developing a repertoire of discursive practices with which to engage in the knowledge and practices of social groups such as classroom communities, professional science disciplines, or various citizen organizations. Research on science discourse in educational settings has considered student conceptual learning, access and identity, and uses of evidence in argumentation. Emerging research includes the consideration of discourse and cultural practices in learning as related to epistemological dimensions of science manifest in discourse, potential for sociohistorical theories to advance science learning, and new perspectives on the discourse of teacher education and teacher development. Future directions regarding the study of the discourse practices of science learning include how discursive practices mediate and shape students' understanding, participation, and affiliation with disciplinary knowledge, and support or limit equity of access to science across student populations.

Keywords

Science learning • Discourse • Argumentation • Sociocultural • Epistemology

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Language and communication are essential elements in science learning. Learning science can be viewed as developing a repertoire of discursive practices with which to engage in the knowledge and practices of various social groups. Such groups may include classroom communities, professional science disciplines, or various citizen organizations. Through participation, learners transform these communities, knowledge, and themselves. The importance of communication to science learning can be understood in at least four ways. First, teaching and learning events are constructed through language and social processes. Through discourse processes communities collectively construct norms and expectations, define and legitimize knowledge, build affiliation, and position participants as they take up roles through social interaction. Second, student access to science is accomplished through engagement in the social and symbolic worlds comprising the knowledge and practices of specialized communities. Learning science consists of becoming a member of a specialized discourse community and thereby understanding how to employ knowledge and practice through use. Engaging in a set of discursive practices entails not only language use but also a related set of values, beliefs, attitudes, and ways of being in the world. Thus, learning includes ways of being with others, the development of learner identities, and their relationships with cognitive and epistemic development. Third, meaning is socially constructed through language. Students learn how to use and understand scientific terms through use in various contexts. Science is social knowledge and learning entails understanding the publicly recognized meanings of epistemic communities. Fourth, disciplinary knowledge is constructed, framed, communicated, and assessed through discursive practices. The tensions between linguistic structure of the final form of scientific knowledge and the language of the sense-making experiences of students represent a key research issue regarding science learning.

Early Developments

Studies of classroom science discourse processes emerged from an interest in classroom interaction and, specifically, the development of the related fields of ethnography of communication, social semiotics, and sociolinguistics (Hicks 1995). These fields contrasted with studies of science learning which typically drew from cognitive psychology and focused on cognitive frameworks and conceptual change, while omitting the study of language use in the learning process. Much of this changed with the publication of Lemke's (1990) *Talking Science: Language, Learning, and Values*. Lemke's social semiotic perspective on classroom discourse demonstrated the

limited ways science was talked into being in secondary science classrooms in the USA. The thematic content of science lessons was largely controlled by the teacher, with little variation from the restricted, final form of science textbooks. Lemke found that teachers relied heavily on the triadic dialogue – a pattern of teacher initiation, student response, and teacher evaluation (IRE sequence). The sense-making uses of language were absent and students were required to do little other than play the game of school science in which they provided short answers to highly directed and thematically narrow questions. While Lemke identified the importance of providing students with opportunities to combine meanings and use science discourse, the teachers' pedagogical goal of transmitting the propositional content of the products of scientific communities did not invite students into substantive discussions regarding the epistemological bases of scientific knowledge. The consequence of such pedagogy was that science remained for students a subject conceptually opaque and perceived as reserved for a cognitive elite.

Lemke's seminal work opened the field for studies that examined features of classroom discourse in more detail. These studies examined ways that science was communicated through discourse processes and considered alternatives to the highly restricted pedagogy found in the studies by Lemke. A series of important studies examined uses of teacher questions in more detail. For example, Carlsen (1991) drew from sociolinguistics to study the dependence of teacher discourse on subject matter knowledge. He found that in areas of subject matter knowledge strength, teachers were more likely to open up classroom conversations to student participation, vary cognitive complexity of questions posed to students, and diverge from specific, defined curriculum goals.

While initial studies often identified ways that teacher discourse shut down student participation, and thus opportunities to talk science, other studies examined pedagogical alternatives. These alternatives were often created by the researchers to examine how to develop rich environments for science learning. Establishing evidence and learning to construct arguments were some of the interventions to change the nature and authority of teacher discourse. Russell (1983) considered how discourse processes situated teachers by distinguishing how teachers took up roles as *in authority* and *as authority* in the science classroom. He applied argumentation analysis to consider how questions could be used to develop a rational basis for deliberation (teacher as authority), as opposed to controlling the nature of the conversation (teacher in authority). In another example, Roth (1996) examined an open-inquiry learning environment created through the use of engineering design in a combined fourth-fifth grade classroom. Under these conditions, the teacher posed questions without a pre-conceived, expected student response. The teacher was able to maintain the role as an epistemic authority without the use of the triadic dialogue to control the thematic content of the conversations in highly restrictive ways. She was able to accomplish this by beginning with students' own topics of interest and engaging in questioning sequences to discuss issues such as properties of materials and design principles, thus embedding canonical knowledge identified as salient by the teacher. Other studies sought to understand how students made sense of science

concepts through engaging in social practices. Kelly et al. (1998) applied Toulmin's layout of arguments to examine how students used evidence while working in small groups on a performance assessment. Kelly and Chen (1999) considered ways that disciplinary knowledge was framed through talk and activity to engage students in sociocultural practices of science.

Major Contributions

Theories of language and science suggest that the discursive practices of school science often mislead students about the nature of language. Sutton (1996) contrasts the views of language entailed in many school science situations, and derived from a positivistic philosophy of science, with a view of language as an interpretative system. The view of language as an interpretative system focuses on the uses of discourse for sense making, exploring, and persuading, rather than uses of language for transmission of information, presumably about natural phenomena. While science textbooks often use conceptually dense, nominalized, and abstract language characteristic of some final form articulations of scientific knowledge (Halliday and Martin 1993), these linguistic features mask the diversity of scientific discourse in professional fields. The empirical study of scientific practices identifies a range of purposes for language use, each embedded in a particular activity system (Kelly 2011). For science learning these practices have led to major contributions in the field including studies of conceptual learning, access and identity, discourse processes across contexts, and uses of argumentation.

Conceptual Learning

Science education researchers have had a sustained interest in how students' beliefs, values, and knowledge change over time through educational processes. This focus on conceptual change has increasingly considered the role of social interaction and discourse in meaning making for students. This social view of conceptual change considers the many ways that classroom life is constructed through language. Through the construction of common ways of perceiving, acting, and evaluating, members of classrooms influence the opportunities to participate in an intellectual ecology where meanings are constructed through discursive practices (Kelly and Green 1998). These practices include epistemic considerations such as presenting and weighing evidence, assessing the merits of proposed ideas, and evaluating the strength of an explanation. Discourse analysis of conceptual learning allows analysts to examine ways students socially construct meaning across contexts and marks differences with previous exclusively cognitive perspectives. For example, Jakobsson et al. (2009) studied how students struggled with the differences between the natural and anthropogenic greenhouse effects on the Earth's temperature in the context of global climate change. This approach contrasts with previous methods based on survey and interview research, which focused on individual students'

knowledge as if it were preexisting and independent of the research elicitation context. Hamza and Wickman (2008) analyzed Swedish upper secondary students' talk while working on an electrochemical cell. Based on analysis of meaning in use and how students fill in conceptual gaps when encountering unfamiliar discursive situations, this study found that students' misconceptions were either neutral or generative for furthering the scientific activity, rather than impeding learning as previously thought. These emerging studies of conceptual learning are increasingly identifying the role of participation in specific discourse communities as relevant to understanding learning. Students participate in groups where shared norms for communication and assumptions about the activity and knowledge are increasingly recognized as central to the learning processes. Studies are beginning to identify the trajectory of students' conceptions through the study of learning progressions that consider conceptual development over multiple years in coordinated ways (Berland and McNeill 2010).

Access and Identity

Researchers in science education have been concerned about equity and access to science. Student identity and development of affiliation with or alienation from science are heavily dependent on language use in context. The formalism of disciplinary language of science fields, particularly as articulated in its final theoretical form, contrasts with students' everyday ways of talking about their worlds (Lee 2003). Researchers such as Brown (2006) have found that some students may be alienated from these discourses of science and pay cultural costs for speaking in ways at variance from their peer groups' way of speaking and interacting. To address the variation in discourse practices across communities, studies of educational equity have examined specific forms of scientific discourse that pose problems for learners, potential contributions from students' cultural knowledge, and ways that affiliation to science can be constructed through language use. Such studies include considerations of multicultural learning communities and the ways that discourse is hybridized through different ways of speaking, acting, and being. For example, Varelas et al. (2008) drew from a sociocultural perspective to consider the discourses of science and that of the "lifeworld" of the students from urban classrooms. In this study, science instruction included discussions of ambiguous objects, such as a bag of shaving cream, which enhanced debate regarding the science of state of matter. Such discussions provided students ways of talking science and deriving meaning from the initial confusion. The development of student meaning making and identity development was examined in a study focused on science journals and conversations around these journal entries (Varelas et al. 2012). Through connections across the written and spoken discourse, students were able to view themselves as scientists. In another urban setting, Brown and Spang (2008) sought to build on hybrid discourses to develop students' conceptual and linguistic repertoire through double talk – making science accessible through reworking and rephrasing of ideas to communicate the science in different

ways. Studies of equity and identity make visible both the constraints to improving participation as well as important dimensions of access to science that depend on language use and associated cultural practices. By drawing on discourse analysis, a new set of opportunities emerges for the field. To improve access to science, discourse studies need to make stronger ties with developing trends in the field around learning, epistemic practices, and teacher education.

Discourse Practices Across Contexts

Cognitive, social, and sociocultural studies in science education have examined disciplinary epistemic practices, teaching science as inquiry, using project-based learning, and learning in everyday life settings. An emerging recognition for developing scientific literacy is the relationship of substantive knowledge and epistemic practices (Kelly 2011). Studies have examined students' uses of model building through engagement in social practices (Manz 2012), ways students' practical, everyday epistemologies influence learning (Lidar et al. 2010), and how teachers' discourse features and practices communicate explicit and implicit meanings about the epistemology of science (Oliveira et al. 2012). Discourse studies have contributed to new ways of examining teaching science as inquiry. Crawford (2005) considered how fifth-grade students' spoken, written, and visual (e.g., graphs, diagrams) discourses represented ways that these learners were viewed as communicatively competent through engagement in inquiry practices. Ford and Wargo (2012) make the case for developing dialogic teaching that includes both conceptual and epistemic aspects of understanding. Drawing from studies of natural selection, they focused on how conceptual understanding is related to understanding relevant alternative explanations and how such differences are adjudicated through discourse processes by considering the relative explanatory success. Project-based science pedagogy has recently turned to the need to examine science discussions (Alozie et al. 2010) focused on making knowledge explicit, asking questions and providing nonevaluative follow-up, supporting student communication, and discussion norms. By identifying constraints to successful science conversations, Alozie et al. recommended specific work on developing the students' and teachers' abilities to engage in science discussions.

Science learning occurs in many contexts and is increasingly being studied in informal and out of school contexts. Zimmerman et al. (2010) created an "everyday expertise framework" for considering the learning interactions across planes of meaning, including the individual, social, and cultural influences on sense making during museum visits. This framework proved valuable to understand how families visiting a museum were able to draw on epistemic resources for developing meaning in the science center. These studies of epistemic practice, inquiry, and project-based learning in multiple settings are developing knowledge about contexts that foster student discourse. These studies provide points of success and plausible directions for new curriculum development and research methods.

Argumentation as Discourse Practice

Learning science requires that students acquire ways of knowing and understanding the reasoning behind knowledge claims. The commitment to developing respect for the reasons supporting knowledge claims has led reform in science education to focus explicitly on epistemological dimensions of learning science (Duschl 2008). Educators have turned to the study of argumentation to develop pedagogy, assess students' uses of evidence, and enhance teacher education. Argumentation refers to the processes of using evidence to support a knowledge claim. Pedagogical uses of argumentation have employed various means to provide students with opportunities to learn to create and critique arguments. Cavagnetto (2010) characterized this research as focusing on three orientations: understanding the interaction of science and society, immersion in learning scientific argument, and learning the structure of argument that can be transferred to diverse situations. Studies of argumentation concerned with science in society often position the rhetorical tasks around socio-scientific issues that include consideration of scientific and ethical dimensions of applications of science and technology, such as disease (Kolstø 2006), genetics (Nielsen 2012), and dangers of mobile phones (Albe 2008). Learning science as argument has led researchers to consider the sense making and persuasive uses of evidence in science learning. By developing a learning progression that takes into consideration three dimensions of argumentation (the instructional context, argumentation product, and argumentation process), Berland and McNeill (2010) have developed strategies to engage students' argumentation practices (such as generating claim, evidence, reasoning) through spoken and written discourse. Applying argumentation across contexts requires the development and examination of diverse metrics for assessment. In a thorough review, Sampson and Clark (2008) weigh the value of different analytic techniques employed in science education to assess the merits and characteristics of students' arguments based on different analytic frameworks.

While much of the research on student learning and discursive practices has examined spoken discourse, the research on reading and writing science has contributed to understandings of how written texts support learning scientific concepts. Norris and Phillips (2003) make the case that learning science, including being knowledgeable and able to employ scientific knowledge in everyday contexts, is dependent on competence in ability to read and write science. Studies of science reading have shown how textual materials, often in support of and supported by spoken discourse, improve students' conceptual understandings, metacognition, and science inquiry activities (Yore et al. 2003). Support for student writing in science has included scaffolds to promote argumentation and heuristics to support reflection on practice experience.

Argumentation studies have emerged and generated much interest in science education. This research has led to a greater focus on scientific practices such as using and critiquing evidence. Despite the growth of research on argumentation, outstanding issues need to be resolved including attention to the differences between

argument and explanation, refinement of research analytics to assess arguments, and the relationship of argumentation to other discourse practices.

Work in Progress

Research on the discourse practices of science learning is developing in many directions. In addition to continued development in the major contributions identified above, there are a number of other new developments. Four of these research directions are recognition of cultural practices in learning, epistemological dimensions of science manifest in discourse, sociohistorical theories of learning, and enhanced perspectives on the discourse of teacher education and teacher development.

Access to knowledge and participation in science is deeply dependent on the ways that learning contexts are constructed with language. Discourse of school science has been shown to discriminate against students with alternative ways of talking about their worlds. Research concerned with equity and underrepresentation of minority populations continues to examine the ways that discursive practices serve to build knowledge and affiliation or limit participation and access (Brown 2004; Lee 2003). Discourse practices of science classrooms are often based in taken-for-granted assumptions about ways of talking science that contrast with students' ways of talking, being, and interacting in the world (Lee 2003). Students' ways of talking about nature are tied to previous experiences, cultural assumptions, and worldviews (Lee 1999). Other studies show how teachers incorporate students' discourse practices into science activities and through the process of introducing ways of posing questions, finding evidence, and communicating results allow students opportunities to construct more standardized ways of talking science (Warren et al. 1994). Gender equity has been a concern regarding science learning because of differences in interest and affiliation between female and male students. Studies of classroom interaction have identified ways that female students had fewer interactions with teachers, were posed less cognitively complex questions, and had fewer opportunities to practice paradigmatic discourse (Barba and Cardinale 1991; Kurth et al. 2002).

Variations in discursive practices associated with ethnic background and gender pose problems regarding the fluidity with which students may be able to slot into the taken-for-granted assumptions about talking science in schools (Brown 2006). Scientific discourse often requires not only employing specialized syntactic moves but also involves assumptions about questioning, making ideas public, challenging the claims of others, and so forth. Discursive practices are thus related to assumptions about knowledge. The instantiation of epistemic practices in schools relies on interpretations of scientific knowledge and practices by social and symbolic mediators whose views may vary from those of both their students as well as scientists. An important development for science teaching involves the continued understanding of the ways that diverse student sociolinguistic experiences can be viewed as intellectual resources for learning (Warren

et al. 2001), rather than a liability for speaking and acting in a prescribed manner.

Historically, much thinking about science learning has included epistemological questions about the nature of evidence, criteria for theory choice, and the structure of disciplinary knowledge. Current research on science learning suggests that cognition can be productively conceptualized as distributed and that knowledge should be understood as accomplished in situationally specific contexts. Thus, the discursive practices members that a community uses to propose, justify, evaluate, and legitimize knowledge claims have become central to research programs interested in the epistemologies of everyday activity (Kelly et al. 2000). Scholars have advocated the study of students' *practical epistemologies* – i.e., what counts as knowledge claims, justification, and so forth – through examination of the discourse of authentic scientific tasks (Lidar et al. 2005). This research line considers the ways that knowledge is interactionally accomplished and recognized among members of a group through participation (Roth 2005).

Sociohistorical theories of learning represent an avenue for future research in science learning. These approaches consider social epistemology, language, and participation as prominent theoretical constructs for the interpretation of potential learning events (Mortimer and Scott 2003; Roth 2005). For example, Mortimer and Scott (2003) argue for the importance of the social plane of interpsychological phenomena as a tool for individual thinking. Their focus on classroom discourse is based on a view that meaning is constructed among people through dialogical processes. The teacher's role becomes one of introducing, framing, shaping, and evaluating dialogue about natural phenomena so that students are able to engage with scientific ideas and internalize knowledge developed at the interpsychological plane. Similarly, Roth (2005) identifies the ways that as a teacher he was able to enter the microworld of his students to mediate the "collaborative construction of useful ways of seeing and talking" (p. 172). The mediation in such cases is both between the student and the world (in an experiential setting) and the student and standard language of observational categories and theoretical statements. Cultural-historical activity theory may provide ways of understanding student identity, participation, and affiliation commensurate with research on learning, multimedia literacies, and equity.

Across educational settings, much of classroom life is dominated by teacher talk. While the move toward more student-centered approaches, e.g., inquiry, project-based learning, argumentation, has been advocated, there remain tensions in developing effective learning and open dialogue in science classrooms. The importance of teacher discourse and thus teacher education around discourse processes has garnered attention. Windschitl et al. (2008) devised a system of heuristics to engage novice secondary science teachers in model-based approaches to inquiry. Through this approach novice teachers learn to restructure their thinking and discourse practices to focus on models, inquiry, and argument. Engaging students in inquiry processes often entails developing teachers' strength in questioning strategies. Oliveira (2010) studied changes in teacher discourse after participation in a professional development program focused on incorporating scientific modeling, scientific

inquiry, and nature of science into their classroom practices. By focusing not only on the cognitive ends of science instruction but also on the development of linguistic awareness needed to understand how questions function in classroom discourse, Oliveira showed how teacher education led to an increased ability among teachers to enhance student-centered questioning practices. Chin and Osborne (2010) considered ways that developing students' abilities to use questions fostered argumentation. They were able to identify the ways that the students' question mediated productive discourse and fostered conversations around issues identified through this questioning. Other studies of argumentation in teacher education have focused on reasoning about ideas (Zemal-Saul 2009) and argumentation as a legitimate goal of learning and not just as a means to conceptual understanding (Sadler 2006). Studies of discourse regarding teacher education are developing research programs examining importance of discourse for pedagogical practices, evaluating student knowledge, and fostering students' access to science and educational opportunities.

Problems and Difficulties

Across theoretical traditions, a number of problems remain outstanding for science learning. One issue is the ways that formalism of disciplinary language of science fields, particularly as articulated in its final theoretical form, contrasts with students' everyday ways of talking about their worlds (Lee 2003; Brown and Sprang 2008). Written science depends often on unique linguistic features such as interlocking definitions, technical taxonomies, lexical density, and semantic discontinuity, which pose challenges to student learning (Halliday and Martin 1993). Such discourse is the continuing consequence of various communities of knowledge producers whose goals include creating knowledge for specialized professional use. The goals of education often include communicating scientific knowledge and inculcating students with a set of beliefs and values about ways of investigating the natural world. The contrasting goals of these communities lead to differences in the purposes and uses of language. Despite such differences in purpose, the formalized language of final form science plays a predominant role in school science often leading to frustration and lack of interest among students (Brown 2004). While it is generally acknowledged that the language of science offers a potentially powerful perspective, and that students need opportunities to make sense of their worlds from this perspective, the everyday discourses of students nevertheless need be to part of the processes leading to students' expanding repertoires. Furthermore, science learning increasingly poses multimedia literacy demands on students as new technologies and the ever increasing means for data and model representation transform what is required to be part of the science learning experience. These demands include interpretation of verbal discourse; paralinguistic features such as voice quality, diagrams, mathematical symbols; and various images from computers, blackboards, and calculators (Lemke 2000).

Another problem facing the field of science learning with respect to discursive practices is methodological. The problem space for defining relevant aspects of

interaction – discursive practices embodied and embedded in particular spatial and temporal contexts – is ever expanding. Continued work on the study of discursive practices of science learning further complicates what can be considered relevant to the intersubjective meanings constructed and derived from interactions. Variations across ethnicity and with multimedia literacies add orders of complexity to the research processes. Difficulties capturing relevant information are less technical and more and more theoretical as knowledge accrues regarding the sense making processes of human interaction. Gestures, proxemics, and prosody are all part of the interpretative field open to interlocutors and analysts alike. While the complexity of interaction poses methodological problems, the emerging modalities may create new opportunities for access to science for a more diverse population. The inclusion of such populations in studies of science and science learning may expand and improve the discursive practices of scientific research and school learning, thus leading to new ways of understanding science learning.

The study of discursive practices also faces the problem of generating normative knowledge about educational processes. The study of discourse has tended to be highly descriptive, but within professional communities and schools, expectations for knowledge include generating specifics regarding practice. While the language of discourse analysis has been effective for understanding the micromoments of interaction, it has been less applied in the fields of teacher learning and education. Science learning requires that teachers mediate knowledge, language, and interpretations for students. This requires knowledge about how to understand language and social processes. A challenge for discourse-oriented studies of learning is to generate ways of talking with those working closely with students. One example of this is found in Mortimer and Scott (2003) who offer examples of how to consider discourse in the planning of instructional sequences, how to help teachers understand their mediational roles, and how to incorporate thinking about classroom discourse into teacher education.

Future Directions

The emphasis on discourse processes and discursive practices in science learning has led the field of science education research to shift its focus from individuals learning socially sanctified knowledge to the social interactions that make knowledge public, recognized, appropriated, and critiqued among participants. Future directions regarding the study of the discourse practices of science learning include at least four broad categories.

First, the ways that discursive practices mediate and shape students' understanding, participation, and affiliation with disciplinary knowledge needs to be examined in the everyday life of science learning in school and nonschool settings. Studies of the lived experience of science learning document the ways that coming to participate in the genres of science requires reformulations of student identity. This research direction may contribute to understandings of the ways that students choose

to affiliate with different social groups and the disproportional interest in science learning across the student population.

Second, research needs to consider the distribution of access to science across student populations and problems of equity for those excluded from science. The discursive practices of scientific fields, and their surrogates in schools, have a large influence on the ways that schooling selects students and students select school experiences. While there has been productive work in the area of creating opportunities for excluded students, the recognition of the importance of language for learning has only increased the focus on the ways that access is achieved through discourse and social processes. Greater recognition is being developed around students' thinking, activity, and identities as they make choices about their own learning.

Third, research needs to examine further the relationship of language use and knowledge construction as situated practice. Emerging views of language in science understand discourse as a means for structuring and constructing ways of participating. Research can identify the ways that discursive practices are interactionally accomplished and what gets accomplished among members of a group. Anthropological and sociolinguistic perspectives focusing on the discourse of learning may be informed by sociocultural learning theories that place the role of mediated learning, language, and psychological tools at the locus of attention.

Fourth, the methodological challenges of the study of the lived experiences of science learning in multiple settings continue to pose challenges for future work. The many ways that discourse is enacted in space and time pose challenges for researchers interested in understanding how the lived experience of coming to know in science is embodied by speakers interacting with one another. Furthermore, changes in the communicative processes of contemporary science, especially the extensive use of electronic media, pose challenges for educators as standardized genres give way to more amorphous, multivocal, and high-speed ways of communicating. Discourse studies need to consider research methods that span across settings, such as school learning, learning in everyday settings, and teacher education, and draw relevant implications for educational policy.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Classroom Interaction, Situated Learning](#)
- ▶ [Classroom Discourse and the Construction of Learner and Teacher Identities](#)
- ▶ [Linguistic Anthropology of Education](#)
- ▶ [Talk, Texts, and Meaning-Making in Classroom Contexts](#)

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Theory and Research on Literacy as a Tool for Navigating Everyday and School Discourses

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Abstract

With the advent of the new standards movement, embodied in a wide range of policy documents, researchers, teachers, and policy makers alike are attending more closely to the discursive practices of the subject-matter areas and related disciplines. At the same time, many scholars have documented the funds of knowledge, discourse, and identities available to youth outside school. What has not shifted much, however, is our understanding of the relationship among those out-of-school discourses, in-school discourses, and learning. In this review, I present research on the relationships among the many different discourses young people navigate every day. Specifically, I examine research that demonstrates that both everyday and disciplinary discourses are socially and cultural produced and mediated. I also analyze studies of what teachers and other adults can do to support and expand youths' navigating skills, together with the relationship between the ability to navigate multiple discursive communities and youths' academic and socioemotional development.

