PEDAGOGICAL DISCOURSE AND ITS THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

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Abstract: The article explains how the method of analysis works by discussing Bernstein's work on pedagogic discourse, using Halliday's functional grammar to analyze a short excerpt from an early childhood curriculum genre, and demonstrating how the pedagogic discourse operates in an upper primary social science classroom. Overall, the article aims to contribute to our understanding of how individuals acquire shared knowledge and independent understanding within a culture through pedagogic discourse.

Keywords: pedagogical discourse, classroom discourse, pedagogic subjects, curriculum genres, curriculum macrogenres, functional grammar, Bernstein, educational activities, pedagogic subject.

Pedagogical discourse involves a set of principles that are used to guide individuals into adopting valued practices within a culture. The term "pedagogical discourse" was originally coined by Bernstein (1990) and has since been adapted to incorporate a linguistic perspective. A pedagogical discourse is manifested through two sets of language choices: (a) the regulative register, which pertains to the goals, purposes, and directions of the teaching-learning process, and (b) the instructional register, which pertains to the content being taught and learned. The use of the first register shapes the use of the second register. Analyzing how these two registers function to create the pedagogical discourse enables us to understand how subject positions are constructed and how students acquire a shared understanding of the "common knowledge" of a culture (Edwards & Mercer, 1987).

The article proposes a model for analyzing classroom discourse based on sets of language choices that change over a series of lessons. This type of discourse is referred to as pedagogic discourse, a term introduced by Bernstein (1990). The article argues that pedagogic discourse is crucial in the formation of pedagogic subjects, individuals who are shaped by and contribute to the discourse. Through participating in the construction of pedagogic discourse, individuals are able to acquire a shared understanding of the "common knowledge" of a culture, as discussed by Edwards and Mercer (1987).

In order to understand how pedagogic discourse functions, it is necessary to analyze extended sequences of lessons because the complex processes involved in the development of shared knowledge and independent understanding take time.

To illustrate how pedagogic discourse operates, it is necessary to examine lengthy sequences of lessons because the complex processes involved in building shared knowledge and independent understanding require a significant amount of time. Furthermore, careful analysis shows that there are substantial shifts in the way language is used by both teachers and students over time, providing essential evidence of how pedagogic discourse construction works incrementally towards achieving important goals. The approach used in this article aligns with the principles proposed in a recent Special Issue of Linguistics and Education that emphasized the need to study discourse through extended cycles of lessons. For instance, Brilliant-Mills (1993) recorded complete cycles of mathematics lessons from start to finish, while Lin (1993) recorded cycles of English classes, and Heras (1993) collected data over a period of 2.5 months to explore the construction of understanding in a sixth-grade bilingual classroom.

The different methodologies proposed by the contributors to the Special Issue and other recent sources are relevant to the discussion that will be developed later. One theme that emerges is the understanding that classroom experiences are socially constructed. Another theme is the role of talk in creating a sense of the rules and values that govern classroom behavior and learning. Green and her colleagues have contributed to this area of research.

The nature of language as a "text" is also a significant theme, with classroom meanings negotiated and constructed through complex interactions of spoken and written texts, as well as nonverbal texts used as resources in the classroom. Halliday and Hasan (1989) have discussed this fundamental linguistic resource in detail.

The methodology outlined in this article is informed by several themes, including the social construction of classroom experience, the role of talk in generating classroom routines and values, and the nature of language as a fundamental resource in which classroom meanings are negotiated and constructed. The article aims to make a distinctive contribution by focusing on the pedagogic discourse constructed in particular lessons known as curriculum genres and the sequence of such genres that constitute a curriculum macrogenre. It is argued that through the operation of a curriculum macrogenre, students are apprenticed into behaviors, skills, attitudes, procedures, and forms of knowledge that enable them to achieve particular pedagogic subject positions and acquire aspects of the "common knowledge" important in schooling. This argument is informed by Halliday's functional grammar.

To explain how the method of analysis works, I plan to discuss Bernstein's work on pedagogic discourse. Then, I will show how Halliday's functional grammar is used to analyze a short excerpt from an early childhood curriculum genre. Lastly, I will demonstrate how the pedagogic discourse operates in an upper primary social science classroom and argue that the analysis reveals how the discourse changes over time, allowing students to adopt appropriate pedagogic subject positions.

As previously mentioned, Bernstein's work on pedagogic discourse heavily influences the concept. The term "pedagogic discourse" encompasses more than what is typically thought of as classroom discourse, as it reflects the social practices involved in educational activities and the underlying principles that structure them, resulting in unique patterns of classroom text construction. Through an analysis of these principles, the study of pedagogic discourse enables an examination of the construction of the pedagogic subject or person. While Bernstein notes that the term extends beyond the teacher-student relationship in schools to include other relationships such as psychiatrist and patient, prison warden and prisoner, and doctor and patient, the focus of this discussion is specifically on the teacher-student relationship within the classroom context.