Keywords

Disciplinary literacy • Discursive practices • Cultural practices • Navigating

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Introduction

In the last version of the Encyclopedia, I offered a review of the latest research on the relationship between everyday funds of knowledge and school discourses, problematizing the distinction between funds of knowledge as something associated with everyday worlds and discourses as something associated with schools. That point is ever more critical in the current moment, one in which talk of standards, accountability, test scores, and competitive edges drives almost every conversation about education. With the advent of the new standards movement, embodied in documents such as the Common Core State Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, and the C3 Framework, attention to the discursive practices of the subject-matter areas and related disciplines has increased dramatically. At the same time, many scholars documented the funds of knowledge, discourse, and identities available to youth outside school. Unfortunately, what has not increased as dramatically is our understanding of the relationship among those out-of-school discourses, in-school discourses, and learning. In particular, we need to shift views of the in- and out-of-school divide among researchers. The divide, I argue, is real; young people often do not transfer the skills they possess outside of school to school-based tasks. In some cases, they even actively subvert their out-of-school experiences (Ives 2011). However, the divide exists as much in the perspectives of researchers as it does in those of youth and their teachers. Every time scholars refer to out-of-school discourses or funds of knowledge as “everyday” or “cultural” and simultaneously cast school discourses as “disciplinary” or “academic,” rather than as themselves “cultural,” we widen the divide. In addition, when we seek to move youth *from* everyday discourses *to* disciplinary discourses, we suggest a hierarchy of usefulness and sophistication. Thus, we need research that examines (a) how both everyday and disciplinary discourses are socially and culturally produced and mediated, (b) how youth navigate different discourses and the sense they make of those navigations, (c) what teachers and other adults can do to support and expand youths’ navigating skills, and (d) the relationship between navigating and youths’ academic and socio-emotional development.

Early Developments in Theory and Research on Navigating Discourse Communities

Two bodies of research and theory are central to this discussion and were reviewed in the previous encyclopedia entry (Moje et al. 2008). First is research that examined students' home cultures to determine whether differential levels of achievement in school might be explained by differences between the cultural practices of home and those demanded by school (Heath 1983; Phillips 1972; Scribner and Cole 1981; Street 1984). One articulation of this work focused on the idea that people learned from and within certain of "funds of knowledge," (Moll 1992). The construct of funds of knowledge has been broadly taken up to mean any knowledge that children and youth construct outside of school, but the original work focused on *networks* and *funds* in which knowledge was constructed and learned as important as the knowledge itself. Moll and colleagues emphasized the *funds* in which knowledge is constructed, revised, maintained, and shared as *social organizations*, in which the people who are members of the fund matter to the way knowledge is constructed and communicated. A funds of knowledge perspective emphasizes ways to build relationships to support student learning.

A second body of work revolved around linguistic explanations of difference between home and school by examining whether students' school achievement was an artifact of communicative differences (e.g., Gumperz 1977; Heath 1983; Phillips 1972). Gee (1996) proposed the concept of Discourses (with an uppercase D to signal a distinction between ways of engaging in language and a stretch of actual language, or discourse, to suggest that all linguistic acts – whether oral or written – were situated in cultural models, or ways of knowing, doing, and believing). Discourses represent ways of talking, reading, and writing that are shaped by cultural models.

The conception of a relationship between culture and discourse refers not only to differences of ethnicity or race (i.e., the differences often evoked by the word culture), but also to the many other ways that people group themselves or are grouped by others, including disciplinary, peer, social class, and community relationships. In particular, academic content-area classrooms represent communities that privilege both particular cultural practices and particular ways of using language – or academic discourses – as a means of learning and of representing what one has learned. Students in such classrooms, however, bring everyday knowledges and discourses to their academic or school learning, producing possible conflicts, as well as points of intersection for teachers and learners.

Major Contributions to Understanding Discourse Navigations

Although several different discourses can be at work in any one classroom, at least three are salient for this discussion: social or everyday discourses, disciplinary or content area discourses, and classroom or instructional/interactional discourses. These discourses represent distinct ways with words, and yet they overlap and

inform one another in important ways. For example, the discourses of classroom instruction are informed by what teachers and students believe about the nature of knowledge in the discipline. Similarly, how students take up classroom or disciplinary discourses is shaped by the social or everyday discourses they bring to the classroom. Teachers can engage students in explicit discussions of and practice in recognizing the different and competing discourses at work in their learning lives (cf. Group 1996).

Social/Everyday Discourses

Heath's (1983) study of the literacy practices of three communities in the North Carolina Piedmont demonstrated that these three communities each had different "ways with words" outside of school, and that these different ways had important implications for their school and social success (see also Lee and Fradd 1998; Hudicourt-Barnes 2003). Teachers are often unaware of, or sometimes dismissed, these ways with words and the funds of knowledge associated with them (Ives 2011). This lack of articulation of different knowledges and ways of knowing and talking about that knowledge can hinder deep conceptual learning in science because students and teachers use the same words but mean very different things (see Lemke 1990).

Instructional and Interactional Discourses

Teachers' and students' cultural and language practices shape classroom instructional and interactional discourses to produce a unique hybrid known as school disciplinary discourse (i.e., school history discourse, school science discourse, etc.). Instructional discourses may also include the language of instruction that revolves around how to use textbooks, where to record class notes, and when and how to answer questions, among others. Research has illustrated that such practices are among the most invisible and most assumed in school learning (e.g., Cazden 2001; Gumperz 1977).

Disciplinary Discourses

Engaging in reading, writing, and talking about disciplinary concepts is often difficult for middle-school students because the language and the ways of thinking are new to them regardless of their particular cultural, ethnic, or social class backgrounds (Hicks 1995/1996;). The discourse of science represents a specialized system of language that rests heavily upon themes and concepts that are not immediately apparent to the novice science learner (Lemke 1990). Moreover, becoming a member of a scientific discourse community can be challenging for

students as they encounter different ways of talking, reading, and writing (discourses) in their science classrooms.

History reading, writing, and analysis, for example, require that students learn to think about the contexts in which texts or ideas were produced. Readers must examine texts for attribution; that is, the reader must ask such questions as, Who wrote the text? What was the writer's background? What was the writer's perspective or standpoint? (Wineburg 2001). School science, by contrast, generally requires students to bring practices of prediction, observation, analysis, summarization, and presentation to their science reading, writing, and oral language practices (Lee and Fradd 1998). In general, students are expected to apply previously learned basic language, literacy, and technology skills to the comprehension, interpretation, and application of disciplinary knowledge.

One step toward building stronger connections among students' various funds of knowledge and the academic discourses they are expected to learn in schools lies in a dramatic rethinking of what it means to engage in disciplinary, or academic, learning. The academic disciplines can be viewed as spaces in which knowledge is produced or constructed, rather than as repositories of content knowledge or information. Even more important, teachers should emphasize knowledge production in the content areas to be the result of human interaction, which means that the disciplines operate according to particular norms for everyday practice, conventions for communicating and representing knowledge and ideas, and ways of interacting, defending ideas, and challenging the deeply held ideas of others. Disciplines, then, are no different as discourse communities than are students' everyday home discourse communities or peer group discourse communities. They are not immutable, they are not unchangeable, and they are not simply bodies of knowledge to be handed down from expert to novice.

For example, in science, a norm of practice is that researchable problems be carefully defined and systematically and repeatedly studied before claims can be made about phenomena. Particular forms of evidence – typically empirical or observable forms that derive from experimental study – are required to provide warrant for claims. In history, by contrast, the norms of practice differ in important ways. Historians, like natural scientists, set aside researchable problems to be studied systematically, but the means of obtaining evidence and the forms that provide warrant for claims differ. The context in which a claim is situated also matters to an historian (Bain 2000). And, as recently documented by Rainey (2015), literary scholars seek and grapple with the puzzles that particular works of literature present; they see these puzzles as conversation pieces for debate in their community of scholars. Moreover, how claims are made public differs across disciplinary traditions. The types of texts produced are different and the role that various texts play in providing warrant for claims also differs.

Key dimensions of learning in content areas, then, are (i) understanding the goals of the discipline, (ii) developing an understanding of and some facility with the norms of practice for producing and communicating knowledge in the disciplines, and (iii) knowing that being part of a discipline is about being part of a community or culture (Bain 2000; Brown et al. 2005). Part of that learning also involves examining

how content-area norms for practice are similar to and different from everyday norms for practice.

Carol Lee (2007) has produced such pedagogical and curricular developments in her research program. Lee's construct of cultural modeling situates subject areas as cultures and seeks to tease out the demands of discourse in subject areas such as English. She then looks for spaces to link students' everyday discourses and practices specifically for the purpose of enhancing academic discourse and literate development. Similarly, Gutiérrez (2008) develops third spaces that provide bridges for young people from the counter-scripts of their everyday lives and funds of knowledge to the official scripts of their classrooms. Her work also focuses on developing "syncretic" understandings of the world that not bridge from everyday to academic discourses and produce new and powerful discourses in the lives of children and youth.

The task of education, relative to these goals of learning the academic or school discourses, then, is that of teaching students what the privileged discourses are, when and why such discourses are useful, how these discourses and practices came to be valued, and – most important – how to navigate across these and other discourse communities. It is equally important to provide opportunities for young people to examine how the norms of knowing, doing, and communicating are constructed. To learn deeply in a content area, young people need to have access to the way that conventions of disciplinary knowledge production and communication can be routinely or more explicitly challenged and reshaped; such knowledge gives young people the power to read critically across various texts and various disciplines.

Work in Progress

A number of scholars continue to conduct research on young people's everyday funds of knowledge and discourse outside of school (e.g., Hull and Stornaiuolo 2014; Kirkland and Jackson 2009; Lam and Rosario-Ramos 2009; Leander and Lovvorn 2006; Moje et al. 2008; Winn 2011). Others conduct powerful research on youth discourse and literacy learning in the academic content areas inside school (e.g., Goldman and Snow *in press*; Kelly 2007; Wiley et al. 2014). In this section, I focus only on current work that seeks to bring in- and out-of-school discourses and practices together in ways that expand both sets of discourse practices. It is worth noting that a great deal of this work has taken place in history and in natural sciences; there is less research on explicating connecting youth and disciplinary discourses is available in the teaching of mathematics and – of special note – in the language arts, where one might expect to find more, rather than less, attention to discourse (see Lee 2007, for a notable exception to this claim).

In the natural sciences numerous scholars are conducting studies of the relationship between everyday and disciplinary discourse practices. Bellocchi and Ritchie (2011), for example, studied an 11th-grade chemistry classroom for 17 weeks (78 lessons) wherein the classroom teacher (Bellocchi) engaged the students in analogical discourse designed to bridge their everyday discourse with more

conventional scientific discursive patterns in chemistry. Their close analysis documented the ways that youth and teacher together constructed “merged discourse” practices that supported students’ learning without shutting down their use of home, popular cultural, or other discourses. According to the authors, these merged discourse practice “represents a transition state in discourse where meaning is fluid and where the analog and target discourse temporarily intertwine” (Bellocchi and Ritchie 2011, p. 786). They further asserted that students used this transitional state as a space for learning new discourses: “While in the transitional state, students construct merged words, merged sentences or utterances, and merged practices that reflect the mappings of elements of the analog concept on the target concept. Once the chemical discourse is appropriated, students abandon the merged discourse and any reference to everyday discourse” (pp. 787–788).

Bricker and colleagues (Bricker and Bell 2011) study youth science learning both in and out of school in an effort to reach across the in- and out-of school discourse divide to connect the so-called informal science learning youth engage in everyday life with the so-called formal science of academic disciplines (cf., Brown 2006). Their work demonstrates the power of working to make connections for young people, recognizing that they may resist making those connections themselves precisely because they believe they should leave home and community learning at home. Like Bricker, Barton and colleagues have engaged in explicit navigational work with middle-school aged youth in science (Barton and Tan 2010), documenting the power of these navigational practices to engage youth and produce deep science learning, including learning the discourses of science. Similarly, an Australian study of chemistry learning in context (King et al. 2008) used a case study with one student learning through both a context-based (similar to an inquiry-based approach in the USA) and a content-driven program to examine learning outcomes. The findings suggested that the context-based program appeared more likely to produce both engaged and meaningful learning because it engaged the student in real-world tasks. The student reported deeper intellectual (rather than merely behavioral) engagement and also appeared to have learned the concepts more fully as a result of the approach that tied chemistry learning to her everyday life.

Tang (2011) engaged in similar work targeted at physics learning. Working with youth in multiple physics classrooms, Tang first investigated youths’ out-of-school experiences, documenting their text reading practices and the discourses that accompanied them. Then, working with classroom teachers, Tang designed and coenacted, physics instruction that drew from and expanded students’ understandings of physics. Tang and colleagues found, however, that at times students’ “everyday” discourses and – perhaps more important, the experiences and beliefs to which those discourses were associated – contradicted natural scientific discourses and norms. As Tang demonstrated, these contradictions could be negotiated, however, and what became clear was that without the surfacing of those beliefs, experiences, and discourses, students would likely have dismissed the scientific without the teacher ever being aware of the contradictions these differences posed for students. As a result of the teachers’ support in navigating and negotiating these differences, the students in these classrooms both report greater engagement than students surveyed in more

traditional classes. Indeed, many expressed even greater satisfaction than in classes that used an inquiry approach but do not connect the inquiry to youths' everyday experiences and discourses.

Similar findings pertain in history and social science classrooms. Stockdill (2011) designed, enacted, and studied a curriculum that drew from a group of urban – mainly Latino/a – students' everyday interests, knowledge, and discourses to engage them in historical inquiry and discourse. As the teacher in this design research study, Stockdill experienced firsthand the challenges of enacting this type of text-rich, inquiry-based instruction with actual students. He found that the students needed extensive support in both reading and producing the discourse of historical texts, despite their interest in the topics those texts represented (i.e., political struggle, immigration). Moreover, Stockdill found that although the students were interested in the topics under study, they resisted the inquiry activities he designed because the activities flew in the face of their existing cultural models of history instruction, which generally privileged teacher lecture and low student engagement. Despite their resistance, students claimed to value the approach in their end-of-unit feedback and Stockdill noted growth in understanding of the core historical concepts under study.

Complicating these findings, Athanases and de Oliveria (2014) showed that the practice of being a culturally relevant teacher goes beyond mere knowledge of student's cultural background. In their study of two novice teachers' practice of teaching disciplinary reading and writing in an urban Latino/a community, they noted that although both teachers offered scaffolding for the reading and writing of their students and both strove to connect the text reading to the students' cultural lives, the teacher who scaffolded students' engagement with texts by providing a disciplinary inquiry frame – and the discourse practices to accompany the frame – to which students could bring their own interests and experiences were better able to move the students toward more independent text reading and writing than the teacher who merely provided scaffolding for working through a text reading assignment. Without the explicit linking of student's backgrounds to the disciplinary purposes for reading and writing, the scaffolding the teacher offered seemed to serve little purpose.

In support of Athanases and Oliveria's argument regarding the importance of a disciplinary frame, Moje and Speyer's (2014) design-based research study on the teaching of history of US immigration law to a group of Latino/a and African American youth demonstrated that helping youth engage with the discursive practices of a discipline required more than simply drawing from youths' experiences or merely introducing them to new discourses. Teaching youth to navigate the multiple discourse communities of their lives required numerous teaching practices to connect students' discourses, interests, and experiences to those of the topic under study.

First, the general atmosphere of the classroom was one in which student contributions and questions were routinely encouraged. Second, Speyer and Moje designed the unit to fall just prior to a planned May Day protest against immigration law in the predominantly Latino/a community. Third, the texts of instruction were

the US immigration laws themselves, making the texts extremely relevant to the current experience of students, even as they were extremely challenging in regard to discourse. The texts were not only discursively challenging due to the archaic language in which they were written, but also because they were rendered in legal discourse. Students drew from all manner of home, ethnic, popular, and youth cultural texts and discourses to make sense of the laws they read. For example, when reading a bracero's (Mexican worker's) journal entry about the "bread and baloney" he was given to eat while in a labor camp, two students began singing a popular rap song about eating "bread and baloney." By making a space for students to introduce these youth and popular cultural texts and discourses, the teachers could draw from, build on, and expand the students' discourses. This moment was powerful for youth as they learned that the idea of eating bread and baloney was not a twenty-first-century rap artist's creation, but instead a trope for poverty and oppression across multiple historical periods. Furthermore, contrasting the primary source documents written by immigrants of different periods with the immigration laws themselves offered students new perspectives and discourses for understanding the work of history and the task of reading and writing legal documents in the present day.

It is important to note, however, that to make this space, the teachers guided students in pulling apart words and phrases by asking students whether the texts reminded them of anything in their own lives and then drawing students back to note the differences in text. The authors also described the extensive use of many other strategies, such as small-group work with texts, using visual images to define words and phrases, shared reading and analysis of tables and charts, and asking students to represent what they had read in primary source texts as pictures. Thus, the teachers began with real historical questions connected to student's present-day realities and concerns, made space for student discourses, engaged those discourses to connect students to the discourses of US immigration law over time, and then heavily scaffolded the students' work with language and text.

Problems and Possibilities

One problem – and simultaneously a possibility – with the current work on helping youth navigate everyday and disciplinary or school discourses is that the work is exceedingly complex. As indicated in the few studies reviewed under "Work in Progress," these efforts are not only about recognizing that youth bring discursive assets to the classroom, nor are they just about developing a richer understanding of the discourses of various disciplines. This work is about both of those demands and more. Teachers, school leaders, policy makers, and researchers must recognize that multiple discourse communities are at work in student learning. These various discourse communities have to be understood, made visible, valued, deconstructed, and scaffolded, all at the same time. What's more, youth come to school with different skill sets, for a whole host of reasons. Those who struggle with basic

reading and writing demands will face even greater discursive challenges than those whose skills have been supported and enriched since early childhood. Teachers need to scaffold those basic skills as they introduce the complex texts and discourses of academic disciplines. Connecting to the complex texts and discourses of youths' lives may help to build the scaffolding that many youth need to engage with and learn new discourse skills.

In the prior volume, I argued that a second problem in navigating discourses has to do with the identities youth bring to and construct in disciplinary classrooms. Shifts in learning both require and produce shifts in identity. The implications of producing hybrid learning spaces by drawing from students' identities, cultures, and funds of knowledge and discourse, however, remains largely unaddressed, even 10 years later. Bellocchi and Ritchie (2011) argued that the youth in their study temporarily merged discourses but then discarded those mergings in favor of using the discourse that seemed most appropriate to a given purpose at a given time. Similarly, hybridity may not only be an elusive, but also problematic, goal. Young people may resist these mergings, wishing instead to keep the multiple spaces of their lives separate. What's more, hybrids in nature are often susceptible to reverting to the dominant; likewise, in seeking hybridity, educators could instead privilege the academic. Thus, rather than seeking hybridity, we may be better positioned to support youth in navigating discourse communities, with a focus on understanding when, why, and how particular discourses are useful. This focus helps to remind us that content areas and disciplines are social and cultural domains just as any other domain. Subject-matter learning is not about merely learning stable concepts or even discourses of a target discourse community. Teachers of content areas need to provide young people with opportunities to examine the discourses they are learning in the discipline in relation to the discourses (and identity enactments) of other funds of knowledge and discourse in everyday life.

Finally, the everyday realities that have historically limited the integration of students' everyday funds of knowledge and discourse with academic knowledge and discourses cannot be ignored. What opportunities do teacher education and inservice professional development provide teachers to learn about the discursive basis of the content areas? How do teacher educators support teachers in helping young people construct identities across different disciplines? How are teachers to work with a notion of content-area literacy as metadiscursive practice as they encounter probable resistance from students who have been taught that learning in the content areas is a matter of memorizing and reproducing information?

At a broader level, school structures need to change to support teachers in supporting students as they navigate, critique, and weave together the discourses of the disciplines. The implacable structure and timing of the typical secondary school day challenges a metadiscursive approach to disciplinary teaching. Without a change in typical school structures of 50-min classes, relative isolation of teachers in single classrooms, and confinement of classes within the physical school space, a broad, metadiscursive pedagogy and curriculum will be difficult to develop.

Future Directions

Future research should pursue at least two questions. First, what are the *multiple* discourse communities, domains, and contexts through which youth must navigate on a daily basis? In reality, the preposition *between* should be changed to *among* whenever we talk about in- and out-of-school contexts and discourses because youth move across many different discourse communities in their everyday and school lives. There is no singular everyday or school experience and, therefore, no singular everyday or school discourse should be identified, valued, or taught. Certainly school discourses share similarities at face value, but those similarities may be deceiving. In particular, current research on the discourse and literacy practices of the disciplines point to the idea that although subtle, real differences exist among disciplinary discourse communities within schools and those differences matter.

Similarly, the fact that an experience or community and its concomitant discourse exists outside school does not necessarily mean that it can be categorized as *everyday* and vice versa. Take, for example, the discourse of a dance studio. Although formal dance instruction is not typically found in the average school (arts schools the notable exception), formal dance instruction is discursively more like formal schooling than it is like the discourse of young people at a skate park or a youth party. For that matter, it may be discursively more like formal schooling than some formal school courses may be. Thus, the notion of everyday and school discourses needs to be examined carefully so that easy assumptions about the meaning, value, challenges, and affordances of discourses in and out of schooling can be debunked.

Second, although approximately 10 years have passed since the last Encyclopedia entry was written, researchers have produced woefully little research on the relationship between youths' navigating and their academic and socioemotional development. Although a number of the researchers named above have demonstrated that teaching students to navigate everyday and academic knowledge and discourse practices can support content learning for all ages, we continue to need studies of bridging, navigating, and change-oriented third spaces constructed in content area classrooms to document what and how students of all ages learn in such classrooms. In addition, there continues to be a dearth of studies that document content learning *as a result of discourse navigations* and *for large numbers of students*. In other words, it continues to be difficult to make convincing causal claims about this work in ways that will convince policy makers and school leaders of the value of such instruction. Most studies provide in-depth examinations of the processes at work in classrooms that draw from and extend students' funds of knowledge and document learning on a small (but important) scale. However, to make such teaching available to more students, the field needs more studies in the tradition of Lee's (2007) and Tang's (2011) mixed methods design that demonstrated both the learning gains in academic literacy terms and the teaching practices required to make such a third space possible.

Cross-References

- [Classroom Discourse and the Construction of Learner and Teacher Identities](#)

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

- Bonny Norton: [Language and Social Identity](#). In Volume: Language Policy and Political Issues in Education
- Brian Street: [New Literacies, New Times: Developments in Literacy Studies](#). In Volume: Literacies and Language Education
- David Bloome: [Literacies in the Classroom](#). In Volume: Literacies and Language Education

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Talk, Texts, and Meaning-Making in Classroom Contexts

Silvia Valencia Giraldo

Abstract

This chapter deals with classroom interaction and discourse in monolingual and bilingual educational settings. It traces the development of research in classroom discourse and interaction between teacher and learners, and the meaning-making practices taking place in contexts where English is a second or foreign language. Interaction in these contexts usually takes place around texts, texts of different kinds, either printed materials, text books, oral texts, or texts that are created or re-created from other texts, and others that are the object of mediation by teachers. Different research traditions in sociolinguistics such as ethnography, ethnomethodology, conversation analysis and micro ethnography have contributed to inform the analysis of classroom discourse and talk around text. More recently, linguistic ethnography, based on these previous traditions, adopts a critical stance, with a post-structuralist orientation, and critiques “essentialist accounts of social life” (Blackledge and Creese 2010, p. 61). Research studies in post-colonial contexts in the South reveal the tensions arising from and the impositions or restrictions of new education policy; these studies highlight the impact of language policies on classroom interactions, and show how global processes impinge on the local. Due to the rapid spread of English and globalization, English has now become a commodity. In the Northern hemisphere, recent studies in multiliteracies and multilingualism have focused on the impact of globalization on education, now transformed by immigration, and the complexities of meaning-making and negotiation of multilingual and multicultural identities.

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Keywords

Classroom talk • Globalisation • Literacy practices • Meaning-making • Research • Talk • Talk around texts • Texts

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Introduction

There is now a rich body of literature on classroom research and on the talk that takes place in interaction in educational settings; however, although talk is a fundamental component of interaction, it does not exist in isolation in classroom. Texts are also an important element in the construction of knowledge in these contexts where interaction takes place around and about texts. In educational settings, pedagogical practices are “made possible” by the use of texts (Freebody 2003, p. 179). In this review, I will focus on the development of research on classroom talk and talk around texts in monolingual and multilingual settings, highlighting specific aspects of meaning-making in interaction in classrooms, taking account of the contribution of ethnographic methods of analysis to this area of research.

Early Developments

Until not long ago, educational research focused exclusively on methods of teaching and assessment. Before the 1960s, very little was known about the characteristics of educational discourse and the analysis of transcripts of classroom talk was not considered a major part of research on classroom interaction (Edwards and Westgate 1987/1994). Early research involving observations of classroom lessons relied on coding schemes, but the focus of research was mainly on the ideal traits of teachers and learners, and on teaching styles. Most studies at the time centered on teacher talk, practically ignoring students’ contributions to the interaction.

One of the most significant contributions to the study of classroom language in the 1970s was that of Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) who developed linguistic methods of analysis, although their concern was not primarily educational. Applying speech act theory, they drew attention to form-function relationships and built their model of classroom discourse around this. In addition, they drew attention to the

three part exchange structure of classroom discourse, the Initiation-Response-Feedback structure (IRF), which has, since then, been found to be the most common sequence in teacher-led discussions in classrooms all over the world.

As researchers have carried out analyses of the IRF patterns of classroom talk over the years since the 1970s, there has been increasing concern about the predictability, simplicity, and limited nature of such teacher-pupil talk, and also about the way this structure positions students in class (Barnes 1976; Van Lier 1996). Nonetheless, IRF exchanges may present very complex patterns, compared to the relatively “simple” structure originally described by Sinclair and Coulthard. Researchers such as Mehan (1979), Cazden (1988/1996) and Zentella (1981) have shown that it is indeed a complex and variable pattern, especially in bilingual classrooms. Mehan (1979) used the acronym IRE, in his analytic framework, with the E component of the three part structure referring to “evaluation” since he wanted to foreground this evaluative dimension of classroom discourse.

Barnes’ (1976) research led the way in focusing attention on classroom language and how it relates to learning processes. According to Barnes, genuine exchange of meanings between teacher and pupils provides opportunities for learning, so talk that draws on the prior knowledge and experience of the learners should be encouraged by teachers. Barnes looked at both teachers’ questions and pupil-initiated sequences and found that the latter represented only a small proportion of the classroom talk in his data. Along with this finding, his main contribution to the study of classroom discourse was the formulation of the concept of “exploratory talk” in contrast to “presentational” or “final draft talk.” The former occurs when teachers ask open questions and reply to the contributions of learners instead of merely evaluating them. The latter is found when teachers ask questions to test the students’ understanding of topics that have already been explained and evaluate their responses paying particular attention to the form of student’s utterances.

A predominant feature of teacher talk, teacher control of classroom interaction, shows up in many studies of classroom discourse. This kind of talk is usually asymmetrical in nature (Stubbs 1976). In addition, research by Edwards and Westgate (1987/1994) has shown that talk in classrooms is “not conducted normally on a basis of shared knowledge.” Moreover, as Lemke (1989) has noted, participants in classrooms have rights and obligations which are continually being negotiated, but most of the time teachers succeed in imposing their authority.

Increasing Interdisciplinarity and the Widening Scope of Research: Major Contributions

In this section, I turn to developments in the 1980s and 1990s. In this period, research on classroom discourse moved beyond linguistic description and functional code analysis, due to the limitations of the interaction coding approach. It did however continue to be problem-focused, seeking to examine the effects of teaching on learners. The attention of researchers now shifted from a primary focus on communicative functions to a more detailed concern with the sequential structures

of classroom discourse and with the ways in which meanings are contextualized through the use of both verbal and nonverbal cues. At the same time, research on classroom interaction widened its focus to include second and foreign language contexts and talk in bilingual classrooms.

Increasing Interdisciplinarity

By the 1980s, research on classroom discourse was beginning to reflect diverse and, often, intersecting influences from the fields of social science research that had been developed and consolidated in the preceding decades. These included fields such as ethnomethodology and conversation analysis (CA) (Garfinkel 1972; Sacks et al. 1974), the ethnography of communication (Hymes 1968), microethnography (Erickson and Schultz 1981), and interactional sociolinguistics (Gumperz 1982). Several scholars working in these fields had a particular concern with the educational achievement of children from social groups who found themselves positioned towards the lower echelons of the social hierarchy, and they conducted some of their research in educational settings. Their influence was far-reaching. The attention of classroom-based researchers shifted away from the communicative functions of individual utterances towards the detail of the ebb and flow of talk in classrooms, highlighting its situated nature and the recurring sequential structures of classroom routines. The emphasis was now on the joint construction of meanings by teachers and learners. The contexts for teaching and learning were no longer seen as fixed and predefined but as being constituted in and through interaction and therefore continually open to negotiation and redefinition.

John Gumperz (1982) made a distinctive contribution to the study of classroom discourse by foregrounding the ways in which meanings are contextualized in ongoing interactions between teachers and learners. He was the first to put forward the notion of “contextualization cue,” referring to choices of verbal and nonverbal signs which participants in a conversation perceive to be marked. This included, for example, signs such as a change in pitch or intonation, codeswitching, or an unexpected gesture. He showed how teachers and learners draw on such cues in negotiating classroom encounters and in making situated inferences about each other’s contributions to classroom conversations and about the significance of ongoing activities. A similar concept to Gumperz’ notion of contextualization cue is “indexicality” (Silverstein 1976, 2003), a process of invoking meaning, that is, language use indexes social positioning (Blackledge and Creese 2010).

Working along similar lines, Fred Erickson (1986) developed a microethnographic approach to the study of the fine grain of classroom interaction, focusing, in particular, on nonverbal cues and on the manner in which participants in classroom conversations attend to such cues. He was especially interested in the ways in which teachers and learners manage to synchronize their contributions to classroom interaction and also sought to identify the means they employed to engage in conversational repair and to describe the strategies deployed when synchrony is

not achieved. He was also interested in documenting the consequences of cross-cultural miscommunication.

Several researchers working in education in the 1980s and 1990s were specifically interested in applying the principles of ethnomethodology and conversation analysis (CA) to the study of classroom discourse (take for example, McHoul 1978, 1982, 1990; Mehan 1979; Baker and Freebody 1989; Macbeth 1992). They focused on the sequential structures of classroom interactions, on question and answer routines and on the accomplishment of turn-taking and conversational repair in multiparty classroom interactions. A good deal of this ethnomethodological work focused on the teaching of reading in the early years of schooling, on the construction of what counts as literacy and on the orientation of learners to specific ways of working with texts.

Influences from developments in social psychology were also beginning to be felt in studies of classroom discourse in the 1980s. Two influential concepts were Vygotsky's (1978) concept of "zone of proximal development" (ZPD) and Bruner's notion of "scaffolding" (Wood et al. 1976). These concepts were taken up as interest grew in the role of talk as a means of joint knowledge building. Classroom discourse was acknowledged as coproductions, derived from the participation of both teachers and students; thus, the construction of knowledge came to be seen then as a collaborative process. These concepts were taken further in work by Mercer (1995) who developed a Neo-Vygotskian approach to the analysis of classroom talk. Mercer's approach highlights the social nature of interaction and foregrounds the role of talk between learners and between teachers and learners in the construction of knowledge.

The 1990s saw further development and consolidation of research in bilingual classroom discourse. Here too, there were cross-cutting influences from different disciplines. Conversational analysts' work was combined with new analytic frameworks from sociology and from research on bilingual codeswitching (e.g., Auer 1984). Some of this research was based in language classrooms (e.g., Lin 1996, 2001; De Mejía 1994, 1998). Other research was developed in contexts where a second or foreign language was employed as medium of instruction (e.g., Arthur 2001; Bunyi 2001, 2005; Canagarajah 1995; Martin-Jones and Saxena 1996; Martin 1999, 2005a, b). Research based in countries of the South constituted the greatest portion of this new body of work on classroom discourse and opened up new insights into the ways in which meanings are exchanged by teachers and learners in multilingual classrooms.

As Martin-Jones (2000, p. 2) points out in her review of research on bilingual classroom interaction:

We now have ample examples in the research literature of teachers using code contrast as a resource for demarcating different kinds of discourse: to signal the transition between preparing for a lesson and the start of the lesson; to specify a particular addressee; to distinguish 'doing a lesson' from talk about it; to change footing or make an aside; to distinguish quotations from a written text from talk about them; to bring out the voices of different characters in a narrative; to distinguish classroom management utterances from talk related to the lesson content.

The analysis of codeswitching practices in these different contexts also drew attention to the tensions arising between official language policy and classroom practices. Teachers in many of the contexts under study were falling back on codeswitching in order to accomplish lessons, despite the fact that, in some schools, this was not an approved practice (e.g., Arthur 2001; Lin 1996, 2001; Mejía 1994, 1998 and Martin 1999).

Some studies in postcolonial contexts, where English was the medium of instruction, documented the prevalence of classroom routines such as teacher-led orchestration of classroom interaction where students responded in chorus to teacher prompts (Bunyi 2001, 2005; Chick 1996; Hornberger and Chick 2001; Martin 1997). Chick (1996) introduced the concept of “safetalk” to capture this interactional phenomenon. “Safetalk” was defined as “talk that creates a space where teacher and students know more or less what to expect and how to behave in class, but where a high price is paid in terms of (a lack of) learning” (Hornberger and Chick 2001, p. 52). Chorus-style responses serve as a means to avoid loss of face associated with being shown up publicly, in the classroom, as being wrong. Chick (1996) gave particular attention to chorused behavior and the way in which chorusing was orchestrated by teachers through ample use of contextualization cues. This concept was taken up in classroom-based research such as Arthur’s (2001) study in Botswana, in Bunyi’s (2001) research in Kenya, in Martin’s (1997) research in Brunei, and in Hornberger and Chick’s (2001) comparative study of Peru and South Africa.

A New Eclecticism

As research on talk in face to face classroom interaction developed over time, in different areas of the curriculum, it grew more eclectic, often drawing on different strands of previous work. Thus, for example, by the turn of the century, conversational analytic approaches were increasingly being interwoven with work of an ethnographic nature (details of this way of working are discussed in a discussion paper prepared for the British Linguistic Ethnography Forum (Rampton et al. 2004)).

This new eclecticism has, in fact, come to be seen as a positive development and as a welcome move away from the methodological purism of some research in the field of conversational analysis. A special issue of the journal of *Applied Linguistics* was devoted, in 2002, to a comparison of approaches to the microanalysis of classroom discourse, including ethnography of communication, conversation analysis, and a systemic functional approach. One group of researchers, who were invited to respond to the papers in this issue, concluded that all three approaches “offer more to the analysis of classroom discourse in combination than they do alone” (Rampton et al. 2002, p. 387).

Texts, Talk, and Classroom Practices

Texts do not exist in isolation in educational settings. The talk that takes place around them is what gives them meaning (Maybin and Moss 1993). The term “text” here

does not only refer to printed materials, it may also include electronic text, student's notes, lesson plans or school textbooks, and many other types of educational material which are "inspected, dissected, and analyzed in various ways" (Barton 1994, p. 58). In classroom situations, the text is almost always the object of mediation by teachers. As we will see in the following section, this process of mediating is particularly evident in bilingual classrooms where bilingual talk often unfolds around monolingual texts. Textbooks are also mediators of experience. They represent the social world in particular ways (Barton 1994).

Research on talk around texts in different types of classroom has shown us that knowledge is often constructed in classrooms via a cultural artifact or a textbook. As De Castell et al. (1989) have observed, a textbook constitutes an authorized medium that conveys "legitimate knowledge" to pupils. In language classrooms, such as EFL and ESL classrooms, the textbook is invested with characteristic features that distinguish it from other types of texts. In a detailed analysis of the features of EFL textbooks, Dendrinos (1992) draws attention to the variability in the discourses, to the different type of genres, to the cultural content of different EFL texts, and especially their underlying ideology. In contexts where English is taught as foreign language, the "EFL textbook" is often relied upon to guide classroom-based interactional activities; its authority derives from sources outside the classroom, including curriculum authorities, local and central government departments concerned with education, and multinational publishing companies. The relative importance of the EFL textbook depends on the way in which the curriculum is organized: so the tighter the state controls over educational content and instructional practice, the stronger the reliance on the textbook (Ibid). However, in developing contexts, textbooks may not be readily available to learners who lack economic resources, so teachers rely on alternative "texts," as recent research in public secondary schools in Colombia has shown (Valencia Giraldo 2004, 2006). In order to supply the need of texts, teachers often create texts from a range of existing textbooks. So, in schools such as these, textual authority resides in these locally produced worksheets and they largely determine the teaching content.

Teacher mediation of texts takes place in specific observable literacy events in classrooms. The notion of "literacy event" derives from the influential work of Heath (1983). Heath referred to literacy events as encounters between people "when talk revolves around a piece of writing" (1983, p. 386). Her particular focus was on children's literacy socialization in different classroom and community contexts, so she studied talk exchanged between adults and children around texts. Heath's ethnographic work paved the way for the development of a sociocultural approach to literacy, the New Literacy Studies (Barton 1994; Street 1984, 2000). As noted by Hall (2012), "the multiliteracies project was developed to face two important challenges to education: the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity of communities around the world which, they argue has changed the nature of schooling" (Hall 2012, p. 125), and the "proliferation of means for communicating within and across these communities" (Ibid). In this approach, that is both learner and knowledge centered, reading and the use of texts are seen as profoundly social and cultural practices, embedded in particular historical contexts.

For two decades, the focus of much ethnographic work on literacy was on the local, on particular cultural contexts and on detailed accounts of the ways in which local literacy practices were manifested in particular literacy events. However, there has been recent debate within the New Literacy Studies about the need to take account of global contexts and global, cultural flows in empirical work related to local literacy events and practices (e.g., Brandt and Clinton 2002; Pahl and Rowsell 2006). It is argued that close description and analysis of literacy events in which talk is exchanged around texts can provide revealing insights into the ways in which the global pervades the local. As Pahl and Rowsell (2006, p. 11) observe, we can see “how texts are shaped by practices which themselves are both locally based and globally shaped. . . we see the global and the local in *instances of practices*.”

Thus, in the studies briefly mentioned above, carried out by Valencia Giraldo (2004, 2006), in state secondary schools in Colombia, both the local and global dimensions of local teaching/learning events were taken into account. In both of these studies, the focus was on particular events when Colombian teachers of English were talking with the students about texts they had produced themselves from existing textbooks. Detailed analysis of the talk around texts in these events revealed complex patterns that could be linked to the wider policy context and to broader processes of change, such as globalization. Global forces are clearly having an impact on Colombian education (e.g., national policy on bilingualism) and on the day-to-day classroom routines of schools. However, the issues raised by globalization and the hegemony of English are not exclusive to development contexts in South America. There are wider resonances, as I will argue in the next section.

Globalization and Texts: Work in Progress

There has been increasing interest in classroom interaction in settings where English is a second or foreign language, settings such as the postcolonial context of countries of the South: in Africa, Asia, and South and Central America. Recent work carried out in these contexts shows a growing concern with sociocultural issues in the context of the English classroom and a trend towards research which takes account of how the local interactional order in particular classrooms is constructed *and* the ways in which global processes impinge on the local. Attention has been drawn to the rapid spread of English due to globalization. Some studies focus on the increasing dominance of English within the curriculum and the resistance to this linguistic dominance which is manifested in and through interaction in different educational sites. On the other hand, as Lin and Martin (2005, p. 13) point out, there exist a great number of bi- and multilingual practices in classrooms all over the world, some of which are successful, while others “might be reproductive of the lack of linguistic capital of both teachers and students”. Work by Canagarajah (1999, 2005) shows how teachers and learners deal with the tension between English and Tamil ideologies in classroom interaction. In this context, codeswitching practices constitute a subtle means of resistance to language education policy constraints which is played out in the daily rounds of interactional life in classrooms in Jaffna.

As Pennycook (1994) has pointed out, discourses about the spread of English in different parts of the world often embody a positive image of English, as a new commodity on the educational market. Language education reforms tend to privilege English at the expense of other languages. Conflicts and tensions generated by the rapid spread of English and the imposition of new policies are most visible in the daily routines of classroom interaction. As noted by Heller and Martin-Jones (2001, p. 422), “it is through the interactional order. . . that it is possible to act with regard to interests and positioning constrained by institutional and social orders beyond the control of actors.”

The impact of English language policies on classroom interaction and on talk around texts is particularly evident in research carried out in Southeast Asia by Peter Martin (2005a, b). A study by Martin (2005a), in Malaysia, highlights key issues related to talk around texts and the construction of knowledge. This study focuses on the language practices in two rural schools in Malaysia where English has come to be seen as a desirable commodity. Recent policy developments have established English as the main medium of instruction in mathematics and science in schools across the country. Martin describes in detail the consequences of this policy. The teachers in these classes have limited English resources so they read through short texts in English from the official textbook with the students annotating key words and concepts. These are usually key lexical items that are repeated by the students. Interactional exchanges in these lessons take place in both English and Malay, with the teacher’s initiations being in Malay and with the students responding with single lexical items in English and in Malay. The teachers and students have become reliant on the textbook although it is in a language which is remote from the local Malay vernacular. The textbook’s pictures and lifestyles have a Malaysian flavor, but according to Martin (2005a, p. 90) the cultural contents are “far removed from the lifeworlds of the students.”

Globalization processes (e.g., increasing immigration) have dramatically transformed educational contexts in countries of the Northern hemisphere. Recent research in multiliteracies and multilingualism in other world contexts has shown the complexities of meaning-making and negotiation of multilingual and multicultural identities. According to Luk and Lin (2007), “Like any other institutional context where interaction takes place, the classroom is a place where a lot of sense making needs to be done both by the teacher and the students. Making sense to and making sense of is a circular route between the teacher and the students” (p. 84). Blackledge’s and Creese’s (2010) work in complementary schools in Britain has revealed that what goes on in schools is more than teaching and learning; as they found, schools are “sites where young people were able not only to claim multicultural identities through using a wide range of linguistic repertoires, but also appeared to be spaces where subject positions may be tried out, contested and in all kinds of other ways, negotiated” (Blackledge and Creese 2010, p. 4). In four ethnographically informed case studies in eight complementary schools in Birmingham (Bengali schools), Leicester (Gujarati schools), Manchester (Chinese –Cantonese and Mandarin schools), and London (Turkish schools) by a multilingual research team (four researchers), they adopted a social orientation to the study of linguistic practices and their meanings in these multilingual and multicultural context, adopting a linguistic

ethnography approach (Rampton et al. 2004). The use of folk tales as cultural artifacts in these schools shows how students contested bilingually, the “preferred” traditional academic literacy practices in the schools, and their essentialized categorizations. Drawing on Heath (1982), Blackledge and Creese treat folk stories as literacy events, global texts that are made local through bilingual and biliterate interactions (2010, p. 162).

Problems, Challenges, and Future Directions

The above studies highlight the need to investigate in more detail the ways in which global process impinge on and constrain local educational practices, but also global processes taking place in different multilingual and multicultural contexts. Further attention is needed, in classroom-based research in the countries of the South, to the spread of English and, specifically, to the trend towards the creation of bilingual education programs involving an official national language and English and the way they are being implemented. Literacy practices and meaning-making strategies by teachers and learners need to be explored in detail. How do teachers and students manage the communicative demands of such bilingual education policies? What kind of meaning-making goes on in such classrooms? How are these meanings built up around texts? How do teachers and learners talk knowledge into being in different kinds of policy conditions? What evidence is there of resistance to the implementation of these policies? From my own work in Colombia, it is clear that secondary school students in public schools continually engage in small acts of resistance to the efforts of English teachers to implement a national policy of bilingual education (Spanish with English) (Valencia Giraldo 2004). Teachers deploy different strategies, some playful, some quite authoritative, in responding to these challenges from students. What evidence is there and elsewhere of student resistance to the implementation of such bilingual education policies? How common are these practices in other public secondary schools in other countries of the South where similar policies have been imposed?

These questions need to be addressed in research conducted by researchers who speak the local languages and know the local culture. They are best-placed to describe and interpret the intricacies of classroom talk in such settings and the particular meanings generated through that talk. As Canagarajah (2005, p. 19) notes, it is important to maintain an “ongoing conversation with local knowledge. . . for our common pursuit of broadening knowledge construction practices. The local will always have a questioning effect on established paradigms.”

In all classroom-based research in the countries of the South and the North, the bulk of research still tends to focus on the voices of teachers. In future research, more importance needs to be given to the role of learners in classroom interaction. Focusing primarily on SLA research, Breen (2001) proposes a research agenda that takes into account not only the value of learners’ contributions to language learning processes, but also the social relations underpinning classroom interaction.

As I have tried to show in this chapter, research agendas in the future will also need to pay greater attention to the role of texts and talk around texts in the study of

classroom discourse. As Smith (1999) and Barton (2001) have pointed out, we need to take greater account of the intensely textually mediated nature of contemporary social life. If we focus primarily on spoken language in face to face encounters, we will risk overlooking significant textual dimensions of human endeavor. Barton (2001) argues as follows for research which incorporates frameworks from the New Literacy Studies with a view to deepening insights into the communicative practices that predominate in today's world.

Whether it is technological change and internet use, educational change and the nature of learning, the relation of language to poverty and social exclusion, or language in the changing workplace, an analysis which starts from literacies is central to understanding. Studies restricted to spoken language cannot adequately account for these crucial areas for contemporary language us (2001, p. 101).

Lastly, the increasingly complex and multimodal nature of text production and of contemporary communication poses new challenges for researchers engaged in classroom-based research. Our attention has been drawn to some of these complexities in recent work in science classrooms (Kress et al. 2001) and in English classes in urban schools (Kress et al. 2005). In a highly media and technologically permeated world, there is a need for further research on the "new" literacies taking place in educational contexts and the mediated practices through the use of technological artifacts uses of digital technologies and their digital literacies. The challenges posed by the rapidly changing nature of contemporary communication in classrooms need to be met with new theory and method.

We will need new analytic lenses and new approaches to research design in future studies of talk, texts, and meaning-making in classroom interaction. Lytra (2012) suggests that "a multimodal perspective can bring about the materiality and multimodal features of pedagogic routines and practices in the negotiation of literacy, learning and authoritative knowledge: official teacher-pupil talk is combined with visual images and writing to convey meaning, as much of that talk is centred around texts. . . This line of research can enhance our understanding of the heterogeneity of classroom talk and the hybrid mixtures of official and unofficial practices and activities in classroom interaction."

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Discourse Communities: From Origins to Social Media

Deoksoon Kim and Oksana Vorobel

Abstract

Discourse communities, their characteristic features and communicative routines, have long been a focus of research. The expansion of technology has changed discourse communities, however, because a much broader set of members can now participate in them. Contemporary research has begun to explore how technology-mediated discourse communities form and change, as well as how they serve educational and other social functions. In this chapter, we review research on discourse communities, focusing on the various changes that mediated online environments such as social media have brought to contemporary discourse communities. We also describe advances in and the challenges of conducting research on discourse communities established through social media.

Keywords

Academic discourse • Computer-mediated discourse • Digital discourse • Discourse communities • Language socialization • Social media

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Introduction

The development of social media has had a major influence on discourse communities, changing how people join communities and participate in them. Social media rely on Internet-based websites and mobile applications that enable users to generate and share their own content and do social networking (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010). As Zourou and Lamy (2013, p. 1) argue, social media create “artefacts with a networking dimension, which are designed so as to make that dimension central to their use.” Social media provide a communicative medium through which people are rapidly and intensively creating new kinds of discourse communities. These contexts have a number of affordances, features that encourage users to create new kinds of connections, information, and social actions.

Earlier work on communities and new media provides a framework for our account of how social media are transforming discourse communities. Vossen and Hagemann (2010, p. 59) define “virtual online communities” as “groups of people with common interests who interact through the Internet and the Web, such as communities of transactions and communities of interests.” Along similar lines, Thorne, Sauro, and Smith (2015) describe how social media discourse can increase cohesion and group identification. This work shows how contemporary discourse communities cross national, linguistic, and cultural boundaries, forming strong social identities and sometimes transforming individual and group trajectories. We follow this emphasis on how complex, hybrid identities are central to discourse communities.

In this chapter, we build on the approaches pioneered by Vossen and Hagemann; Thorne, Sauro, and Smith; and others, describing recent research on the transformation of discourse communities through social media. We first review early definitions of “discourse communities,” laying out the origins of key concepts. The rest of the chapter reviews empirical studies of discourse communities and social media, particularly in higher education. We focus on the role that social media play in language socialization into academic discourse communities and the use of social media as a community-building tool. At the end of the chapter, we describe continuing problems and difficulties and provide methodological suggestions for future research on social media and discourse communities.

Early Developments: The Concept of “Discourse Communities”

Research on discourse communities goes back to the 1970s, to the study of “scientific communities” in science (Kuhn 1970), “speech communities” in sociolinguistics (Hymes 1972), and “discourse communities” in composition research (Bizzell 1982). Kuhn (1970) defined *scientific communities* as groups of scientists working in a particular scientific area who share similar educational backgrounds, professional areas, and scientific goals which facilitate their professional communication. The defining feature of *interpretive communities* is members’ ability to read and interpret literary works. *Speech communities* are groups of people who communicate and know how and when to use linguistic signs in appropriate ways, in cultural context (Hymes 1972). *Discourse communities* differ from other communities in their primary focus on shared expectations among members, which are reflected in discourse conventions and determined by discourse community members’ work (Bizzell 1982).