Bernstein (1990) defined pedagogic discourse as a rule that integrates a discourse of competence, which pertains to various skills, with a discourse of social order, in a way that the latter always has greater prominence. He referred to the discourse that conveys specialized competences and their interrelationships as instructional discourse and the discourse that establishes specialized order, relationships, and identity as regulative discourse. (p. 183)

Bernstein has identified three hierarchical principles or rules that govern pedagogic discourse: distribution, relocation or recontextualisation, and evaluation. These rules govern institutional practices, the transformation of school subjects, and pedagogic practice, respectively. Bernstein distinguishes between the invisible structures that underlie the realization of a pedagogic subject and what he calls "the text", which encompasses utterances, written texts, and other forms of communication that are privileged by these structures. He argues that a theory of cultural reproduction must explain how a text is constituted and accorded privileged status, as well as what is transmitted. If a theory is weak on "relations within", it cannot describe the agencies or processes it is concerned with.

He advocates for the "pedagogic device" as a means of explaining how a theory of cultural reproduction can be complete.

This theory of pedagogic discourse includes an inherent grammar, or "pedagogic device," that governs the three principles of distribution, recontextualization, and

evaluation. Bernstein provides the example of the formation of a pedagogic subject, specifically physics in secondary schools, which is the result of the recontextualizing principle that has selected and relocated what constitutes physics from its primary location in universities to the secondary school level. He suggests that physics undergoes a complex transformation from an original to a virtual and imaginary discourse.

According to Bernstein, the rules governing the reproduction of physics cannot be derived solely from physics itself or from the practices of physicists. These rules are social in nature, not logical. The recontextualising rules, which govern the selection, sequencing, pacing, and relations of physics with other subjects, also regulate the theory of instruction that underlies the transmission rules, as explained in Bernstein's work (1990, p. 185).

Another example that exemplifies the concept of pedagogic discourse is the subject of English in schools. In this case, the discourse is removed or taken out of its original location in universities and relocated to the school context, where it is restructured and reoriented based on the principle of distribution, which is governed by the pedagogic device.

Bernstein's three principles in pedagogic discourse are hierarchical, with the principle of distribution at the top regulating the principle of recontextualisation, which in turn regulates the principle of evaluation. The principle of distribution is concerned with the fundamental relationship between power, social groups, and their reproductions and productions. The principle of recontextualisation governs the constitution of specific pedagogic discourse, while the principle of evaluation is realized in pedagogic practice.

According to Bernstein, the pedagogic device, which is controlled primarily by the upper echelons of the education system, exists between power and knowledge and between knowledge and forms of consciousness. To explain this device, he distinguishes between two types of knowledge: the esoteric and the mundane, with the line between them being relative to the given period and the principles that generate them. In non-literate societies, the religious system regulates the division between the "thinkable" and the "unthinkable", while in our literate society, the educational system, particularly the part that produces discourse, controls it to a large extent. However, Bernstein argues that in both simple and complex societies, the distribution of forms of consciousness and systems of meaning is structurally similar, but specialized differently through various agencies and pedagogic discourses. The "unthinkable" exists as a potential space or gap, which any distribution of power seeks to regulate in

the interest of social order, while any redistribution of power attempts to regulate its realization differently.

According to Bernstein, the pedagogic device is responsible for transforming power into specialized subjects by distributing and regulating knowledge and its associated discourses. Change arises when the device's inner potential and regulation of knowledge conflict with its social base of power. Therefore, instead of serving as an agent of change, the education system, including its curriculum, becomes a site for reproducing the culture and society it exists within.

The content of a school subject is not a result of a unique or logical process but is determined by those who control and regulate the curriculum, based on what they believe is beneficial to society. These decisions are social, rather than logical. Linguistics, like physics, is primarily taught at universities but is also taught in secondary schools through a complex process that involves rules of relation, selection, sequencing, and pacing. These rules are not based on any internal logic within linguistics or the practices of those who work in the field.

The rules governing the pedagogic discourse are not based on logic or the practices of those who produce the subject, but on social and political considerations. In order to teach a subject like linguistics or physics, the rules of relation, selection, sequencing, and pacing are applied to select and relocate aspects of the subject deemed useful and desirable to society. Bernstein's theory suggests that the recontextualizing rules not only regulate the selection and pacing of the subject matter, but also the theory of instruction from which the transmission rules are derived. Therefore, the way a subject is taught is not necessarily inherent to the subject itself but rather shaped by those who control and manage its content.

Bernstein's theory of pedagogic discourse is complex and intricate. He uses terms like "discourse" and "text" in ways that are different and sometimes inconsistent with how cultural theorists use them. Additionally, he is not a linguist, so his use of these terms may not always align with linguistic conventions.

Bernstein's theory of pedagogic discourse provides a valuable description of how cultural reproduction works and how it positions various social groups, despite its complexity and the use of terms from cultural theory that are not always linguistically recognizable. The school curriculum is critical in maintaining and reproducing ideas of national identity, with a particular emphasis on teaching standard written English. One example of the application of Bernstein's theory is the efforts of the English government in the late 1980s and early 1990s to legislate the content of the school curriculum, including teaching standard English as a means of restoring social order and bringing national identity issues to the forefront once again.

Bernstein's argument is that the regulation and principles of pedagogic discourse are influenced by both macro and micro relations within social, economic, and political institutions. As these relations change, educational aims and objectives also shift. According to his theory, a key principle of State education is to provide education that aligns with the aspirations of students within the society it serves. The ultimate goal of any State education system is to prepare students for their position in the socio-economic order. When changes occur in society and alter that order, political policies, including education policies, shift in response. The introduction of a national curriculum in the late 1980s serves as an example of how educational policy changed in response to shifts in the political order of society.

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