These seminal definitions of discourse communities vary in some important ways. In a key paper published in 1990, Swales articulates the difference between “speech communities” and “discourse communities.” He describes how such aspects as medium of communication (speech versus literacy), the dominant factor in the communicative functioning of a community (the needs of the group versus the goals of the actors) and criteria for belonging to the community (“birth, accident, or adoption” versus specialty and interest), help clarify the difference between the two notions and highlight the need to define “discourse communities” more carefully (p. 471). Swales’ definition has six components: members of a discourse community have shared goals, shared means of communication, provide information and feedback as the primary purpose of participation, use and feel ownership of one or more genres in discourse, use specific lexical items, and have a common level of expertise. Swales’ (1990) study was a step forward in the attempt to define discourse communities, although not everyone agrees with every component of his definition. It is clear that a discourse community is narrower than a speech community, as it involves a group communicating for a more specific purpose. Work still remains to be done in defining the boundaries of and overlap between communities, however.

In 1997, Anne Beaufort explored how to operationalize the concept of a discourse community in her investigation of a nonprofit organization. She identified several critical features of discourse communities: they involve oral and written communication, the use of specific genres, and the distribution of roles for writers based on tasks and contextual needs. She also explored the values and goals of the discourse community, the distance between members of a discourse community, the tools of communication, and each member’s individual background, values, goals, and skills that can influence communication in the community. Beaufort offers a model which shows the dynamic relationship and mutual influence of various factors in any discourse community, and she describes how different discourse communities can vary on many of these dimensions. Swales’ (1990) and Beaufort’s (1997) studies provided a solid foundation for further research on discourse communities in various disciplines.

Over time, among the various aspects of discourse communities, it is the context and the tools of communication that scholars have most often focused on. The development of technology from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 marked a drastic shift in the use of technology, from a means to access information to a new means of communication. Social media tools such as wikis and social networking websites have become new venues for discourse communities as they invite action and creation, afford access and originality, and enhance participation and collaboration. The rapid spread of technology has fundamentally changed many discourse communities and their characteristic features.

Major Contributions

In this section, we review studies on discourse communities and social media in education. We pay particular attention to the role of social media in new members' language socialization into discourse communities in higher education. We also consider research on the use of social media as a community-building tool in education.

Language Socialization into Academic Discourse Communities: Digital Discourse and Social Media

Duff (2010) analyzes socialization into oral, written, and online academic discourse, and the social practices associated with each mode, across educational contexts. She defines "academic discourse" as "forms of oral and written language and communication – genre, registers, graphics, linguistic structures, interactional patterns – that are privileged, expected, cultivated, conventionalized, or ritualized" in various academic contexts (p. 175). She shows how these aspects of discourse vary across disciplines and professional areas, both in interaction and in various forms of representation. She also shows how academic discourse is evolving, as new genres emerge, with new linguistic, discursive, and multimodal conventions.

Increasingly, academic discourse communities are mediated in significant part by various technological tools, including social media. These new media environments involve what has been called "digital discourse," a broad concept which covers metadiscursive framings, genres, style, and stylization as well as ideological stance (Thurlow and Mroczek 2011). Digital discourse has semiotic characteristics including coherence and cohesion, or texture and flow (Gee 2015); intertextuality and interdiscursivity (Vásquez 2015); a dialogic character, the interaction between readers and writers and between human users and machines (Jones 2015); multimodality; and reflexivity, the ability to analyze input and customize based on human actions (Jones 2015). These semiotic characteristics are deeply influenced by various affordances of social media such as hyperlinking and tagging.

Recent work on digital discourse, applied to academic contexts, has shown that new media have distinctive affordances for learning. These include the multimodality of digital discourse, which allows for new combinations of meaning and

interpretation; the creation of new genres of social interaction made possible through social media; the opportunity for remixing and “curating” practices, through which content is recycled in ways heretofore not possible; hypertextual linking, embedding, copying and pasting, liking, tagging, and other means of connecting and combining resources; and the lamination of virtual reality layers onto each other and real-time actions.

Important work in this area has focused on students learning how to become a part of academic discourse communities, a process that is often studied in terms of learners’ language socialization into academic discourse communities. Duff (2010) defines academic discourse socialization as “a dynamic, socially situated process that in contemporary contexts is often multimodal, multilingual, and highly intertextual as well. The process is characterized by variable amounts of modeling, feedback, and uptake; different levels of investment and agency on the part of learners; by the negotiation of power and identities; and, often, important personal transformations for at least some participants” (p. 169). By participating in new academic discourse communities, learners develop both cognitively and socially.

Potts (2005) studies language socialization in social media contexts, exploring graduate students’ language socialization into a larger academic discourse community in the context of an online bulletin board in WebCT. Four nonnative speakers of English, students in a graduate seminar on modern language education, provided data through participation in online bulletin board, individual interviews, and a written survey. By following these focal participants, Potts shows how students can form a community characterized by high levels of interaction, interactivity, and shared purpose. The students’ subjective experiences and their coconstruction of knowledge across the course allowed them to create a community with its own meditational tools, located within but not determined by a larger academic discourse community. The online bulletin board afforded the participants an increased sense of visibility, additional time due to the asynchronous mode of communication, the ability to review the prior postings, and, most importantly, a dialogic context. The students’ participation in an online context allowed them to position themselves as active, equal community members.

Yim (2011) studies graduate students in face-to-face and online contexts with L1 and L2 participants. Her study focuses on the characteristics of asynchronous online discourse, its formation and challenges, as well as participant roles that second language graduate students adopt when interacting online. The L1 and L2 students in two mixed-mode graduate courses used WebCT for access to course materials, emailing, chat, and online bulletin board discussions. The results of the study show that the online bulletin board served as a platform for students’ academic discussion and dialogue about course materials. L1 and L2 participants posted equally in quality and quantity, but there was a difference in instructors’ methods and pedagogical goals that influenced participants’ discourse across the two courses – rigid and formulaic versus interpersonal and interactive, respectively. There was also a difference in L2 students’ writing between the two courses: one had a more casual, personal tone while the other had a more formal, academic tone. Overall, the L2 students were more confident when writing academic papers than when participating

in the online bulletin board. In both courses the L2 students more actively participated in the online bulletin board, in contrast to their more limited, passive participation in the face-to-face context. Nonetheless, the online context with its various technological tools provided L2 learners increased opportunities for learning.

Social Media as a Discourse Community Building Tool in Education

In addition to research on the influence of social media on socialization into academic discourse communities, others have studied the use of various types of social media in order to build discourse communities in educational settings. This work has shown how social media provide an important new platform through which educational discourse communities are formed, and it has explored the affordances that new technologies offer for facilitating certain kinds of communities, practices, and identities. Schriener and Rice (1989), for example, conducted a two-year study of 15 sections of Introductory Composition at the University of Michigan. They explored how students formed a community by using asynchronous discussion posts in CONFER, an online conferencing tool. Their findings show that collaboration in CONFER allowed students to express their voices and become community members, while developing their own interpretations of the matter under discussion through negotiation and dialogue. The conferencing tool also facilitated the social construction of knowledge and enhanced students' feeling of responsibility for their education.

Edens and Gallini (2000) employed a discourse analytic approach to investigate preservice teachers' dialogic processes of knowledge building and meaning making when sharing early field experiences in a technology-mediated community. They also explored the use of asynchronous Internet discussion as a discourse community building tool. The data included students' postings in online class discussion groups and in an informal on-campus focus group discussion. The findings show how online discussions afforded the development of a discourse community outside the classroom as well as robust co-construction of meaning. Along similar lines, Kim and Jang (2014) give examples of how preservice teachers used blogs and podcasts to collaborate and coconstruct knowledge in a teacher education course. Blogs and podcasts provided preservice teachers opportunities to learn, scaffold each other's contributions, and build a robust discourse community. They trace how these students in an online class created a supportive, dialogic learning community in which they were able to share their ideas, check their progress, complete assignments, and offer constructive feedback.

In order to understand the relationship between a traditional face-to-face classroom and an online social (private Google+) educational environment, Clayton, Hetteche, and Kim (Clayton et al. 2014) investigated students' participation, focusing on its quality and intensity across contexts in an Integrated Marketing Communications course. They found that a majority of students who actively participated in the face-to-face classroom context behaved the same way online in a social media context, perhaps due to individual factors and preexisting interest in the subject

matter. They offer suggestions for choosing an effective social media tool for building a discourse community, setting expectations about students' contributions in discussions across contexts, and distributing roles for students in online communities. They argue that, despite many similarities in participation across face-to-face and online contexts, technological tools can provide a wider range of options for building discourse communities among students, enhancing their membership in the group and supporting their learning.

In general, researchers have found that social media tools effectively promote collaboration and encourage the social construction of knowledge. The online environment facilitates the intentional building of a discourse community devoted to learning. Such environments also provide opportunities to extend discourse communities to new members because of the potential reach of online technologies.

Work in Progress: New Practices and Emerging Methodologies

Because of all the changes new digital media have brought to discourse communities and education, discourse analysts have had to adapt existing methods of discourse analysis and create new approaches. The publication of books like *Discourse 2.0. Language and new media* (Tannen and Trester 2013), *Discourse and digital practices: Doing discourse analysis in the digital age* (Jones et al. 2015), and others illustrates a variety of new approaches to discourse analysis that have emerged to study the new discourse communities created by digital media.

One important characteristic of recent studies of digital discourse is researchers' emphasis on the need for an interdisciplinary approach, combining frameworks and approaches so as to capture the complexity of digital media and new forms of discourse. Studies draw insights from cybernetics, media theory (Jones 2015), and haptics (Merchant 2015), for example. Complex recent approaches to discourse analysis include multimodal discourse analysis (Jones et al. 2015), computer-assisted discourse analysis (Baker 2010), postphenomenological philosophy of technology and artifacts (Verbeek 2006), object ethnography (Carrington and Dowdall 2013), and a social practice approach to language use online (Barton and Lee 2013). Digital discourse analysis often includes ethnography as well as archival work (Wortham and Reyes 2015).

Many researchers have been exploring technology-human interactions as new forms of communication where technology can serve as a text itself, have its own agency and history, and shape human interactions and actions. Gee (2015), for example, analyzes games as multimodal texts, exploring their syntax and semantics, their interface with human vision, and focusing on their "packaging" and "flow." Jones (2015) explores self-tracking practices and their influence on people and their actions. Barton (2015) focuses on tagging as a social practice and how relevant spaces are designed and used by people. Carrington (2015) investigates the interaction between iPhones as technological artifacts and their users. Such studies respond to changes in

the nature of discourse, in the era of social media, by extending discourse analysis so that it can illuminate more complex human-technology interactions.

New online discourse practices have challenged traditional ways of understanding discourse communities. Now we have to explore intertextuality and interdiscursivity in online consumer reviews, for example, and how they form discourse communities in the digital world (Vásquez 2015). Intertextuality involves relationships among texts, in both digitally mediated and other types of discourse. In the process of constructing any text, speakers, writers, and users of digital media in particular draw not only on the whole range of intertextual links but also on knowledge of conventional genres. Internet discourse is more often “hybrid” because it mixes genres and facilitates wider linking across domains and types. Recent work on social media and discourse communities continues to discover internally complex layers of social media and how they are creating new kinds of communities. The next section discusses work on the affordances of social media for the formation of discourse communities.

Discourse Communities and Affordances of Social Media

Although many empirical studies have recently been published on the affordances of Web 2.0 tools for learning and teaching, research on the affordances of social media for discourse communities is in its early stages. Matsuda (2002) provides one early, influential study. He investigates online discourse in a Japanese email discussion list. His analysis focuses on identity and power in this Japanese online discourse community. Specifically, Matsuda explores the transformation of social relations among Japanese professionals from various contexts, attending to such conventional aspects of identity as gender, age, and social status. He finds that other criteria are just as important in an online context, such as the amount of knowledge demonstrated. His findings show that the online context provides an alternative platform for the negotiation of identity and power. It does not diminish the hierarchical social relations which could be found in offline communities, but it changes their character in noticeable ways.

Farabaugh (2007) also studies the affordances social media have for discourse communities. Her longitudinal study explores the affordances of two wikis, “QwikiWiki” and “MediaWiki,” as platforms for students’ writing exercises and reflections, especially their comprehension of metaphor, in a course on Shakespeare in the context of the “Writing to Learn” movement in the United States. Her findings show that wikis can be an excellent platform for improving students’ reading and writing, as they enhance students’ awareness about literature. Wikis provide an easy way to complete short assignments, enhance students’ engagement in out-of-class group work through asynchronous interaction, and allow students to structure their online interaction independently. The dynamic nature and versatile functions of social media provide many affordances for learning in academic contexts and create various types of discourse communities that learners participate in while engaging in tasks.

Computer-Mediated Discourse

Another aspect of discourse communities, which needs further research because of changes brought by technology and use of social media, is the discourse itself. Computer-mediated discourse (CMD) is language use mediated through networked computer or mobile devices (Herring 2007). While digital discourse is a broader term, CMD is mainly used in reference to practices and research approaches. Early work on CMD (e.g., Ferrara et al. 1991) described it as an “emergent register” of interactive written discourse. Crystal’s (2001) analysis of language use on the internet shows how CMD is related to both spoken and written discourse, involving both synchronous and asynchronous components. Cherny (1999) provides an empirical description of online conversation in an early multiuser dimension (MUD), emphasizing participants’ membership in an online community and examined the dynamics of one MUD community.

Herring (2007) and Herring and Androutsopoulos (2015) provide more contemporary and comprehensive accounts. Text-based CMD includes email, discussion forums, newsgroups, chat, MUDs (multiuser dimensions) and MOOs (object-oriented MUDs), blogs, microblogs, and wikis. Herring (2007) argues that language use in computer-mediated communication involves some distinctive features that must be studied in their own right. She describes two broad types of CMD, one focused on the medium (technological) and one on the situation (social). Technological facets include, for example, available channels of communication, synchronicity, one-way versus two-way message transmission, message persistence, message format, and size of message buffer. Situational facets include group size, participant characteristics, purpose of communication, topic, norms of social appropriateness, and code or language variety used.

Herring and Androutsopoulos (2015) focus their analysis of CMD on web 2.0. They focus on four dimensions: (1) modality, involving unique forms of writing or speech that are situated along a continuum from asynchronous to synchronous modes; (2) modes, genres, and discourse types, including private email, electronic mailing lists, web forums, chat, instant messaging, and blogging – all of which afford different types of discourse; and (3) multiple facets, which “cut across the boundaries of sociotechnical modes and combine to allow for the identification of a nuanced set of CMD types,” based on Herring’s previous classification of “discourse 2.0” (Herring 2007, p. 4). Web 2.0 environments generally involve the cooccurrence or convergence of different modes of communication on a single platform, as well as new types of content, new contexts, new usage patterns, and multiauthorship, joint discourse production, and user adoption.

CMD also involves various types of discourse structures, such as utterance level, messages, exchanges, and threads or conversations. Meaning in CMD is continuously constituted throughout engagement in situated discourse. The pragmatic meanings are carried in words, utterances, emoticons, descriptive messages, descriptive genres, conventions, performativity, and through intertextuality. CMD also involves interactional aspects, including one-to-one, one-to-many, and many-to-many relationships. Social practices mediated through CMD involve key dimensions

of variation and linguistic diversity, interaction and identity, and discourse and engagement (Herring and Androutsopoulos 2015).

CMD is an important new phenomenon in the contemporary world, and it needs to be studied more extensively in its own right. To understand the rich, diverse, dynamic nature of CMD, we need to attend to the discourse going on in emerging media and platforms, exploring new contexts as technologies rapidly develop and extending our research methods to better understand the functioning of discourse communities.

Problems and Difficulties

Defining the Concept

Research on discourse communities continues, but familiar problems with the concept still cause difficulties. Joseph Harris (1989) critiqued the concept of discourse communities for its abstract imagined homogeneity. Marilyn Cooper (1989) argued that the concept of discourse communities was usually perceived independent of context, as if communities were stable, without taking into account the variety of practices, processes, and agents. With the major influence of technology and social media in providing a new medium for discourse communities, the need for redefining the concept has become clearer. Digital discourse communities are even more complex, involving multiple, heterogeneous linkages that change quickly and assume various configurations.

In the contemporary world, discourse communities' digital practices are not restricted to online or offline contexts, but often cross physical and virtual boundaries as well as technological and social systems. The lack of a solid definition challenges contemporary research on discourse communities and raises questions about its future. It is a challenge to establish analytic boundaries and define the overlap among communities. This complexity has been complicated by the emergence of new concepts such as "communities of practice," "online communities," "communities of communication," "affinity spaces," and related concepts (Gee 2005; Jürgens 2012; Lam 2008; Lave and Wenger 1991; Yim 2011). The term "community of practice" from Lave and Wenger (1991), for example, brings more questions about the boundaries and differences between communities.

Lave and Wenger (1991) define a community of practice as a group of people who are engaged in some common practice over some time. It is characterized by shared engagement and understanding, with opportunities for mutual construction of meaning. Work on communities of practice describes how collective learning in a shared social space can produce group cohesion and performance, as well as shape individual trajectories into the group. Discourse communities also involve shared concerns, passions, and practices. As Lave and Wenger describe, members of these communities develop shared learning and understanding, and they facilitate the incorporation of new members. Groups change, however, and over time the shared practices and understandings shift. Individuals can also have varying stances toward

these practices and understandings. Lave and Wenger provide a useful framework for conceptualizing the important processes of group cohesion, learning, and development. Meanwhile, the overlap between their concept and “discourse communities” foregrounds the need to develop clear definitions.

In elaborating the concept of “affinity spaces,” Gee (2005) points out the aforementioned questions about membership, participation, and boundaries in the use of the term “communities of practices.” The term normally implies close personal connections between members, but this does not characterize most technologically mediated communities, which exist across physical and virtual spaces. Gee proposes the alternative concept of “affinity spaces,” defined as a semiotically mediated social space characterized by members’ common endeavor, a shared space where people affiliate with others based on their shared activities, interests, and common goals, as well as a place where informal learning happens. In such spaces, members of discourse communities participate in common activities and practices without members being segregated based on proficiency, a variety of forms of and routes to participation and status. Gee points out the relevance of the term for today’s high-tech world and the digital practices of various communities. Gee’s introduction of the concept of “affinity spaces” further underlines the need to clarify the concept of “discourse communities.”

Eva Lam (2008) has done important work on how immigrant youth participates in online, interest-based communities across transnational spaces, and this helps with the definition of the concept. She traces how immigrant youth participate in online communities across host and home countries, showing the impact of transnational relationships on their cultural and linguistic practices. She also analyzes how participation in digital discourse communities shapes students’ multilingual identities. Along similar lines, Thorne, Sauro, and Smith (2015) describe how social media discourse can increase cohesion and group identification. Their work shows how contemporary discourse communities can cross national, linguistic, and cultural boundaries, forming strong social identities and sometimes transforming individual and group trajectories. In this chapter, we follow this emphasis on complex, hybrid identities as central to the effects of socially mediated discourse communities.

All of this work highlights the need to develop the concept of discourse communities so that it can be productively used in analyses of new technologically mediated environments. With the rapid and extensive spread of social media and digital discourse, we have an opportunity to reflect on the changing nature of discourse communities and clarify the meaning of the term for a new era. We can best accomplish this by approaching the concept in an ecological way, that is, by viewing discourse communities holistically as an ecological system with diverse agents bound by shared discourse conventions, relationships, processes, and actions (van Lier 2004). The agents in a discourse community are also influenced by and function in a social context. We view such context not as a physical or virtual space, but as any combination of spaces where participants in the discourse communities engage in communication using multiple modalities and modes. Discourse communities are complex systems involving participants of diverse expertise bound by and functioning in a relevant context, which comprises a set of physical and virtual

spaces that afford agents' oral and written communication. Future research will tell us more about how such communities emerge and develop in a world increasingly penetrated by social media.

Conducting Research

Another challenge brought by the strong influence of social media on contemporary discourse communities is methodological: How do we conduct research in communities maintained through new digital technologies? After reviewing research literature on "digital methods" (Rogers 2009), that is, studying behavior online using medium-specific methods, Jürgens (2012) identifies four broad difficulties. The first problem is assessing the representativeness of data collected online when the structure of the virtual space is unknown, which leads to validity issues for quantitative or mixed method research conducted online. A second difficulty lies in the unknown relationship between online and offline behavior of the participants and the role of technology in shaping their behavior. Third, protecting participants' privacy when investigating data in an online context is more challenging due to digital traces left in the online medium. Finally, researchers face enormous amounts of digital data, which requires powerful computers, software, and statistical methods, as well as problems with unexpected loss of information and difficulties avoiding errors while accessing large data sets.

Jürgens (2012) provides a solid foundation for identifying and solving methodological problems conducting research in an online context. All of his concerns are relevant to studies on discourse communities and social media. For example, making relevant observations is easier in the face-to-face context, and it can be problematic in studies of asynchronous discourse communities. Analysis of data collected from various social media websites (e.g., Twitter tweets, chat in Skype, and Facebook posts) can be problematic when researchers are insufficiently familiar with new and rapidly changing genres. The constantly changing nature of social media requires close attention when considering research design and methodology for studies on discourse communities.

Digital technology is not only an object of research but also a research tool. We need innovative research methods to study it. A few scholars have argued that heterogeneous research methods are required to study the digital world. Thurlow and Mroczek (2011) explore several research methods for studying discourse communities, using various technological tools such as text messages, online gossip, a language-learning community in Facebook, microblogging, online photo sharing, and YouTube video. Jones (2011) highlights a method for studying "computer-mediated discourse," corpus-based analysis of texting, as well as "mediated discourse analysis." This is "a perspective on discourse that focuses on how texts and other cultural tools mediate human activities and social identity" (p. 322). Recently, Jones et al. (2015) have described various ways of researching discursive components of new communication practices in various digital contexts, such as discourse analysis of gaming (Gee 2015), analysis of YouTube texts (Benson 2015), identity

formation in virtual worlds (Hafner 2015), and content analysis of blogs (Fisher and Kim 2013).

New tools and web applications provide diverse spaces for connecting to others and exposing learners to various genres of discourse. We need to understand the new activities afforded by these media and design better ways to analyze the new kinds of conversations taking place in these media. Our research methods will need to expand to meet this new challenge.

Future Directions

While there are clear challenges in conducting research on discourse communities constituted partly through social media, the topic is essential for contemporary educational researchers. We need to develop a conceptual framework that provides a holistic vision of discourse communities situated in technologically mediated local and global contexts. Such a framework would acknowledge members of discourse communities as agents with values, goals, interests, and activities and in relation to each member's possible belonging to other communities, a focus which could potentially lead to progress on the challenging theoretical issue of boundaries between various types of communities. Studying newly emerging kinds of discourse communities using an ecological approach will help us develop more adequate theoretical and methodological approaches, because social media bring a number of changes in the way discourse communities emerge, communicate, and develop. By studying the new genres and new forms of social organization brought by social media, the research community will be able to better understand both traditional and newly emerging discourse communities.

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Role Play and Dialogue in Early Childhood Education

Sheena Gardner and Aizan Bt Yaacob

Abstract

This chapter on role play and dialogue in early childhood contexts focuses on studies of sociodramatic play, where children pretend in verbal interaction with others, that include analysis of the discourse. The combination of reproduced roles and fictional play provides insights on children's developing language and understandings of the world through the lenses of play registers. Most of the studies were conducted in or relate to educational contexts.

Following critical reviews of claims that have been made about the benefits of sociodramatic play, the chapter considers three groups of studies: those that explore the roles of adults as facilitators of children's role play, studies of naturally occurring role play, as well as studies which focus on syncretic literacy and heteroglossia. The studies are from around the world – Australia, England, Malaysia, Mexico, Taiwan and Hong Kong, Scotland, Spain, and USA. The balance between fantasy and reproduction of approved cultural behavior is a recurring theme in research on play that considers language socialization and cultural differences more widely.

Among the studies reviewed, there is considerable diversity of methods and of focus. Future research could develop more systematic classifications of adult roles and of contextual variables. It could also work within a comprehensive theory of language as a resource for meaning making in context which would lead to even more nuanced accounts of the ways children move between the play and the management of the play, between fantasy and everyday experiences, and experiment with voices, roles and possibilities through dialogue.

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Keywords

Role play • Dialogue • Early years • Sociodramatic play • Literacy practices

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Introduction

To explore role play and dialogue in early childhood contexts, we review studies of sociodramatic play, where children pretend in verbal interaction with others. The terms *imaginative play*, *fantasy play*, *dramatic play*, and *pretend play* are also used to describe play that is encouraged in educational settings and positively associated with young children's cognitive, social, emotional, and linguistic development.

Sociodramatic play generally involves: (a) imitative role play, (b) make-believe with regard to toys or objects, (c) make-believe with regard to actions and situations, (d) persistence of at least 10 min, (e) interaction between at least two players, and (f) verbal communication (Smilansky 1968). Here, we additionally focus on studies of sociodramatic play that include analysis of the discourse in educational settings.

Assuming roles is a complex process:

“In role play, children are able to synthesise their ‘factual’ and ‘fictional’ experiences, and also transform them for their own purposes. Such transformations involve both children's affective selves and their adopted roles. That is, players do not simply reproduce pre-formed adult roles, but actively recreate playful versions of them” (Martin and Dombey 2002, p. 58).

This combination of reproduced roles and fictional play enables distinctive role play registers.

Role play generates dialogue in different ways. Before and during the role play children negotiate roles, props, and plot, sometimes producing written scripts for themselves or puppets to perform. Adults may be involved at various stages, or not. The roles and the play blend stories and lived experiences with children's

imagination and developing identities, moving in and out of the very different registers of performance management and the play roles assumed. As this suggests, role play is an excellent site, within the confines of an early childhood setting, for the study of children's wider dialogic potential.

Early Developments

The relationship between sociodramatic play and the language and literacy development of preschool children was established by the 1970s (Fein 1981). Smilansky's work on the effects of sociodramatic play on disadvantaged preschool children's language development (1968) is a significant early contribution drawing as many studies have on Piaget's work and his theory that pretending in role play is evidence of the development of the semiotic function. Later studies in the 1990s and 2000s have followed Vygotsky's view that pretence is crucial for child development and that through interaction in pretend play children develop abstract thought (Lilliard et al. 2011).

Broadly speaking, research on play has followed general trends in educational research. Two of the preoccupying themes of early childhood educational research in the late 1970s were classroom interaction, and play-tutoring, where teachers might initiate a role play with a child (Aubrey et al. 2000, p. 74). The 1980s saw an increase in clinical studies of language through play, while the 1990s could be characterized by an increase in interpretive methods to capture naturally occurring situations and complex, social practices (ibid, p. 95). Designing studies that capture children's views and engage young children as participants in the research process has been a growing focus in the last 10 years.

Major Contributions

There is a widespread belief that pretend play is beneficial and is positively linked to child development. These beliefs are supported by theories that draw on the work of Piaget and/or Vygotsky and by dozens of studies of children in early years settings at play. Such beliefs also form the basis of many early years education policies and training programs, but they have recently been controversially questioned in a detailed review of 40 years of research. Lilliard et al. (2013) argue that the research evidence does not support the view that pretend play is crucial for children's creativity (8), cognitive development (13); or social skills (17). They suggest that the language development reported in pretend play studies could equally have been linked to adult interaction; literacy development could have been linked to increased motivation; narrative development could have been enhanced through role play where children have to "imagine and track the perspective of another character" and "embodied cognition" predicts that children would remember stories better after acting them out (19). The suggestion that in

many cases we just do not have the evidence to prove what they characterize as the Vygotskian position that play leads to enhanced language, or the Piagetian position that language development leads to decentered play, or a third position that play is one of the variables associated with child development has sparked a debate in the *Psychological Bulletin*, with critics suggesting a more holistic approach might be appropriate.

Questions are also raised by Smith and Pellegrini (2013) who point to the risks in war play: “Dunn and Hughes [2001] found that 4-year-old, hard-to-manage children showed frequent violent fantasy and the extent of this was related to poorer language and play skills, more antisocial behaviour, and less empathetic understanding at the age of 6 years” (2013, pp. 3–4). From a developmental perspective, play can be a positive vehicle for children’s self-expression, although there are sociopolitical concerns that war play might lead to children adopting militaristic values. This highlights the importance of fully understanding the implications of different aspects of play.

It is too soon to tell whether in response to such critical reviews studies will be undertaken that can satisfy experimental design conditions and demonstrate a causal connection between role play and language development, but the debates underscore the need for further research to better understand in particular the roles of adults as facilitators, participants, and observers of children’s dialogue in role play.

Adults as Facilitators of Children’s Role Play

With the increased professionalization of early childhood, education has become the formalization of the curricula which generally advocate setting up a play corner with props for children’s play. For example, Meacham et al. (2013, pp. 257–258) describe Head Start preschools in the USA where teachers were trained to use theme-related vocabulary during the day (e.g., *physician, nurse, patient* for a hospital theme) and then during free choice activity time, children could play in the dramatic play centre which contained elaborate theme-related props (e.g., lab coat, stethoscope, prescription pad, clipboard, signs, reading materials). The researchers recorded extended role play when the teachers were involved, often in a coaching role, as in this extract.

Ms Janet Alright, nurse Anna. Go tell your patient, ‘It’s time to come to the examination room’

Anna It’s time to come to the examination room.

In Tam’s (2012) study in a Hong Kong kindergarten, the teacher would preview the expected script, providing students with examples of how a typical exchange (on the bus, in a shop) might develop and what language might be used before the children played in the dramatic play centre where again elaborate props had been

prepared. In both cases children were primed with language that might be useful to help them engage in more sophisticated role play which would push their language development.

Sociodramatic role play for children, however much it involves reproducing social roles, is also play. It creates a space where children can direct the action. Tam (2012) shows how children can subvert the goals of teacher's well-prepared lessons. In the play centre where props have been prepared and "under the gaze of the teacher," the children will follow the scripts the teacher has previewed, but these texts are also made the object of play, as children subvert them by adding chocolate sauce to frying fish in a cooking play or washing away cockroaches in a fire fighting play, particularly when the gaze of the teacher is averted. "Children's bricolage can only be deployed when the teacher's surveillance is temporarily absent" (2012, p. 256), and part of the pleasure of their play is that it is counter-culture. They were observed reverting to cultural expectations when the teacher's gaze was present. Tam argues that both the imposition of fixed cultural meanings and the concomitant valuing of children who could conform to these fixed scripts against "less competent ones" are suffocating the children's play culture and bricolage.

The two studies above shed light on how national education programs are being implemented by teachers and children in role play settings. The following two involve carefully planned interventions by researchers at a more local level.

Numerous studies build on the association between language development, social development, and sophisticated play. Neeley et al. (2001) show that following 20 min of individual script training involving what appears to be a fabricated dialogue of a service encounter between an employee and visitor to a fast food restaurant, there was a clear shift in the children's overall balance of play activity from solitary and functional play ("muscle movements") to group constructive play (e.g., with blocks), games with rules, and dramatic (role-) play, with group dramatic play being the most frequent after training. This study highlights both the social aspects of role play and the difficulties some children have in engaging initially, as well as the importance of shared scripts or schema in the development of dialogue.

Whereas construction and symbolic play have been associated with explanatory exchanges, symbolic play, fantasy, and role play have been linked to enhanced reasoning or justificatory skills. McWilliam and Howe (2004), in an urban nursery setting in Scotland, used role play with "Alien" puppets to model either "justificatory" or "non-justificatory" three-turn exchanges to 4-year-old dyads in 10-min play sessions, decreasing their support over 5 days. The dialogue with Aliens modeled in the experimental condition was "claim-*why*- justification" (e.g., I like this school – why? – because I can talk to all the nice children), whereas in the control group it was "claim-question-response" (e.g., I like this school – What do you like about it? – I like to talk to the nice children). On day 2 the researcher modeled one part in the exchange. On day 3, the researcher prompted the children in dyads (e.g., Tell Zag to answer the question); on day 4, the role play dialogue

with puppets was simply encouraged where necessary, and on day 5, the researcher moved away from the dyad after asking the children to talk with the puppets as before. The results show that the experimental group was able to produce more “why” questions and justifications at every stage of the intervention than the control group. For example:

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Control | I’m playing with that (yellow puppet). – Do you not want to help with this? – yes, that is his nose and put his hair on. |
| Experimental | I’ve a broken spaceship – Why did the spaceship crash? – Because he was not a very good driver. |

This research is significant not only in its attribution of justificatory talk to children as young as four, in collaborative play (as opposed to conflictory talk where it had been previously noted), but also in its support for using role play as a site for developing specific language skills, here justificatory talk.

Adult Initiated Role Play

While some studies show adults facilitating talk before and during role play, others involve adults setting up the context of the role play, then standing back and observing. Three examples are given here. The first involves providing play equipment, the second, RIRP, employs a specific prompt and props, while the third is initiated by an instructional prompt.

As part of a series of studies on the telephone dialogues of 3–4-year-old children in pretence play, Gillen and Hall (2001) place a toy phone in a play hut in a nursery setting. In spontaneous role play the children use the phone to make emergency calls, place delivery orders, and call their parents. Analysis of the dialogues showed that 71 % of calls included an appropriate opening move, 45 % included a closing move, while 51 % including turn taking. Whereas the imaginary interlocutor was usually identified, self-identification was rare. One third of the “emergency” calls followed the pattern of a request or imperative followed by justification, such as:

- “Anna Doctor come round tomorrow’cos someone’s poorly. It’s teddy bear poorly so come round. *Call ends.*” (ibid, p. 20)

These one-sided telephone dialogues suggest children’s proficiency in pretence telephone talk exceeds their proficiency in actual dialogues.

With the aim of gaining better understanding of learner perspectives on school literacy practices in several languages, in the UK and Malaysia, researcher initiated role play (RIRP) was employed, where the researcher sets up a specific role play, with props and a prompt, then records the Malay children’s performances. (Yaacob and Gardner 2012, pp. 247–249):

Learning to read in Malay

| | |
|----|--------------------|
| T | SE |
| SS | SE |
| T | KO |
| SS | KO |
| T | LAH |
| SS | LAH |
| T | SEKOLAH < school > |
| SS | SEKOLAH < school > |

Learning to read in English in Malaysia

| | |
|----|---|
| T | Ok. Thirty three. I MUST WASH MY HANDS (page 33) |
| SS | I MUST WASH MY HANDS (students act washing their hands) |
| T | I MUST BRUSH MY TEETH |
| SS | I MUST BRUSH MY TEETH (students brush their teeth) |
| T | I MUST COMB MY HAIR |
| SS | I MUST COMB MY HAIR (students comb their hair) |

Learning to read in England

| | |
|----|--|
| T | Today we are going to read a story about Faraway Friends |
| S1 | Look you need to show it like that (pointing to the title and showing Leah how to hold the book facing the children) |
| S2 | Cakaplah with expression < say it with expression > Today we're going to read about Faraway Friends |

KEY

<italic > —English translation

(laughs) —nonverbal behavior

CAPITAL LETTERS—reading from the textbook

T = Teacher

SS = Students

In the third extract, we see how RIRP provides children’s perspectives not only on the dialogue but also on the embodiment, how the roles should be performed. In other extracts, we notice the features they deem salient (e.g., a bell indicating the start of a lesson, a smile from the “teacher”) and these provide an additional focus for triangulation with classroom observation. These play reproductions are of course play and so cannot be taken at face value, but they do provide children’s perspectives and are available to be explored with children and teachers in post-role play interviews.

A third small scale example of how adults can initiate role play comes from Galeano’s study of Sara whose playmates were asked to “speak to her only in Spanish to help her learn the language” (2011, p. 330), as in this extract (2011, p. 349).

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Anita | Quien Euiere esta mona? La vendo por diez pesos. <Who wants this doll? I am selling it for ten pesos.> |
| Sara | Me! Me! |
| Margarita | Yo < I do > |
| Sarah | Yo < I do > |

Galeano's study includes analysis of the scaffolding strategies used by Sarah's playmates and the developments in Sarah's Spanish. (2011, p. 349).

The push to more sophisticated language and the tensions between roles and play seen in these studies where adults aim to facilitate role play resonate with studies from very different research traditions where play occurs naturally, in and out of school.

Observing Naturally Occurring Role Play

Spontaneous, naturally occurring role play is open to interpretation from many perspectives. To illustrate this, Danby in her study of preschool children's speech practices in daily play in Australia contrasts a reading of her data based on "more traditional" early childhood practices in terms of educational and social learning with one that "constitutes children as persons of gender and power by showing how they are positioned (and position themselves) as teachers, learners and players" (Danby 1999, p. 151).

Significant in this area is the work of Gregory and colleagues. In an investigation of the role played by siblings in mediating both home and school literacy practices, they compared "playing school" with what actually happens in school, among monolingual and bilingual learners. Gregory (2004) reports on play between siblings, one aged 9–11, the other 4–8, in Bangladeshi British homes. The children learn from each other, "usually through *playing out* formal classroom experiences (Williams 2004)." (Gregory 2004, p. 99). The "lessons" at home, one of which lasts almost an hour, show that the older child "could almost be her sister's real teacher. The curriculum is clearly focused, the discourse shows respect from both teacher and learner, and praise is given where deserved." (2004, p. 104). Direct comparisons of classroom interaction and home role plays illustrate that children's play exemplifies procedural, cultural, and, as illustrated in Table 1, academic knowledge.

The older children are not only expert imitators of their teacher's talk and pedagogic style, they are also able to adjust the "lesson" to the learner (making it a meaningful learning experience) and to inject creativity by extending or exaggerating the talk. For example, the "teacher" gives her sister lines for bad behavior (not a school practice); others blend (syncretize) literacy classes with styles used in Qur'anic and Bengali classes. (Gregory 2004, p. 104)

Syncretic Literacy Studies and Heteroglossia: Focus on Transformation

The work of Gregory and colleagues under the umbrella of syncretic literacy studies (Gregory et al. 2004) is important in exploring how different languages and cultures blend in talk and literacy practices. It also brings to the study of role play the complex relationships between home and school talk. A study by Kelly (2004) describes a child who lacked confidence in school literacy practices but

Table 1 Classroom interaction and playing school

| Classroom interaction | Siblings playing school at home |
|--|--|
| 81. Teacher: ‘Right’. Can you tell me why that’s a homophone, Sultana? What’s the other word that sounds like it? How would you spell that? Sorry, can’t hear you. A. can you spell it for me? 82. A: ‘w-r-i-g-h-t’ 83. Teacher: what ‘w-r-i-g-h-t’ Do you agree with him, M? (Gregory 2004, pp. 102–103) | 42. Now we’re going to do homophones. Who knows what a homophone is? No one? OK. I’ll tell you one and then you’re going to do some by yourselves. Like watch – one watch is your time watch, like what’s the time, watch. And another watch is I’m watching you. OK? So Sayeeda you wrote some in your book, haven’t you? Can you tell me some please. Sayeeda, can you only give me three please. 43. Oh I have to give five 44. No, Sayeeda, we haven’t got enough time. We’ve only got another 5 min to assembly. And guess who’s going to do assembly – Miss Kudija (<i>Wahida’s friend</i>)... (Gregory 2004, p. 103) |

then demonstrates use of specialist vocabulary and understanding of space procedures when able to join in sociodramatic play about Buzz Lightyear, a character he was familiar with from home videos. Here we see the transfer of popular culture from home, to play, to literacy in school. Role play also provides a window at home on school learning. Drury (2004) portrays 3-year-old Samia using English mixed with Pahari in playing nursery with her younger brother – though Samia’s teacher was unaware that she could speak any English at all. In these diverse ways, role play enhances children’s confidence, linguistic growth, literacy development, and sheer pleasure and gives us insights into children’s linguistic and cultural practices.

In the introduction to a special issue on Heteroglossia and language ideologies in children’s peer play interactions, Kyratzis, Reynolds, and Evaldsson juxtapose language socialization where children are socialized through participation in language interactions, and Bakhtinian heteroglossic verbal practices, where they “make use of and juxtapose multiple linguistic and cultural resources” (2010, p. 457).

Reynold’s work is a good example of the way children appropriate and then refashion discourses in role play. She illustrates how boys not only appropriate colonial discourse but also “construct selves capable of confronting the social order” (2010, p. 467) in invoking different authoritative discourses in their lives. For instance, while enacting a battle with swords between Christians and Moors, a child, who out of play is supposed to carry out a chore at home, is invited in the play register to “go and leave your beans; and come back again” to dual another day.

Work in Progress

Three areas are considered here, all of which work towards the wider goal of enabling meaningful integration and comparisons of findings.

Towards a Classification of Adult Roles in Children's Role Play Dialogues

Meacham et al. in their studies of 11 teachers talk with children in theme-related dramatic play centers in the USA analyze not only how teachers participate but also the language they use to do so (2014, p. 570). They identify four types of teacher-play instructional talk: 1. Play embedded instructional talk, where the teacher takes a role in the play and develops the language in role, 2. Explicit instructional talk, where the teacher takes a role in the play and steps out of role for a mini language lesson 3. Play language coaching, where the teacher, in role, suggests an utterance for a child role player 4. Play administrative talk, where the teacher directs as teacher (2013, p. 258ff) and relate the form of the questions (open-ended, closed, or prompt) to the teacher's roles as play leader, co-player, stage manager, and director (2014, p. 568). In their analysis of hospital play, they found that their experienced teachers used more instructional talk (2 and 4) than embedded play talk (1) when they participated in dramatic play (2013, p. 262), and that teacher questions generate more child language than teacher comment (2014, p. 570). These studies are detailed and explicit in their methodology and limitations, opening up this area for further research.

Towards a Classification of Interactions in Roleplay

Alongside classifications of adult roles, the development of systematic coding frameworks for dialogue in role play would enable meaningful comparisons. The work of Trawick-Smith and Dziurgot (2011) is noted here for its detailed framework of 61 adult behaviours (such as instruction, praise, parallel play, observation, no interaction) together with which of 63 identified play needs they meet. This research recognizes that teachers' and children's responses are variable and individualized. They found that teachers provided support to children according to their need, and such "good-fit" interactions more frequently led to autonomous subsequent play than poor-fit interaction (110).

Script Variation and Negotiation in Role Play

Where background knowledge, experience, and scripts differ among role play participants, there is more need for negotiation. Janson's (2001) study of blind and sighted preschool children show how they negotiate the scripts in fantasy play. It is not the disability that impedes communication, but the different scripts and experiences blind and sighted children have in familiar contexts. Riojas-Cortez (2001) shows how Mexican American children in their sociodramatic play draw on funds of knowledge including language, values, beliefs, ways of discipline, and the value of education.

More cross-cultural studies, such as those reviewed in Lilliard et al. (2011, pp. 287–289), are needed to better understand how children develop their roles in play. For example, Haight et al. (1999) found that American preschoolers enacted more fantasy themes, while Taiwanese children enacted more “social routine and proper conduct themes” (Lilliard et al. 2011, p. 288). This balance between fantasy and reproduction of approved cultural behavior is a recurring theme in research on play that provides a window on language socialization and cultural differences more widely.

Problems and Difficulties

Research on role play and dialogue in early childhood education is approached from many different research traditions, from highly controlled interventions and experimental designs to ethnographic investigations of children in and out of school. While some studies have been based on interviews with teachers, we would argue that obtaining recordings of dialogue is essential for detailed analysis, and this is typically done through strategically placed video cameras in the play corner (Tam 2012), attaching microphones to individual children (Gregory 2004), or setting up specific performances (Yaacob and Gardner 2012).

Many different approaches are used to analyzing the dialogue. Some detailed coding frames have been developed, but researchers are drawing on many different theories of language development. There is scattered data on context, genre, register, MLU, lexical density, open and closed questions, use of different languages, in and out of play roles. A comprehensive theory of language as a resource for making meanings in social contexts could result in more nuanced descriptions of the dialogues.

Different studies also examine different types of data, which again makes comparisons difficult. Some studies aim to control for variance by examining only data from one topic (e.g., Meacham et al. focused on hospital themed play); others aim to control for different props (see review in Gardner and Yaacob 2008). Such aims make good sense but means that generalizations from findings can be problematic.

Child variables are also diverse, with different ages, language and cultural backgrounds, gender play groups, friendship or stranger groups, and differences in learning ability often being reported. Neppel and Murray (1997) found that interactive, imaginative play tended to occur most where children were grouped in same-sex pairs, largely because they opted for different kinds of play activities. We have seen that girls tend to feature in the research on playing school, while boys are central in studies on superheroes and conflict. Such differences impact not only on the roles (reproductive vs. fantasy) and language used but also on the nature of adult intervention. These different analyses, child and contextual variables make comparisons problematic.

Future Directions

Studies of role play focused initially on what the children were doing; this chapter has shown that recently more attention has been paid to the specific roles that adults play in facilitating, initiating, and participating in children's role play. Equally important are the roles that peers play, as in Gregory's and Galeano's studies.

Increasingly other interlocutors might be via digital means, but although there are a number of studies that involve using iPads, research on role play in digital contexts does not seem to be flourishing.

As the previous section suggests, it is hoped that future research will include the development of more systematic classifications of adult roles, of contextual variables, and of analysis of the language of the role plays. These will all facilitate the development of a more coherent and substantial body of knowledge about this fascinating and important area.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Classroom Interaction, Situated Learning](#)
- ▶ [Playful Talk, Learners' Play Frames, and the Construction of Identities](#)

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Dorris Warriner and Kate Anderson: [Discourse Analysis in Educational Research](#). In Volume: Research Methods in Language and Education

Marjorie Goodwin and Amy Kyratzis: [Language Socialization and Social Practices in Children's Peer Interactions](#). In Volume: Language Socialization

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Discourse and Second Language Learning

Diana Boxer and Weihua Zhu

Abstract

This chapter presents a big picture of the past, present, and future of the intersection between discourse and second language learning. It traces back to early developments in the two fields tackling negotiated interaction; learner variation; accommodation theory; acculturation; initiation, response, feedback (IRF) patterns in classroom discourse; and cross-cultural communication. Then it discusses the major contributions to discourse-based SLA research including language identity, language socialization, sociocultural theory (SCT), and conversation analysis. All these discursive approaches have been feeding the ongoing cognitive-social debate, which was recapitulated in the 2007 focus issue of *Modern Language Journal* (Volume 91, Issue Supplement s1). Responding to the debate, Atkinson (*Modern Lang J* 86:525–545, 2002) proposed a socio-cognitive approach, which takes an ecological perspective that could conflate cognitive and social orientations. Young (*Discursive practice in language learning and teaching*. Wiley-Blackwell, Malden, 2009) espoused practice theory to examine diverse resources that participants deploy in a practice and the relationship between the practice, its generic history, and the participants' personal histories. Another current qualitative research focuses on plurilingualism or

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pragmatic development in varying discourses. Discursive approaches to second language acquisition (SLA) are facing such challenges as documenting SLA over time and going beyond monolingual, instructed settings. One possible solution is adopting Ethnography of Speaking or Interactional Sociolinguistics for longitudinal studies conducted in multilingual, uninstructed contexts. The approaches are moving toward post-structuralism and multidirections, which can illuminate, from both etic and emic perspectives, fluid identities, contingent learning outcomes, and nonlinear evolution of social participation in practices. The future of SLA research can benefit most from the integration of different approaches and the reconciliation of cognitive and social sides.

Keywords

Discourse • Second language learning • Cognitive-social debate • Post-structuralism

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Introduction

It is axiomatic that second language learning occurs in varying discourses, whether they are monologic or dialogic, verbal or nonverbal, and instructional or non-instructional. Analysis of both the big “D” discourse and the little “d” discourse (Gee 2012) can promote the understanding of how a second language is learned and used. Insights resulting from discourse analysis can provide the field of second language acquisition (SLA) with important theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical implications. The maturation of the field of discourse analysis has influenced the evolution of research in SLA and vice versa, despite the tension between cognitive versus social orientations. Meaningful discussions have arisen since Firth and Wagner (1997). These have revealed the problems and difficulties that emerge in the implementation of discourse analysis to second language learning. Moreover, they have contributed significantly to new developments in the intersection of the two fields and our apprehension of the epistemology concerning second language learning.

Early Developments

In the intersection of discourse and SLA, the strain between psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic perspectives has existed for decades. From the psycholinguistic perspective, language is a purely cognitive phenomenon and SLA occurs in negotiated interaction between native speakers and learners or among learners (e.g., Hatch 1978; Long 1983). However, negotiated interaction is also quintessentially social. Indeed, from the sociolinguistic perspective, language learners employ linguistic forms resourcefully and strategically to achieve social and interactional purposes and collaborate with other speakers to construct meaningful discourse. In this case, SLA is impacted by contextual factors in social interaction (e.g., Tarone 1988, 2007).

Negotiated interaction has been thought to encourage language learners to stretch their linguistic abilities in second language by means of checking their comprehension of the discourse until mutual understanding is achieved. Hatch (1978) went so far as to propose that out of discourse comes syntax; that is to say, the ability to use native-like strings of words into sentences emanates from participation in discourse in the target language. Long (1983) found negotiated interaction to be replete with such moves as comprehension checks, clarification requests, confirmation checks, repetitions, and reformulations. These serve the learner by aiding in comprehension of the ongoing discourse and providing necessary feedback on the learner's comprehensibility.

Labovian sociolinguistic perspectives on SLA were explored in Tarone's (1988) early work on variation and SLA. These studies focused on variability in learner usage along the dimension of attention to speech. A somewhat different approach was taken by studies focusing on accommodation theory perspectives on SLA (e.g., Beebe and Giles 1984). This research looked specifically at formality/informality of context and interlocutor relationships and their effects on second language production.

Acculturation is another important early discourse perspective on second language learning (e.g., Schumann 1986). This theory focused on immigrant group members' language acquisition along the dimensions of social distance and psychological distance. It has served to put forward a more macro sociolinguistic view of factors involved in successful second language learning. As such, it is an important early view of the connection between discourse and second language learning.

Also significant are the early contributions of studies focusing on classroom discourse and interaction (e.g., Mehan 1979). This body of research examined the discourse features of language and content classrooms with particular attention to teacher and student "moves." An important construct to emerge from this research is the "IRF" (initiation, response, feedback) pattern typical of classroom interaction. Classroom discourse is an important area for analysis that continues in the studies on tutored second language development.

Cross-cultural discourse has been an important focus of work on *Crosstalk* spearheaded by John Gumperz (1982). This perspective focuses on the use of

differing contextualization cues by speakers of languages in multilingual settings. Although many SLA studies from a cross-cultural perspective have focused on bilingual speakers' linguistic deficiencies and communicative problems (e.g., Scollon and Scollon 1995), a few (e.g., Kasper 1997) have demonstrated cross-cultural communication as an accomplishment of NS and NNS speakers in a non-instructional setting.

Major Contributions

Theoretical Frameworks for Discourse and Language Learning

Applied linguists have argued for a comprehensive theory of SLA. Firth and Wagner (1997, p. 286) called for a reconceptualization of SLA in terms of "(a) a significantly enhanced awareness of the contextual and interactional dimensions of language use, (b) an increased emic (i.e., participant-relevant) sensitivity toward fundamental concepts, and (c) the broadening of the traditional SLA database." Aligning with this, Rampton (1997) contended that the current state of world globalization necessitates new perspectives on what it means to be a language "learner" and "user." Currently, language learning is no longer seen as a purely cognitive phenomenon by most researchers interested in discourse and SLA. The issue of the "native speaker" is obfuscated in a shrinking planet.

In order to adequately analyze the best processes for applying findings on discourse analysis to SLA, we must assess the usefulness of existing theories, models, and frameworks for the processes involved in the development of language ability in second/additional languages. Several theoretical models offer very important insights into these processes: (a) language identity, (b) language socialization, (c) sociocultural theory, and (d) conversation analysis.

Language Identity

Influenced by post-structuralist theories, the identity approach to SLA (cf. Norton and McKinney 2011) foregrounds struggles over meaning and legitimacy and aims to uncover second language learners' understanding of their relationship to the world and the dynamic, changing nature of the relationship over time and space. Learners' investment in an additional language is coupled with expectation to obtain access to target language resources. Their nonparticipation might reflect their identification with imagined communities rather than low motivation. Their identities are discursively constructed and socioculturally embedded.

Some applied linguists have examined how incorporating an additional language and culture impacts on one's sense of who one is in the world. For example, McKay and Wong (1996) focused on the importance of fluid individual and social identities and their relation to multiple discourses (e.g., immigrant, minority, academic, gender). The identity of an individual in the process of SLA affects agency. Agency

enhancement affords learners a sense of power over their environment and thereby learning. In a somewhat parallel view, Boxer and Cortes-Conde (2000) put forth the concept of “relational identity” (RID), which is displayed and developed between and among specific interlocutors in their interactions over time and which affords comfort to build on sequential interactions that rest on rapport and solidarity. This relationship built among interlocutors leads naturally to further interaction and, consequently, increased opportunities for language development.

It seems likely that the first and foremost resource of those involved in additional language learning involves face-to-face (or digital) discourse. Second language users must grapple with fluid and shifting identities – individual, social, and relational – and come to terms with the power relations inherent in them. Whether or not those in the position of taking on new linguistic and cultural identities choose to appropriate or reject the “affordances” of the new language/culture may depend largely on the lived histories of the individuals, the contexts of their interactions, and the power relationships inherent in these contexts.

Language Socialization

The language socialization framework of studying linguistic and cultural development derives from Schieffelin and Ochs (1986). It views second language learning as a socioculturally situated, longitudinally oriented, unpredictable, and multidirectional process. While more competent members of society can help learners acquire second language cultural knowledge and communicative practices over time, learners can also socialize experts into their own subjectivities and practices (Duff and Talmy 2011). Research along this line has been expanded in the past two decades from a focus on child development to a broader scope including adult second language learning in various settings (Zuengler and Miller 2006).

Contemporary language socialization theory has incorporated with Lave and Wenger’s (1991) Community of Practice framework in SLA research. Second language learners might start out as legitimate peripheral participants in a less empowered position and later grow to fully participate in target language social practices, which indicate their language development. This has been demonstrated in classroom discourse, where teachers take on the role of socializing agent, more than in naturalistic contexts, where newcomers are transformed by or transform the existing community. The applications of socialization theory to SLA are principally in the realm of discourse and pragmatic development (Duff, ► [Language Socialization, Higher Education and Work](#)).

Sociocultural Theory

Unlike the language identity and language socialization models described above, sociocultural theory (SCT) adopts the theoretical perspectives of Vygotsky (e.g., 1978) to second language studies, applies to any learning process, and connects

sociolinguistic with psycholinguistic contexts and outcomes. It sees language as a tool that mediates between social interaction and the development of higher-order mental processes and attaches importance to the history of a present entity or process (Swain and Deters 2007). It views second language development in the zone of proximal development (ZPD) as a sociocultural phenomenon linking the social/interactional with the cognitive. The ZPD is the domain of skills that learners lack but can acquire with assistance.

Several key notions have been introduced in SCT applied in SLA research. *Scaffolding* is one in which the interlocutor possessing expertise guides the novice through a series of interactions in which the expert gradually cedes and the novice takes on increasing responsibility. It occurs through social interaction and includes modeling and training by the expert and observing and imitating by the novice. Gradually the novice becomes more adept, and that which began as an inter-mental, socially mediated activity becomes an intramental, cognitive, developmental process. Another notion is *dynamic assessment*, which means systematic incorporation of the ZPD into classroom practice by evaluating what learners can do and how they react to instruction while teaching. The third notion worth mentioning is *concept-based instruction*, which encompasses phases such as verbal explanation of a concept in second language, materialization where the concept is represented visually, communicative activities ranging from tasks to scenarios, verbalization, and internalization (Lantolf 2011).

Conversation Analysis

Firth and Wagner's call in 1996–1997 for a more fully contextualized, emic perspective on second language learning has blossomed into a series of research projects using conversation analysis (CA) as a methodological tool. Researchers involved in this new thrust claim that CA is the most effective means for studying moment-by-moment second language development. Evolving from ethnomethodology, CA re-envisions mental processes as socially shared in interaction and takes unmotivated looking in naturally occurring data (e.g., Schegloff 1991). This body of research has by and large focused on classroom discourse and interaction, with a few exceptions (see also Mori and Zuengler 2008).

The *Modern Language Journal*, in 2004, devoted a special issue (Volume 88, Issue 4) to a series of articles using CA for second language research and included several essays taking a critical perspective on the pros and cons of this line of research endeavor. Mondada and Pekarek Doehler (2004) characterized their approach as sociointeractionist and asserted that CA as a research tool enables the observation of task (re)organization by teachers and students in a French language class. Young and Miller (2004) showed how a CA analysis of ESL writing conferences affords a view of participation frameworks that change over time for the learner. Mori (2004) highlighted learners' orientation to learning opportunities in a Japanese language class. Kasper's (2004) CA analysis of a learner of German in conversation partner speech showed how participant statuses were made relevant

through the interactions between the expert and the novice. Markee (2004) put forth the notion of “Zones of Interactional Transition” to designate talk that occurs at the boundaries of speech exchange systems through CA analysis. Agnes He’s (2004) piece used Chinese heritage language classrooms as the site for her research. She proposed that a language socialization perspective, rather than CA, may lend increased insights into the process of language learning.

Of critical importance among the essays in the special edition were the four commentaries by applied linguists Susan Gass, Diane Larsen-Freeman, Joan Kelly Hall, and Johannes Wagner. Each assessed the role played by CA while taking to task some specific claims made by the individual papers in the collection. As in the 1997 MLJ debate, Gass (2004), from a psycholinguistic perspective, continued to question how CA could demonstrate acquisition. Larsen-Freeman (2004), who espoused a chaos/complexity perspective on SLA, questioned the CA conception of *emic* in these studies. Hall’s (2004) work was firmly rooted in a Vygotskian sociocultural perspective and, thus while noting the pros of CA, also outlined what SCT can offer to second language development. Wagner (2004), the sole CA representative of the group, reasserted his stance that classroom discourse may not be the best site for studying language learning. He stated: “the real potential for a social approach to language learning lies outside the classroom in the activities of ordinary bilingual social life” (p. 615).

Work in Progress

Research in progress on the interface of discourse and second language learning has carried on an ongoing cognitive-social debate on ontology, epistemology, and methodology. The 2007 focus issue of MLJ (Volume 91, Issue Supplement s1), presented by Sally Magnan (2007) as her last issue of editorship, continued the debate and explored how much impact Firth and Wagner (1997) has made on the fields of SLA and foreign language pedagogy.

In the focus issue, Larsen-Freeman (2007) classified the SLA studies that reacted to Firth and Wagner (1997) into supporting, partially agreeing, or mostly disagreeing ones. With the help of a table manifesting a binary contrast between cognitive and social sides, she convincingly argued that the two groups are investigating different data and questions. Although Gass, Lee, and Roots (2007) would disagree, Larsen-Freeman (2007) proposed reconciling the differences. She provided three options: (a) each side do research in its own direction; (b) empirical data be used to show how the two sides are related; and (c) a large frame encompassing different approaches be sought to accommodate the two sides.

While commenting on the reactions to their 1997 article, Firth and Wagner (2007) discussed its conceptual, theoretical, and methodological impact. To address the criticism involving evidence of language development, they contended that meticulous transcripts of recordings of natural conversational interactions could reveal learning in action without leaning on the cognitive constructs of language learning. They also offered a synopsis of three socially oriented approaches that developed

between 1997 and 2007: sociocultural theory, constructivism that is well established in educational research, and a social interactional approach built on communities of practice.

From the social perspective, Swain and Deters (2007) acknowledged continuous growth in SLA research scrutinizing contextual factors, human agency, and multi-faceted identities. They elaborated on how four major approaches to SLA research, sociocultural theory, situated learning, post-structural theories, and dialogism, have provided alternative interpretations of language learning. They asserted that second language acquisition needs to be understood from both *etic* and *emic* perspectives.

Also advocating a social orientation, Tarone (2007) discussed a sociolinguistic model of SLA that integrates social factors, attention, and linguistic forms (e.g., Preston 2002). This model illuminates contextual factors that cause variation in second language use, choice, perception, development, and identity. A growing interest related to this can be seen in increasing research on pragmatic variation in second language contexts (see Félix-Brasdefer and Koike 2012).

When discussing the new directions in SLA, Mori (2007) suggested the possibility of combining CA with other theoretical frameworks such as SCT. CA researchers consider both data-external environmental and data-internal sequential contexts, disclose participants' particular identities by analyzing how they construct talk and respond to others' talk moment by moment, and provide *emic* perspectives through meticulous observation of the initiation, projection, construction, completion, and termination of conversational turns. Although CA cannot effectively address SLA concerns about language learning, its research findings about second language conversations can inform textbook writers, second language learners, and second language teachers.

Block (2007) noted an increase in socially oriented SLA research employing a postmodern model to examine the relationship between learner identities and second language acquisition. This research has demonstrated that in naturalistic, classroom, or study abroad contexts, second language learners' access and willingness to engage in second language social networks play a crucial role in their success. Their identity constrains and is constrained by social interaction. The complexity and mutability of learner identity can account for some challenges in ideally linear and systematic SLA research.

Lantolf and Johnson (2007) discussed the implications of the social orientation of SLA for educational praxis. They highlighted the necessity of bringing human agency into the understanding of internalization in classroom discourse. They proposed that language and culture be (re)unified and that second language instruction be (re)situated in concrete communicative activities designed for conceptual understanding in context. Concept-based instruction can build second language learners' capacity to adjust and function in a second language and also improve second language teachers' critical thinking ability about second language classroom discourse and praxis.

Echoing Lantolf and Johnson's (2007) viewpoints, Freeman (2007) moved the refocusing of second language teaching on meaning-driven classroom activities and the reshaping of learner and teacher identity. To make his point, Freeman discussed

different teaching methods and SLA constructs to display paradigm shifts in the history and the effect of Firth and Wagner (1997) on pedagogy.

Considering the global multilingual reality, Kramsch and Whiteside (2007) examined the change in the interpretation of three primary SLA concepts challenged by Firth and Wagner (1997): *native speaker*, *interlanguage*, and *the language learner*. They maintained that the three notions should be broadened because their socially relative and discursive dimensions have been revealed.

Unlike Kramsch and Whiteside (2007), Canagarajah (2007) questioned the use of those three terms against the backdrop of multilingual communities speaking lingua franca English (LFE). Since LFE is intersubjectively constructed and discursively negotiated by participants from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, one form that is inappropriate or unintelligible in one context might turn out to be acceptable and understandable in another. The fluidity and hybridity of LFE indicate the invalidity of the three structuralist notions and lead to the birth of unique ways to assess LFE speakers in areas of interaction strategies, situated performance, communicative repertoire, and sociolinguistic sensitivity. Canagarajah (2007) proposed a practice-based model to illustrate the “multimodal, multisensory, multilateral, and, therefore, multidimensional” features of language acquisition (p. 923).

Lafford (2007) highlighted the discursive approaches that have contributed to the undertaking of the reconceptualization of SLA, providing in-depth discussion on the topics and describing the evolution of SLA. She confirmed the positive impact of Firth and Wagner (1997) on SLA scholars’ awareness of contextual factors, emic sensitivity, and expansion of database, despite the continuous existence of a cognitive-social bifurcation. Due to the complexity of SLA that involves learners’ mind, innate qualities, and surrounding social context, efforts have been and will continue to be made to increase the compatibility of cognitive and social lines, create intersection between them, and integrate both perspectives into a more inclusive approach beyond the boundaries.

Though not discussed in this focus issue, another attempt toward the integration of cognitive and social lines of thoughts was the socio-cognitive approach (e.g., Atkinson 2002). This approach takes an ecological perspective to integrate cognitive and social perspectives. It views language as a tool for social action and learning as developing alignment with the environment. It adopts multimodal interaction analysis emphasizing particularity, process, integrativeness, variation, experience, extended cognition, and action as interaction. This approach has been employed by only a handful of empirical SLA studies and intercultural pragmatics research (e.g., Kecskes 2014). It needs to be further explored for its applicability and effectiveness.

Similar to Canagarajah (2007), Young (2009) proposed practice theory to examine the verbal, nonverbal, and interactional resources that participants deploy in practice and the relationship between the practice, its generic history, and the participants’ personal histories. From this perspective, language learning indicates and is indicated by the change in learners’ linguistic knowledge and their participation in discursive practices. In-depth analysis of language learning requires an understanding of how and why a participant interacts in a social context.

Another strand of qualitative research employs corpus linguistic approaches to SLA to investigate second language samples collected in natural contexts. In the special issue (Volume 97, S1) of the 2013 MLJ, Hasko (2013) anticipated a long-lasting engagement between learner corpora and SLA owing to their mutually informative relationship. Zhang and Lu (2013) revealed inter- and intraindividual variability in four learners' development in Chinese classifier use through qualitative description after providing quantitative analysis. Examining contextual factors is important in such cases because it can enhance our understanding of second language development.

A brief glance at the 2014 program of the conference of AAAL shows us that current research using qualitative methodologies is highlighted. Interesting ongoing research focuses on plurilingualism in foreign language education (e.g., Moore 2006). This line of research has demonstrated that bi-/plurilinguals showed enhanced language awareness, built knowledge in context, and achieved pluricultural competence despite variable access to plurilingual repertoires. Their language proficiency can be assessed in nontraditional, context-based ways with the premise that translanguaging is a norm.

The year 2014 witnessed the 19th International Conference on Pragmatics and Language Learning (P & LL). Research featured at this biannual conference shed light on the subject of second language pragmatic development in various discourses including study abroad, medical, and political settings. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were showcased for second language pragmatics research.

Problems and Difficulties

The main problems with applying discourse analysis to second language learning revolve around methodological, theoretical, and epistemological issues. The models and theories discussed above in current major contributions have stemmed from the epistemological question of what counts as evidence of second language development. An outgrowth of this problem is that of ascertaining the most effective means of studying discourse to determine how second language learning best takes place. As we have seen in the above discussion, there has been a strong move toward considering contingent, contextual factors for unpredictable outcomes, connecting emic perspectives on discourse to the study of SLA, and expanding SLA research to uninstructed and multilingual settings.

A major difficulty is the issue of documenting actual second language learning. Gass (2004) and Larsen-Freeman (2004) took up this specific argument in their commentaries on the 2004 MLJ articles. While CA can trace a learner's participation in the learning process, this is not the same as showing that acquisition has taken place. Although Mondada and Pekarek Doehler (2004) and Young and Miller (2004) tried to elucidate second language learning through CA analysis, Agnes He (2004) acknowledged that CA is not designed to document second language acquisition.

Indeed, the existing problem with this current research thread using CA to investigate SLA is that the studies fall short of demonstrating language acquisition.

Moreover, as Larsen-Freeman (2004) pointed out, the conception of CA as emic is not the same as what is considered emic in other qualitative approaches (e.g., ethnography of speaking or interactional sociolinguistic perspectives). Wagner's (2004) suggestion that we explore contexts of lingua franca use as rich sites for study is a good one. Those contexts should also include non-Western communities of practice where learners choose to speak English as a lingua franca of practice outside of the classroom even though they share a native language (e.g., Zhu 2014).

ES and IS are highly contextualized emic methodologies, which have lent insights into the nagging questions of how best to view language acquisition as well as use. Although their usefulness for studying second language development has long been overlooked, they might rise to prominence because they would work better than current popular discursive approaches to SLA, such as CA, for longitudinal studies. It has been argued that longitudinal studies can disclose second language development over time more accurately and effectively (e.g., Duff and Talmy 2011).

Future Directions

Highly contextualized, emic approaches to applied linguistics research are increasingly critical in current analyses of spoken and digital discourse. Novice language users would benefit from knowledge of what members of discourse communities successfully do in various contexts. Such heterogeneous, multilingual, and transnational contexts include multilingual language practices (e.g., code switching and translanguaging), sensitivity to the constraints of the sociolinguistic variables (e.g., gender, social distance, and social status) in a second language, and sensitivity to domains of usage (e.g., workplace, education, social interaction, computer-mediated communication, and new media). In analyses of the knowledge, critical discourse analysis is and will continue to be an important thrust, since issues of power and dominance necessarily come into play (see also Rogers, ► [Critical Discourse Analysis in Education](#)).¹

Discursive approaches to SLA are moving toward post-structuralism and multidirections due to transnationalization and the growth of multilingualism, as evidenced by the blossoming alternative approaches to SLA mentioned above. SLA scholars need a comprehensive theory to connect individual learners with the large social world and give equal weight to etic and emic perspectives. Furthermore, SLA theory should be able to account for human agency, learners' fluid and hybrid subjectivities, contingent and unanticipated second language development, and nonlinear trajectory of the evolution of social participation in practice-based longitudinal studies. To handle the complexity of SLA data and the ever-changing world, it is not difficult to envision the integration of two approaches such as CA and discursive psychology, CA and SCT, or chaos theory and socio-cognitive

¹For a thorough overview of Critical Discourse Analysis, see Fairclough (1995).

approaches. Situated learning theory has been argued to be compatible with identity theory, practice theory, and language socialization. The compatibility of different approaches might eventually lead the way to an ecological SLA theory where cognitive and social sides converge to elucidate second language learners' discursive practice within and beyond the time-space horizon of the practice.

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Multilingual Resources in Classroom Interaction

Portuguese and African/Creole Languages in Monolingual and Bilingual Education Programs

Feliciano Chimbutane

Abstract

The use of multilingual resources in classroom interaction has been a contentious issue. It is widely debated by teachers, policymakers, and language-in-education researchers. There have long been calls for a ban on students' first languages in second and foreign language learning contexts, allegedly to avoid creating opportunities for these languages to "interfere" with the development of the "target" language. However, there is a growing body of research now calling into question the power of language pedagogies based on exclusive use of the target language. This new research is promoting the use of multi/plurilingual resources in classroom interaction as a legitimate communicative and pedagogical strategy.

This chapter discusses these issues with reference to language-in-education policies and practices in the PALOP countries ("African Countries where Portuguese is an Official Language"). The focus is on the use of bi/multilingual resources in classroom interaction in both monolingual and bilingual education programs.

Keywords

African languages • Classroom interaction • Creole languages • Multilingual pedagogies • Multilingual resources • Portuguese

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Introduction

Switching from one language to another is a common practice in daily conversations in multilingual settings around the world. However, the use of multilingual resources in classroom interaction has been a contentious issue. It is widely debated by teachers, policymakers, and language-in-education researchers (see García 2009; Macaro 2009; Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain 2009; Wei and Martin 2009; Saxena and Martin-Jones 2013; among others). This is particularly true both in second language (L2) or foreign language (FL) learning classrooms and in contexts where an L2 or a FL is used as a teaching and learning medium. In all these contexts, there are calls for a ban on the students' first languages (L1), especially when those languages have a low social status in the environment where learning takes place.

Long-standing arguments against the use of the students' first languages have been that those can "interfere" with the development of the "target" language (for discussion, see Cook 2001; Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain 2009) and reduce exposure to comprehensible input in the target language (Krashen 1982). These arguments have been used to justify, for example, the banning of L1 from L2-monolingual programs and the adoption of language separation policies in bi/multilingual education programs (Cook 2001; Cummins 2005, 2008). Critics of the language separation approach in bi/multilingual contexts have, among other terms, coined this approach as "parallel monolingualism" (Heller 1999), "the two solitudes assumption" (Cummins 2005, 2008), or "separate bilingualism" (Creese and Blackledge 2010, 2011).

However, there is a growing body of research now calling into question the power of language pedagogies based on exclusive use of the target language (Cook 2001; Cummins 2005, 2008; Jessner 2008; García 2009, 2012; Levine 2009, 2011;

Macaro 2009; Turnbull and Dailey-O’Cain 2009; Creese and Blackledge 2010, 2011; Otsuji and Pennycook 2010; Jørgensen et al. 2011; Weber 2014; among others). The pedagogical approaches proposed have evolved around notions such as *translanguaging* (on the origin of the term, see Lewis et al. 2012), *metrolingualism* (Otsuji and Pennycook 2010), and *polylanguaging* (Jørgensen et al. 2011). This new trend promotes the use of multi/plurilingual resources in classroom interaction as a legitimate communicative and pedagogical strategy. Underpinning these new approaches is a view of languages (L1, L2 or FL) not as autonomous or overlapping systems but as complete metamorphoses of systems (Jessner 2008, p. 95). Among other things, this means that new hybrid and evolving language systems emerge as a consequence of mutual influences in terms of form and structure. Transdisciplinary approaches are also apparent in research related to the use of multi/plurilingual resources in the language classroom. These include the embracing of the tenets of sociocultural and ecological approaches to language teaching and learning. In addition to that, and in line with the constructivist approach to learning, *scaffolding* has come to be regarded as the pedagogical core of multi/plurilingual pedagogies. It is argued that multi/plurilingual support for students in the daily rounds of classroom life helps them complete their academic tasks more successfully (Jessner 2008; García 2009, 2012; Creese and Blackledge 2010, 2011; Levine 2011; Lewis et al. 2012; Lin 2013; Saxena and Martin-Jones 2013; Weber 2014).

Despite their importance in challenging the dominance of language education approaches based on exclusive use of the target language, the ideas underpinning this new trend in research and pedagogy are not filtering through to educators in multilingual contexts (Turnbull and Dailey-O’Cain 2009).

This chapter discusses language-in-education policies and practices in the PALOP countries, *Países Africanos de Língua Oficial Portuguesa* (“African Countries where Portuguese is an Official Language”), namely Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and São Tomé and Príncipe. Special attention is devoted to the analysis of policies, practices, and attitudes toward the use of multilingual resources in classroom interaction both in monolingual and in bilingual education programs.

Although I have attempted to cover all the PALOP countries, the fact that bilingual education is a recent phenomenon in these countries, coupled with the scarcity of studies documenting past and current experiences of use of bi/multilingual resources in classroom interaction, made it impossible for me to give a balanced representation of the five countries in this chapter.

Early Developments: Colonial and Postcolonial Language-in-Education Policies in the PALOP Countries

In this sections I discuss language-in-education policies adopted in the PALOP countries in colonial and postcolonial periods. I show how there are continuities and discontinuities between the two periods.

Colonial Language-in-Education Policies

Drawing on Ansre's (1978) classification of the language-in-education policies of former colonial powers in Africa, Portugal can be classified as "antiuser" in the sense that, overall, it proscribed the use of African languages in official domains, including in education. In contrast, Great Britain and Germany, for example, have been regarded as having tolerated or even promoted the use of African languages as media of instruction, particularly at the elementary level, hence their classification as "prouser".

As discussed in Chimbutane (2011, 2012), the antiuser policy of Portugal (and also France) was consistent with its explicit and *de jure* assimilationist colonial philosophy. Under this philosophy, Portugal assumed that its core mission in Africa (and elsewhere) was to "civilize" and "nationalize" the native people by spreading the Portuguese language and associated cultural values. Within this ideological frame, the Portuguese constructed their language as the language of civilization and modernity, whereas African/Creole languages were conceptualized as inferior forms of speech (derogatively called *linguas de cafres*/"kaffir languages"), which should be restricted to the informal domains and, exceptionally, to evangelical purposes. This explains why Portuguese was defined as the sole language of formal education throughout the colonial era.

The diglossic, eurocentric language policies adopted by Portugal have a bearing on the poor development¹ of African languages and Portuguese-based Creoles, as well as on the attested negative attitudes toward these languages and the cultural values and practices of their speakers in the PALOP countries. In contrast to the situation in countries that had prouser colonial masters, in all PALOP countries African languages and Portuguese-based Creoles are understudied and a few literacy resources are available in these languages. They remain linked merely to informal domains and are primarily used orally. Moreover, people tend to be less tolerant about the use of these languages in institutional domains, including in education. The current signs of resistance to the introduction of bi/multilingual education programs and to the use of multilingual resources in Portuguese-dominated classrooms in these countries need to be explained within this broader sociopolitical context.

Postcolonial Language-in-Education Policies

The colonial language policies adopted by Portugal continue to influence and define the policies currently pursued by the PALOP countries. In fact, despite more than 40 years of independence, in all these countries Portuguese continues to be *the* official language and, technically, the sole language of education, whereas African/

¹The development stage of a language is gauged based on the availability or not of standardized orthography, glossaries, dictionaries, grammar books, literature materials, etc.

Creole languages remain relegated to informal domains (Chimbutane 2011; Freire 2007; Gomes 2014), with the exception of those countries that are “experimentally” using them in formal education.

Faced with the project of nation-state building based on the French nationalist principle of *one state, one nation, one language*, the leaderships of the PALOP countries decided to retain Portuguese as the official language of administration and education at independence. From a sociopolitical point of view, the language policies pursued in these countries envisaged the construction of Portuguese, the language of the former enemy, as the language of national unity (*língua da unidade nacional*), one that should be adopted and used in the service of social change (Ricento 2006). In contrast, multilingualism was conceptualized as a source of tribalism and regionalism – phenomena which were contrary to the political project of nation-state building.

However, the end of the Cold War precipitated the destabilization of the tenets of nation-state politics in the PALOP countries, and elsewhere in the world and paved the way for political, linguistic, and cultural pluralism (see Arthur Shoba and Chimbutane 2013, for examples). Indeed, in the early 1990s, internal and external forces led all the socialist-oriented PALOP countries to revise their constitutions. Constitutional reforms included provisions promoting multilingualism and multiculturalism in the education sector, and in society more generally. For example, Angolan education law, which has been in force since 2001, states in article 9 that:

1. Portuguese is the language of formal education; 2. The state promotes and ensures the mobilization of human, technic-scientific, material and financial resources for expansion and generalized use and teaching of national languages; 3. Without prejudice to what has been said in number 1 of this article, education can be in national languages, especially as adult education is concerned. (República de Angola 2001, p. 4, my translation)

These policy changes responded not only to international, rights-based calls for social equity but also to demands for social inclusiveness made by speakers of African/Creole languages, who had long been marginalized. In this context of democratization and liberalization, the new leaders in the PALOP countries also came round to the view that their states can be built around the principle of “political togetherness in difference” (Young 1993, p. 124). There was a broad shift in political discourse: diversity was no longer seen as an obstacle to nation-building but a richness to be celebrated.

Major Contributions: Emergent Bilingual Education Programs and the Use of Multilingual Resources in Classroom Interaction

This section discusses the shift in language-in-education policy and practice in the PALOP countries. The focus of the discussion is on the emergence of bilingual education programs and the legitimate use of multilingual resources in the classroom.

From Zero Provision to Some Accommodation of African/Creole Languages in Education

Until recently, the PALOP countries were among the few sub-Saharan countries that had never experimented or made any official statement on the teaching or the use of African/Creole languages as media of teaching and learning (Obondo 1994). This state of affairs has changed, mainly since the second half of the 1980s, following the first bilingual education experiments targeting primary education and adult literacy programs. Indeed, the ideological changes portrayed in the previous section and the acknowledgement of the inefficiency of Portuguese-based monolingual education systems have been pushing the PALOP countries to experiment with alternative education programs that involve the use of local languages as media of education and/or the use of these languages to scaffold the learning of/through Portuguese.

Guinea-Bissau (in 1987) was the first PALOP country to pilot a bilingual education program at primary school level in the postcolonial era, followed by Mozambique (in 1993). Guinea-Bissau conducted a 10-year bilingual education experiment (1987–1997) at primary education level using Creole and Portuguese as languages of teaching and learning (Benson 1993, 2004; Hovens 2001). Mozambique followed suit, trialling its first bilingual education program at primary level from 1993 to 1997, using Portuguese and Changana or Nyanja, depending on the African language spoken in the catchment area (Benson 2000). Meanwhile, Mozambique also piloted adult literacy bilingual education programs using Portuguese and Sena or Changana as languages of education.

Cape Verde has recently started to pilot a bilingual education program in a few primary schools using Portuguese and Creole as media of teaching and learning. Moreover, this country had already trialled bilingual education in adult literacy programs back in 1987. In its turn, Angola has been teaching a few local languages² as subjects in selected primary schools since 2006. This follows earlier initiatives in bilingual education provision in the context of adult literacy programs which started in 1985. São Tomé and Príncipe is the sole PALOP country that has yet to consider the use of local languages in formal education, although there are reports of nonofficial activities taking place in Ilha do Príncipe (Personal Communication with Beatriz Afonso, on 21.01.2015).

In 2003, the Mozambican experiment was followed up by an expansion of bilingual education provision and by the introduction of 16³ local languages as media of education alongside Portuguese, albeit still on a small scale. In contrast, the Guinean experiment died at the end of the 10-year project. This substantiates the common observation that many bi/multilingual education initiatives in sub-Saharan

²The experiment started with the teaching of five languages – Kimbundu, Umbundu, Kikongo, Còkwe, and Nganguela – but, with time, other languages have been introduced in the system, including Oshykwanyama and Fyote.

³The 16 local languages being used as media of education in Mozambique are Emakhuwa, Shimakonde, Kimwani, Cinyanja, Ciyaawo, Echwabo, Elomwé, Cinyungwe, Cisena, Cindau, Ciwutee, Gitonga, Cicopi, Cithswa, Xichangana, and Xirhonga.

Africa do not go beyond the experimental phase (Campbell-Makini 2000; Alidou 2004).

Mozambique has adopted an early-exit transitional model of bilingual education. The curriculum is organized on a language separation basis: the language boundaries are established in terms of grade levels and subjects. In the first 3 years of schooling, in addition to being taught as a subject, a local language is used as a medium of instruction. This role is taken up by Portuguese at grade 4. In contrast, Cape Verde is following an “additive” design of bilingual education in which both Portuguese and Creole are used as media of teaching and learning right from grade 1 through the end of primary education (Personal Communication with Ana Josefa Cardoso, on 10.02.2015). However, even in this case there is a certain degree of language separation in the sense that each classroom has two teachers: one teaching Creole and in Creole and the other teaching Portuguese and in Portuguese. These teachers are not allowed to switch from one language into another and students are trained to associate each teacher to a particular language, which epitomizes what Cummins (2005, 2008) has called “the two solitudes assumption.” And, as Garcia (2012, p. 234) has observed, with reference to bilingual education programs elsewhere, “although additive bilingualism is encouraged and expected, it is a monolingual lens and a monoglossic ideology that is adopted.”

An interesting aspect to be stressed here is that the provision of bilingual education programs or the teaching of African/Creole languages as subjects is prompting the use of these languages as resources in the teaching and learning of/through the Portuguese language. That is, African/Creole languages and Portuguese are being more openly used in the same formal space of the classroom, with or without official recognition. In this regard, Mozambique has moved some steps forward since there are now policy guidelines encouraging the use of African languages to scaffold teaching of/through Portuguese (INDE/MINED 2003). This applies both to the mainstream Portuguese program and to the bilingual program.

Multilingual Resources in Classroom Interaction: Policy and Practice

This subsection analyzes how bi/multilingual policies adopted in the PALOP countries have been implemented. I discuss some critical elements of such policies and show how teachers and students deal with those in the classroom. Special attention is devoted to the language separation pedagogy and to the use of L1 to scaffold students’ learning, two of the features that are present across contexts.

The Language Separation Pedagogy

Despite the favorable environment for the use of African/Creole languages as resources in classroom interaction, for various reasons, including lack of familiarity with bi/multilingual pedagogies and the diglossic, assimilationist legacy of colonial and postindependence language-in-education policies, there are teachers who still refrain from using and/or allowing the use of these languages in contexts where Portuguese is taught as a subject or used as a teaching and learning medium. This is

true both in monolingual and in bilingual programs. In fact, as noted so far, despite the enabling policy, the bilingual education curricula in force both in Mozambique and in Cape Verde are themselves organized on a language separation basis.

The language separation policy adopted in bilingual education in Mozambique is clearly enacted in the episode portrayed in the following extract, which was taken from a grade 5 Changana-language lesson. (The transcription conventions for this and the other extracts are set out in [Appendix](#).)

Extract #1 The language separation policy in action (in Chimbutane 2013, p. 5)

| | | |
|----|---------|---|
| 1 | Ms Ma: | <i>Okay... now it's time for... for us to speak in our heritage language which is Changana, isn't it?</i> |
| | Ss: | <i>Yes.</i> |
| 5 | Ms Ma: | <i>So le-... let's... let's forget Portuguese for a short while. I often tell you that, when in a Portuguese class, we should leave our heritage language aside because there's time reserved for us to speak our heritage language... Changana, isn't there?</i> |
| | Ss: | <i>Yes.</i> |
| 10 | Ms Ma: | <i>That time has come, hasn't it?</i> |
| | Ss: | <i>[Yes.</i> |
| | Obadias | <i>[Yeah, you must speak good Changana in here! ((he says while smiling))</i> |

In this opening phase of the lesson, speaking in Changana, Ms Marta (Ms Ma) represents language boundaries as being institutionally defined. Although this was a Changana-language class, she used the occasion to remind the students (in Changana) that they should not speak Changana in Portuguese classes since there were appropriate spaces reserved for them to speak this language. In a debriefing session after the lesson, Ms Marta argued that, by forbidding and avoiding the use of the students' L1 in L2 contexts, she wanted to ensure that her students thought and wrote in Portuguese when in Portuguese lessons. Underlying Ms Marta's stance is the view that learners need to be maximally exposed to Portuguese language input if mastery of this language is to be achieved, a view that is in line with the work of Krashen (1982).

As has been noted in relation to other contexts (Jessner 2008; García 2012), instead of employing bi/multilingual pedagogies, teachers such as Ms Marta tend to set boundaries between the languages of schooling, seeing them "as autonomous skills that need to be separately and linearly developed." (García 2012, p. 236)

The Use of L1 to Scaffold Students' Learning

Despite the dominance of the language separation policy in the PALOP countries, the fact that Portuguese is typically an L2 for most of the children makes it impossible to avoid the use of their L1 in classroom interaction. In fact, new policies now sanctioning the use of local languages in Portuguese learning contexts actually

ratify a practice that has long been established in the PALOP countries (e.g., Chibutane 2011; Gomes 2014), especially in rural contexts.

The next extract, taken from a grade 2 Portuguese-language lesson in the Portuguese monolingual curriculum in Angola, illustrates the use of bilingual resources in classroom interaction. In this lesson, the students were reading pictures on different types of houses and talking about their importance. The classroom conversation is primarily in Portuguese but, from time to time, Kilingi, a local language, is interwoven with the talk in Portuguese.

Extract #2 The use of the students' L1 as a communicative and pedagogical resource in Portuguese classroom contexts (Adapted from Gomes 2014, p. 136)

| | | |
|----|-------|---|
| 1 | SS: | <i>Good morning, Madame!</i> |
| | Ms F: | <i>Good morning.</i> (. . .) |
| 5 | Ms F: | <i>What can you see in this picture here?</i> ((she points to a picture of different types of houses)) |
| | S: | <i>This is a house.</i> |
| | Ms F: | <i>These are all houses. These are all houses</i> ((she translates her initial sentence from Portuguese to Kilingi)). <i>What is the importance of houses?</i> |
| | SS: | ((silence)) |
| 10 | Ms F: | <i>What is the importance of houses?</i> ((she asks the same question in Kilingi)) |
| | S: | <i>Houses protect us from rain and storms.</i> ((a prompt response in Kilingi)) |
| | Ms F: | <i>That is correct. We live in houses; they serve as shelters when it is raining or storming.</i> |

In line 7, we see that Ms Florbela (Ms F) uses Kilingi to make sure that the students understood her previous utterance in Portuguese. In contrast, in line 11 she restates her question in Kilingi after assuming that the students had not understood the initial command in Portuguese (Gomes 2014, p. 136). This is substantiated by the students' silence after her initiation move. The correct answer promptly given by a student in Kilingi (line 13) suggests that, in fact, the students had not understood the question initially asked by Ms Florbela in Portuguese or it may mean that they knew the importance of houses but could not express that in Portuguese. If this second interpretation is correct, then on hearing his teacher speaking in Kilingi, the student may have taken that as a green light to use his L1 in what was a Portuguese-dominated learning context, hence the delivery of the desired answer in that language.

Extract #3 also illustrates the use of the students' L1 as a communicative and pedagogical resource in Portuguese-speaking contexts. This episode took place in a grade 4 Portuguese-language lesson in the bilingual education program in Mozambique. The lesson was based on the reading of a text on healthy eating. The teacher attempted to get the students to name some of the negative effects of eating large amounts of foods that are high in sugar.

Extract #3 The use of the students' L1 to scaffold learning in Portuguese classroom contexts (in Chimbutane 2013, pp. 7–8)

| | | |
|----|-------|---|
| 1 | Ms C: | <i>Why should we not eat lots of foods high in sugar?</i> |
| | Ss: | <i>Because eating lots of foods high in sugar is harmful for our health. ((they read from the textbook))</i> |
| 5 | Ms C: | <i>So, it means that we should not eat lots of foods high in sugar. . . because it is not good for health umm we should not eat many sugary things (. . .) If we. . . eat too much sugar. . . it is not good for health. We can get ill! What is the illness that. . . we always get. . . when we eat sugary foods?</i> |
| 10 | | <i>At home they say "you ate too much sugar, you!" ((she changes her intonation, saying it in a theatrical voice, as if she were embodying an imaginary persona))</i> |
| | Ss: | ((silence)) |
| | Ms C: | <i>What is the illness that we can easily get?</i> |
| | Ss: | ((silence, but the students look at each other while smiling, as if they are signaling that they know the answer)) |
| | Ms C: | <i>Hm? . . . Who can say it in Changana. . . that kind of illness?</i> |
| | Ss: | ((silence)) |
| 15 | Ms C: | <i>What is the illness?</i> |
| | Ss: | ((silence)) |
| | Ms C: | <i>Who. . . who can say it in Changana?</i> |
| 20 | Ss: | ((silence, but some students close to me whisper the word <i>nyongwa</i> /diabetes among themselves)) |
| | Ms C: | <i>You should not add too much sugar into your tea because you will get ill. ((again she says this theatrically, as a mother to her child))</i> |
| | | <i>What is. . . what is the illness that you may suffer from?</i> |
| 25 | Ss: | FROM DIABETES! |
| | Ms C: | What? |
| | Ss: | From diabetes! |
| | Ms C: | <i>So, umm to that we call. . . what is. . . what are you going to suffer from?</i> |
| | Ss: | FROM DIABETES! |
| 30 | Ms C: | What? |
| | Ss: | From diabetes. |
| | Ms C: | <i>So, umm. . . what we call BILE ((she meant diabetes))</i> |

After various failed attempts to get the students to name at least one of the negative effects of eating large amounts of sugary foods in Portuguese, the students finally gave the desired answer in Changana, in chorus and out loud. That only happened when the teacher, speaking in Changana, authorized them to answer in their home language. As I observed this class, I picked up on nonverbal communication between the students which suggested that they knew the answer but were unable to deliver it in Portuguese.

From the above episode it can be concluded that the use of Changana served chiefly to facilitate the teacher-student interaction, at a point where there were a series of awkward silences. In addition to that, it can also be argued that, by allowing the use of Changana, Ms Constância also helped the students to link the knowledge

transmitted through the textbook to that acquired during their socialization at home. Indeed, through successive use of contextualization cues, including the use of theatrical strategies, she made the students aware of the fact that in their home contexts people also have valid knowledge about healthy eating (lines 9, 23–25). Other similar examples of teacher use of such contextualisation cues, in other multilingual classrooms in Africa and elsewhere, are provided in research reviews of the use of multilingual resources in classroom interaction (e.g., Lin 2013; Saxena and Martin-Jones 2013; Martin-Jones 2015).

Moreover, as Creese and Blackledge (2010, p. 112) have concluded in relation to complementary schools in the UK, the use of flexible bilingualism and flexible pedagogy allows classroom participants to make links “between the social, cultural, community and linguistic domains of their lives.”

The approach taken by teachers such as Ms Florbela (Angola) and Ms Constância (Mozambique) has been called “classroom translanguaging” (Lewis et al. 2012), that is, the use of translanguaging with a pedagogic emphasis, including scaffolding of learning. This approach is consistent with constructivist pedagogy (see Howe and Mercer 2007), which underscores the value of learners’ prior knowledge as a cognitive basis for further learning. Indeed, as Cummins (2008, p. 67) points out, “if students’ prior knowledge is encoded in their L1, then their L1 is inevitably implicated in the learning of L2.”

Work in Progress: Corpus Planning and Development of Human Resources

The official use of African/Creole languages as media of education and/or their teaching as subjects in the PALOP countries is in itself a sign of progress toward a wider use of multilingual resources in classroom interaction. The use of local languages in the official context of school has been playing a pivotal role in the development of their corpora and in the emergence of a pool of teachers prepared to operate in bi/multilingual classrooms.

Corpus Planning

As mentioned so far, the Eurocentric, assimilationist language-in-education policies adopted by Portugal constrained the development of African/Creole languages in the PALOP countries. Most of these languages remained unwritten – without orthographic systems, reading materials, grammar books, or dictionaries, which are important tools for the development of literacies. The low level of development of these languages was one of the arguments advanced for not officializing or using them as languages of education at independence, which perpetuated their underdevelopment. This argument has often been associated with the myth that African/Creole languages are not capable of serving as vehicles for science and technology (Bokamba 1991; Obondo 1994; Campbell-Makini 2000).

However, the current use of African/Creole languages in education and in other official domains has been catalyzing the devising of orthographies, the development of new registers and genres and the emergence of different types of literacy practices in these languages. These processes can be taken as necessary conditions for an effective use of local languages as resources in classroom interaction.

Cape Verde was the first PALOP country to propose an orthographic system for a local language in the postcolonial era. Indeed, in 1979 Cape Verde devised the orthography for Creole, based on phonetic-phonologic orthographic principles (Freire 2007). This system was successively revised and improved in 1989 and in 1993. In 1987 the government of Angola provisionally approved orthographies for six local African languages, namely Kikongo, Kimbundu, Umbundu, Cokwe, Mbunda, and Oxikwanyama. Mozambique proposed the first standardized and harmonized orthographies for 17 local languages in 1989, a proposal successively revised and improved in 1999 and in 2008. Despite various attempts, none of the orthographies devised so far in the PALOP countries has received a final official approval, which can be taken as a tactic aiming at delaying the officialization of the languages concerned.

In addition to the improvement of the proposed orthographies, the use of African/Creole languages in education has been contributing to the development of the respective lexicons, new registers, and genres, and to the emergence of different literacy practices (see Chimbutane 2011, in relation to Mozambique). This is the expected consequence of using these languages in the new cultural environment of formal education, which substantiates the view that “a language cannot be used in a wider range of domains if it is not developed, and it will not be developed unless there is a need to use it in a wider range of domains.” (Bamgbose 1999, p. 14)

Development of Human Resources

Discouraged or even banned in colonial and in postindependence eras, bilingual education and the teaching of African/Creole languages are new phenomena in formal education in the PALOP countries. As a consequence, the implementation of these initiatives poses challenges not only to teachers but also to all educational actors involved. Overall, these actors have been educated in a monolingual Portuguese-based system and, although the overwhelming majority includes native speakers of African/Creole languages, they lack literacy skills in these languages.

Despite this lack of experience in bilingual education, no preservice training or certification in bilingual education has yet been developed in the PALOP countries that are piloting or expanding bilingual programs to wider contexts. They all rely on teachers trained for the mainstream Portuguese curriculum. Some inservice training activities are providing support for these teachers and developing their capacity in bilingual methodologies. There have been some improvements not only in terms of their knowledge of the orthographies and structures of African/Creole languages, but also in terms of their understanding of bilingual education philosophies and

pedagogies. However, mainly due to the limited time allocated for inservice training and lack of continuity of these activities, teachers involved in bilingual education are not, in general, fully prepared to use bi/multilingual pedagogies in their classrooms. Overall, they continue to employ the teaching methods that are commonly used in the monolingual Portuguese program, including the teaching of Portuguese as an L1, the deployment of language separation pedagogies, and safe-talk strategies (see Benson 2004; Chimbutane 2011; Ana Josefa Cardoso, personal communication, on 10.02.2015). Safetalk refers to teachers' and students' use of interactional strategies that allow them to preserve their dignity by avoiding opportunities for displays of academic or linguistic incompetence (Hornberger and Chick 2001). These include teacher's prompts and students' choral responses and unprincipled use of codeswitching.

This suggests that improvements in inservice training and more proactive pre-service training systems targeting both bilingual and monolingual teachers need to be in place in order to ensure effective application of bi/multilingual pedagogies in the PALOP countries.

Problems and Difficulties: Bi/Multilingual Methods and Students' Proficiency in L2

Portuguese language proficiency and academic success in this language are perceived as the main gateways to upward socioeconomic mobility in the PALOP countries. This makes it a much sought-after language. In contexts like these, unsuccessful learning of this language can be easily attributed to the deployment of perceived inappropriate policies and/or teaching methods. This may include the questioning of the effectiveness of flexible multilingual pedagogies.

In line with the transitional model of bilingual education adopted in Mozambique, for example, it is expected that students at grade 4 have the necessary proficiency in Portuguese to cope with the curriculum demands at this level and beyond. However, the difficulties exhibited by students such as the ones portrayed in Extract #3 show that they are not ready to learn through the medium of Portuguese at the transition phase. As discussed in Chimbutane (2011), due to the lack of Portuguese language proficiency, teacher-student classroom interaction is constrained and students' academic performance declines precipitously, when compared to earlier grades where instruction is in their L1. This has led some bilingual teachers to reinforce their theory of students' L1 avoidance in L2 learning contexts, perceiving the maximum use of the Portuguese language as the correct way to deal with the decline in students' performance.

As argued in Chimbutane (2011, 2013), the stance taken by these teachers is, to a certain extent, understandable, especially taking into account their students' poor performance after transition and the finding that extensive use of L1 may have a negative impact on L2/FL learning (Turnbull 2001; Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain 2009). However, we should not overlook the conditions in which learning and

teaching of Portuguese take place in Mozambique and in the PALOP countries more generally. These conditions include: scarcity of printed materials, ineffective pedagogies, including the inappropriate option of teaching Portuguese as an L1 (e.g., Varela 2011; Freire 2007), in contexts where learners often do not have access to this language outside the classroom. Moreover, the research available thus far indicates that, despite the efforts that have been made, teachers are still not fully prepared to teach Portuguese as an L2 (Freire 2007; Chimbutane 2011).

Therefore, the use of students' L1 in Portuguese classrooms should not, per se, be considered the sole reason why students in bilingual programs, such as the Mozambican one, do not exhibit grade level appropriate Portuguese language proficiency or academic achievement in content subjects. Taking a broader perspective, I would argue that, instead of banning or minimizing the use of the students' L1, principled and optimal use of their L1 is what is appropriate. This view has also been put forward by other researchers who have investigated the use of students' L1 in L2 contexts (e.g., Cook 2001; García 2009, 2012; Levine 2009, 2011; Macaro 2009; Lin 2013). I would, however, take into account Turnbull's (2001) and Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain's (2009) cautionary note on the drawbacks of relying excessively on the students' L1.

Future Directions: Putting Multi/Plurilingual Pedagogies into Practice

The evidence presented in this chapter suggests that, despite the convincing arguments in favor of the multi/plurilingual pedagogies in the current literature, and despite the emerging insights from classroom-based research of a discourse analytic and ethnographic nature, multi/plurilingual pedagogies still need to be tested in different contexts, including in postcolonial contexts such as those of the PALOP countries. And, perhaps above all, we need convincing evidence that their application does not constrain the development of communicative competence in languages like Portuguese, that are constructed locally as the "legitimate language".

The multi/plurilingual pedagogies proposed are, in general, based on experiences in typical L2 classrooms in the global north and west, which do not necessarily have the same size or composition as those in postcolonial contexts. Moreover, the social and sociolinguistic environments are quite different. In the global north and west, L2 classrooms usually bring together students with different national origins and sociolinguistic histories, and these students are generally assisted in their learning of language by teachers who are fluent L1 speakers of the target language. In contrast, in postcolonial contexts such as those in the PALOP countries, L2 classrooms include students from different ethnolinguistic groups – often groups with origins in the same region as the school or adult literacy program. They are assisted in their learning of language by teachers who are themselves L2 users of the target language. Moreover, L2 students in the north and west are often exposed to the target language

in the wider society outside the learning context (interaction with L1 speakers, easy access to the internet, literacy rich environment, etc.) whereas, in general, L2 students in postcolonial contexts only have access to and use the target language in the classroom, especially in schools and literacy programs outside the urban areas. This diversity calls for contextually sensitive adaptations of the multi/plurilingual approaches proposed – adaptations which might, in fact, foster refinement of their theoretical and pedagogical underpinnings.

Moreover, part of the difficulties involved in translating multi/plurilingual pedagogies into practice in school contexts has to do with the fact that these approaches challenge the traditional role of schools as the guardians of the idealized monolingual norms of communicative competence, which are associated with the so-called standard varieties. In education and society at large, these are the “legitimate language” varieties “against which the prices of the other modes of expression, and with them the values of the various competences, are defined.” (Bourdieu 1977, p. 652). It is within this sociolinguistic landscape that resistance to codeswitching and to other forms of language fluidity, such as translanguaging in education, should be appraised. Indeed, despite their pervasiveness in multilingual contexts, fluid language practices are seldom perceived as legitimate forms of expression, ones that, for example, can be freely used in formal and official activities. This is particularly true when these fluid language practices involve the use of low-status languages in historically assimilationist contexts, as is the case in the PALOP countries, where the social status mismatch between Portuguese and local languages is huge. Therefore, when they are perceived as the subversion of linguistic norms, the norms that schools are meant to enforce and disseminate, fluid language practices are seen as corrupt ways of speaking and as unnecessary constraints on effective development of the legitimate communicative competence in the target language.

Therefore, language professionals promoting fluid language practices in classroom communication need to continue to produce strong evidence to convince educational practitioners and other social actors and stakeholders, including parents, planners, and language teachers, that dynamic multi/plurilingual pedagogies not only foster the development of multilingual and intercultural communicative competences but also the development of the capacity to engage in monolingual communication in the target language, if and when required (Levine 2011).

Buy-in and effective application of dynamic multi/plurilingual pedagogies can, at least in part, be achieved if there is ample dialogue and research cooperation between researchers and teachers. Indeed, teachers can only apply those approaches if they understand how they are intended to work, and in what ways they are superior to hegemonic approaches based on the exclusive use of the target language. In addition, they need to have a say in relation to the actual application of these approaches, mainly based on the sociolinguistic and educational conditions in which they operate. As suggested in Chimbutane (2013), the engagement of teachers in action research in their own classrooms may help them build a deeper understanding of their own use of multilingual resources and make appropriate local judgments as to what might work best for their particular classrooms.

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Appendix: Transcription Symbols and Conventions

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| . | Stopping fall in tone, with some sense of completion |
| , | A slightly rising tone giving a sense of continuation |
| ... | Pause |
| ? | Raising intonation (marking uncertainty or a question) |
| ! | Emphasis (marked prominence through pitch or increase in volume) |
| [| Overlapping turns |
| “ ” | Indicates the beginning and end of a direct quotation or parts of reading from textbooks, blackboard, etc. |
| (...) | Indicates that parts of the episode transcribed have been omitted |
| ((text)) | Contextual information |
| [word or text] | Word or text not uttered but implicit in speaker's speech |
| <i>Italics</i> | Marks utterances or words in Portuguese or translated from Portuguese |
| Italics (boldened) | Marks utterances or words in African languages or translated from African languages |
| UPPER CASE | Indicates louder speech than the surrounding talk |
| S: | Nonidentified student |
| Ss: | Several or all students speaking simultaneously |

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Researching Learners' and Teachers' Beliefs About Language Learning Using Metaphor

Linda Fisher

Abstract

Due to the potentially powerful influence of beliefs on actions, research in SLA has focused increasingly on the beliefs of language learners and teachers and, more recently, on how such beliefs develop over time in particular contexts and as a result of social interaction. However, not least because they are mutable and because we are often not aware of the ways in which they influence us, belief has been recognized as a complex construct for investigation. In offering a way to expose thinking that may otherwise be difficult to articulate, metaphor also entails social and affective dimensions, which makes it apposite for beliefs research. Either by analyzing the metaphors that people use in naturally occurring oral or written discourse, or by eliciting metaphors from them through task completion exercises, researchers have been able to examine the ways in which people conceptualize themselves as language learners, the language learning experience, and their understanding of the role of the language teacher. The chapter presents beliefs research that has employed metaphor in a variety of second language educational settings and explores the methodological problems that metaphor studies must address. Future research directions are explored, namely, further work on how metaphor develops in social settings, and research into how it might be used to shape beliefs to improve language learning outcomes.

Keywords

Beliefs • Cognition • Emotion • Language learning • Learners • Metaphor • Teachers

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Introduction

Recognizing that beliefs exert a potentially powerful influence on behaviors and learning outcomes, second language research has since the 1980s focused attention on examining how learners and teachers view the language learning process and conceive of themselves as language learners or language teachers. Accessing beliefs remains, however, an area of methodological difficulty. Beliefs form a system or schema, can be occurrent (being actively considered at any given time) or nonoccurrent, and have been shown to guide our thinking and action in ways we may be unaware of. Accessing the complexity of occurrent beliefs is less than straightforward, but accessing what is implicit is even more of a research problem. This is where metaphor would seem to have a role to play.

From the Greek “metapherin” meaning transfer, metaphor is a tool or device for seeing one thing (sometimes referred to as a “topic”) in terms of a different thing (a “vehicle”) and involves some sort of transfer of meaning or sense between the two. It suffuses our language; in our speech, we draw consistently on conventionalized metaphors, such as life being a journey, and use them to make sense of the world and to organize our thinking and our talk. Therefore, examining peoples’ metaphors, either as arising naturally in spoken or written discourse (metaphoric processing), or as elicited through, for example, sentence completion exercises (processing metaphor), might prove useful for accessing beliefs and help us to understand how people conceptualize their world. Metaphor may, have a role not only in helping us discern how beliefs develop over time, but also may have potential for shaping beliefs through social interaction with others and therefore might be used as a mediational tool for improved language learning potential.

Early Developments in Beliefs Research and a Rationale for Employing Metaphor

Much work on beliefs in SLA has built on the foundations laid by Elaine Horwitz, who, in the 1980s, developed the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) to investigate students’ beliefs about language learning (see, e.g., Horwitz 1988, 1999). The BALLI has been widely used to establish patterns in learners’ and teachers’ beliefs (differences and similarities between groups of learners and across cultures) or to ascertain which beliefs students hold that might be erroneous.

However, in the last 10 years in particular, and in line with other research directions in SLA, beliefs have come to be understood as unique to the individual, situated, dynamic, and complex constructs, which are often confused and contradictory, and have an affective dimension, especially where they relate to self-beliefs. This has led to a shift towards more holistic accounts of learners' and teachers' beliefs (Barcelos and Kalaja 2011; Larsen-Freeman and Cameron 2008). Here the emphasis is on understanding in more detail the contexts in which beliefs have arisen. As such, more recent studies have tended to employ qualitative methods such as interviews and narrative writing, adopting an idiographic approach (working at the level of the individual), rather than a nomothetic approach (working across larger cohorts), and have been interested in mapping belief development.

Metaphor has been flagged as a potentially very useful methodological tool for accessing beliefs (Barcelos and Kalaja 2011) and, as discussed below, has been used both nomothetically and idiographically. Metaphor research into beliefs within a cognitive vein (see Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Lakoff 2008) is premised on the idea that we make mental maps with metaphors and that these automatically guide our thinking and actions. Gibbs, for example, refers to the fact that metaphor is not just ornamental, but is a "fundamental scheme by which people conceptualize the world and their own activities" (2008, p. 3). This suggests that if we can access peoples' metaphors, we can access their belief systems because the metaphors might allow for occurrent and nonoccurrent thinking to be brought to light. It is this potential of metaphor that Aristotle first drew attention to: its ability to express what cannot be named (Holme 2004).

A further affordance of metaphor for beliefs research is the access it can provide to the affective dimensions of belief which, as Fiedler and Bless have argued (2000, p. 144), are "located at the very interface of emotion and cognition." Investigating this through the lens of metaphor would seem to be particularly appropriate since, as Cameron points out, "the vehicle terms of linguistic metaphors often carry evaluations, attitudes, values, perspectives or beliefs" (2010, p. 5).

The use of metaphor in cognitive approaches to research in teacher or learner beliefs has tended to elicit metaphors from research participants. So, for example, to understand teachers' beliefs about their role, respondents are typically asked to complete starter sentences such as "An EFL teacher is....," with the results analyzed thematically. To this end, the metaphors elicited tend to be viewed as representing stable cognitions capturing how people conceive of the world. While this is potentially useful for understanding learners' and teachers' conceptualizations at one point in time, some scholars have argued that a purely cognitive approach to metaphor assumes a directionality, presupposing that cognitive metaphor works directly on our linguistic output, and that it has paid too little attention to the sociocultural and other linguistic and potentially dynamic aspects of metaphor (Cameron 2003).

Evidently, there are also dangers in presuming a direct relationship between use of metaphor, either elicited or as arising in oral and written discourse, and beliefs. The metaphors that we use in our discourse are conceptual and are conventionalized, that is, they are assimilated as a result of our engagement in social settings, and may not reflect beliefs, but rather simply reflect common use of language and so

conventional patterns of thought. In the case of research using elicited metaphor, participants may not be able to find a suitable metaphor to express their thoughts and so choose something at random, or may simply not complete the exercise. As Oxford, Tomlinson, Barcelos, Harrington, Lavine, Saleh, and Longhini (1998, p. 44) point out, “a single metaphor can contain tautologies, inconsistencies and juxtapositions of contrasting facts.” This may make it a useful tool in allowing the complexity of beliefs to be expressed, but also makes the job of understanding people’s intentions when they use a metaphor more difficult.

Major Contributions

Work employing metaphor to investigate language teachers’ beliefs has often sought to categorize across populations the sorts of beliefs teachers and preservice teachers hold (see for example De Guerrero and Villamil 2002; Zapata and Lacorte 2007), with the rationale that if language teachers’, and especially prospective teachers’, tacit beliefs are not examined, they may influence professional learning throughout their training and their careers (Borg 2003). The majority of these studies have sought to examine respondents’ beliefs about “the teacher,” as did Seferoğlu, Korkmazgil and Ölçü (2009), for example, who examined the elicited metaphors of pre- and in-service teachers to see if there were differences that emerged between the groups. They found that all viewed the teacher as a guide, but that those with more experience were more likely to view the teacher as a facilitator than those in the earlier years of service, and the authors suggest that teachers become more learner-centered as they gain experience in the classroom.

Other work has sought to understand conceptions of “the teacher” from both teacher and learner perspectives, again in order that any differences in the beliefs of both groups can be revealed. In one of the earliest studies that analyzed the metaphors arising in interviews with learners and teachers, Block (1992) found that while there was some common ground, teachers viewed themselves more as nurturers or guides who sought to develop the students as independent learners, whereas students viewed teachers as holding the power in the classroom. Similar themes were picked up in another influential study (Oxford et al. 1998) analyzing the metaphors in more than 250 written or oral personal narratives elicited from learners and teachers via prompts, such as “Describe a teacher whom you especially liked.” The 14 metaphors for teacher that resulted from analysis (e.g., teacher as manufacturer, teacher as conduit, teacher as nurturer, teacher as learning partner, teacher as scaffolder, teacher as lover/spouse) were then assigned to a further overarching analytical framework of four philosophical perspectives that arose from the researchers’ textual analysis of educational writing through the centuries on the role of teacher: Social Order, Cultural Transmission, Learner-Centered Growth, and Social Reform. Findings suggested that learners were more likely to view the teacher as an imposer of order and associated with strict control. Oxford et al. argue that all parties need to be aware of underlying assumptions, particularly about the purpose of education and therefore how language learning might best happen.

This framework of the four perspectives has proved popular with other researchers interested in analyzing metaphor in terms of cultural differences in beliefs (see, e.g., Farrell (2006) who examines the journal writing of three trainee English language teachers in Singapore, and Nikitina and Furuoka (2006) who examine Malaysian learners' perceptions of language teachers). The cultural context in which beliefs arise is particularly well discussed in a paper by Zapata and Lacorte (2007), who similarly draw on Oxford et al., having analyzed the metaphors about teachers, learners, and language classrooms elicited from two groups of preservice EFL teachers at two US universities and from a group of inservice English teachers in Argentina. Zapata and Lacorte (2007) note that teachers in Argentina were more likely to choose metaphors associated with "learner centered growth" than the other groups, which tended to choose metaphors that viewed language teaching as "cultural transmission." As beliefs do not arise in a vacuum, the ensuing discussion of the socio-historical nature of the Argentinian context and the sorts of education the participants might have had that might have led to the development of these beliefs is welcome and relatively rare in research papers.

Some of the work drawing on metaphor to examine cross-cultural differences in belief has its foundations in a study carried out by Cortazzi and Jin (1999). Adding to a body of work completed a few years earlier with UK primary teachers, the researchers aimed to understand the conceptions of "a good teacher" held by students studying English in five different cultural contexts (China, Turkey, Japan, Lebanon, and Iran). The prompt used was "A good teacher is ...," so findings are not L2 teacher-specific. There was commonality across many of the different national groups; teacher as parent or friend came out most strongly in all groups, apart from the Iranian teachers, though interestingly this group also had one of the lowest completion rates. Cortazzi and Jin argue that this theme was especially strong in countries with a Neo-Confucian tradition, where ordered social relations are important.

The interesting educational question is what do we do with the information we gather about learners' and teachers' beliefs? What do teachers do when they find out that their students' beliefs do not match their own, for example? One paper that touched on this issue (Wan, Low and Li 2011) is an investigation of teachers' and students' elicited metaphors about EFL teacher roles and had the aim of seeing if teachers, when presented with the metaphors of their students, considered changing their teaching practices. The categories generated were teacher as provider, teacher as nurturer, teacher as devotee, teacher as instructor, teacher as culture transmitter, teacher as authority, teacher as interest arouser, and teacher as coworker. Teacher as instructor was a divergent category; the teachers and students agreed on most categorizations, but students saw teachers more as instructors and culture transmitters than the teachers saw themselves. As a result of participation in the project teachers agreed that they may need to consider being more explicit with classes as to their choice of classroom practices and that there needed to be space for cultural learning. On another note, this paper is one of the few empirical works that are highly reflexive about the process of analysis, discussing in detail both nonresponse and the difficulty with coding some items.

While there are a number of studies that have used metaphor to understand conceptions of “the teacher,” there are surprisingly few that have focused on learners’ beliefs about the language learning process or about themselves as language learners. Where these have been conducted, some themes have recurred in different contexts. One of these is the “language learning as a journey” metaphor (Ellis 2001, Kramsch 2003), and the other the “struggle,” or indeed “suffering,” that the language learning process entails (Ellis 2001, Kramsch 2003, Fisher 2013). Ellis (2001), for example, carried out a metaphoric processing of the diaries of six adult beginner learners of German. Over a 10-week period, he asked the adult participants to comment on a range of topics (e.g., their feelings of progress, the instructional approach, their motivation to learn German, and so on) and then analyzed the diaries to identify the main conceptual metaphors used. The beliefs inferred from this were learning as a journey, learning as a puzzle, learning as suffering, learning as a struggle, and learning as work. Some of these themes were also visible in a study by Fisher (2013) who, as part of a larger longitudinal project to examine belief change, also conducted a metaphor elicitation task, though this time with 12- to 13-year-old beginner learners of German. Using the prompts “learning German is like...,” “if German was a food it would be...,” and “if German was an animal it would be...,” the main categories that emerged were learning German as drudgery, difficulty, complexity, and physical suffering, with pleasure in learning appearing only rarely.

While some of these themes were also visible in Kramsch’s (2003) large-scale elicitation study carried out with university level language students, on the whole the themes here tended to be more positive. Three prompts (“learning a language is like.../speaking a language is like.../writing a language is like...”) yielded 18 categories that included engaging in an artistic process, learning a physical skill, getting to know another culture, learning a cognitive skill, though “incurring physical danger” was ninth most frequent and undergoing a painful medical procedure was 14th. Highlighting the need for more longitudinal study perhaps, Kramsch found that proficiency seemed to be a factor, insofar as the metaphors chosen were more positive when learners considered themselves more proficient. One student, for example, refers to language learning as “putting on a brand new pair of shoes – it’s uncomfortable at first, but you break them in” (Kramsch 2003, p. 118). Certainly, it would seem that at the lower levels of proficiency, participants, regardless of age, were more likely to produce metaphors that were to do with language learning as struggle and suffering. The metaphors of those with higher levels of proficiency, while still sometimes falling under these themes, were more likely to be conducive to or positive about language learning.

There is a growing recognition that metaphor offers a number of affordances for beliefs research (see Barcelos and Kalaja 2011). Most research in SLA education has been conducted around teachers’ conceptions of teaching or learner and teacher beliefs about teacher role, and most work has focused on metaphor as product rather than as process (see Block 1999). That is to say that research has tended to focus on naming and categorizing the metaphors employed and using them to ascribe beliefs, with less focus on how metaphors develop over time and reflecting belief change.

How to address both this temporal issue and the complexity of the beliefs construct, for example, how stated beliefs may be contradictory, are issues that researchers continue to grapple with. Kramersch offered one way forward through examination of the “belief spaces” (2003, p. 124) that were opened up in the metaphorical reading of the autobiographical writing and essays of a Korean heritage undergraduate in the USA. She shows how the writing could be interpreted in different ways, reflecting paradoxical themes and so capturing the complexity of beliefs. For example, the student was using conventionalized metaphors to reflect the society around her, but there was also evidence that contradicted the dominant narrative of the US culture she was surrounded by. It could be argued that this sort of metaphorical reading requires a high degree of sensitivity and skill on the part of the researcher. It also requires a high degree of openness about the analytical process, as discussed in the next section.

Problems and Difficulties

As an approach, metaphor analysis seems deceptively simple, yet there are a number of potential complications that need to be borne in mind. The first obvious question, though not necessarily addressed in research papers, is: “which language are participants using when producing their metaphors?” In their project investigating conceptions of the teacher in a number of different national settings, Cortazzi and Jin (1999) explicitly address the language issue, pointing out that the metaphor elicitation was done in English, which was not the first language for the participants. This must have crucial ramifications for any research design. If participants are limited by the extent of their linguistic repertoire and not fully able to construct the metaphors they might want to in, say, elicitation tasks, then to what extent can researchers be confident that they are seeing an unveiling of thinking? It might also call for particularly cautious analysis of the metaphors arising in oral and written discourse, where participants are operating in an L2, as they may either not be able to find ways of expressing themselves metaphorically because they are yet to learn the conventionalized metaphors of the L2, or where the conventionalized metaphors of the L2 do not appropriately capture their thinking.

This is related to a second possible complication, namely, the reasons that lie behind noncompletion of tasks. Are some topics more difficult than others to find metaphors for? Are individual differences implicated, where some people are and some are not able to come up with metaphor? Or indeed are there cultural differences? In Cortazzi and Jin’s work (1999), completion rates differed greatly across groups, for example, there were only 41 metaphors from 93 Japanese students and 18 from the 60 Iranian participants, whereas there the 90 Lebanese students produced 106 metaphors. Cortazzi and Jin were careful to report failure rates, where other researchers do not, but these are relevant and researchers need to discuss potential reasons for failure (see Low 2015). Do, for example, participants need training, i.e., do respondents need to be shown how to be metaphorical? Some would say yes. Wan et al. (2011) and Wan (2014) held workshops to explore metaphor with

participants in advance, but in other studies learners seemed able to do this without such training (Fisher 2013). Before the main data gathering phase, it would seem crucial to pilot carefully to ascertain whether training is needed and, if it is, then it is important that such training is completely unrelated to the topic under investigation. For example, if “a language teacher is . . .” is the elicitation prompt for the main study, a prompt from a completely different area should be used for training.

The third consideration is the need for researchers to be absolutely clear about what counts as a metaphor. Often in elicitation studies, similes are used in order to make sure that respondents make a comparison (e.g., see Kramsch’s study 2003 and her cue of “a language learner is like...”). Most scholars in the field of metaphor research accept that a metaphor *can* underlie a simile, though not necessarily. We may have “metaphorical similes” (Cameron 1999, p. 131) when a “like” construction results in conceptual incongruity, for example, “Learning German is like biting a rock” (Fisher 2013). On the other hand, “Learning French is like learning Latin” is not, as it comes from the same domain rather than different domains, and so is metonymic rather than metaphoric (see also Low 2008). Explicitness about what the researcher is recognizing as a metaphoric response or not is therefore essential.

The categorization of metaphors is probably the most challenging aspect of study in this area. Given the pervasiveness of metaphor in naturalistic language, when working with discourse, the researcher needs to decide whether the focus will be on all metaphors or on certain themes only and to justify this decision. In this, as for metaphor elicitation, the researcher needs to make clear how these higher level themes were arrived at. (Graham Low (2015) offers an excellent exposition of the sorts of issues that need to be considered in coding and arriving at themes). Fundamentally, the coding issue is: what is the belief/what did the person intend when coming up with this metaphor choice? This is likely to entail building into research design opportunities that would allow for a degree of verification. For example, adding a “because” phrase into metaphor elicitation design allows respondents to say why they chose the metaphor they did and strengthens one’s confidence in the thematic coding. Similarly, interviews with respondents post data-gathering allow for possible interpretations to be discussed. While true of all interpretivist approaches, the researcher must interpret others’ beliefs through the lens of his or her own assumptions and beliefs (the double hermeneutic, Giddens 1982, p. 11). Because this is unavoidable, a research audit trail, including a detailed description of processes for metaphor categorization, is desirable to allow others to judge the validity of conclusions drawn, and where possible the data might be published so that others may do their own analysis (Todd and Low 2010). While this is currently not traditionally written as part of methodology, researchers may wish also to be more open about the beliefs they hold, in order that readers can understand the biases that they will, naturally, be susceptible to.

The final and perhaps most fundamental question of all is to what extent can we be confident that the metaphors produced actually do represent beliefs? For example, if a participant’s discourse contains an instance of conventionalized use of language, to what extent does this reflect an underlying cognition? As Low points out “The fact that someone uses a metaphoric expression does not prove that the underlying

metaphor is actively used by them as a guide to thinking and action” (Low 2008, p. 214). The implications here are for more metaphor studies that, as well as focusing on the language produced, examine more closely behaviors within specific socio-cultural settings. As a corollary, this focus on behaviors is likely to lead to an investigation of how metaphors and beliefs might change over time, which is an area that warrants much more research attention.

Work in Progress and Future Directions

In much of the work on beliefs explored in this chapter, metaphors have been viewed as *product* rather than as *process* (see Block 1999; Ellis and Barkhuizen 2005), that is, metaphor has been used as a way of revealing beliefs, rather than understood as dynamic and adaptive. Indeed, while research on teachers' and students' beliefs has seen a move to more qualitative, longitudinal studies, focused on how beliefs develop within contexts over time (e.g., see Borg 2011; Mercer 2011), there is space for more research on how metaphor develops over time, or how in social interaction it might actively shape existing beliefs or construct new ones.

More recently, some researchers have started to explore this idea. In one recent study (Wan 2014), metaphors representing seven Chinese MA students' beliefs about writing were elicited in three cycles over an academic year. As part of a pedagogical intervention, the metaphors were shared each time with peers in group discussion. The aim here is to find out whether the students' understandings about academic writing might change as a result and also whether and how their writing developed. Findings suggested that the project helped students to understand their own beliefs and to think critically about writing and the writing process. Sharing metaphors also helped individuals understand their writing difficulties, helped peers give feedback on the process of writing (though not on the work itself), and helped beliefs about writing to become more positive. In follow-up interviews, all students reported changing their writing beliefs as a result of the intervention and intended to make changes to their writing practices. Wan concludes that talk around these issues can therefore be helpful and productive and that looking at actual writing practice is where research should focus next.

In a second recent study referred to briefly earlier, Fisher (2013) explored the nature of young beginner German learners' beliefs, but, more importantly, how beliefs might develop as a result of sharing elicited metaphors for learning German in a pedagogical intervention in a language classroom. Data were gathered over the course of one academic year from two classes of German learners (N=59), both taught by the same teacher, with one class only taking part in a pedagogical intervention co-planned with the class teacher. Based on key themes arising from the initial analysis of the learners' metaphors, at regular intervals over several months, the teacher displayed to the whole class metaphors that students had written and facilitated the subsequent discussion. Initially pupils' metaphors suggested difficulty and impossibility, for example, “trying to bite a rock,” “trying to tame a lion,” whereas nine months later pupils in the intervention class were more likely to

choose metaphors for learning German that suggested it was a task that was hard but achievable, for example, “running a marathon,” “doing puzzles.” Ongoing work from this project includes analysis of a range of supplementary data including follow-up interviews, narrative essays, and classroom observation, drawing on classroom behaviors as an indicator of belief change.

These two studies constitute examples of “real-world” metaphor research (Low, Todd, Deignan and Cameron 2010) and adopt a metaphor as both product *and* process approach, taking into account the social and linguistic dimensions of human behavior. Employing metaphor as a mediational tool within the tool of language (Cameron 2003) to help learners and teachers not only understand their own or each others’ conceptions, but also to explore how their beliefs might be developed and, as a corollary, their behaviors changed in the light of others’ metaphors, is an area ripe for further investigation in future metaphor research.

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