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***Encountering the Void: An Attempted Description of the Dynamics of
Pedagogic Communication in terms of the Pedagogic Relation between
the Teacher, the Student and Knowledge***

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A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award
of the degree of Master of Philosophy in Education (Curriculum)

Faculty of the Humanities

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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ABSTRACT

This essay is a wholly theoretical engagement with the pedagogic relation. It attempts to take a small step in the direction of theorising the very complex phenomenon of the pedagogic relation. The relation is non-trivial as it is imbued with all the complications of social relations, plus the added complexity of the relation of knowledge in the social/libidinal economy of the classroom.

Pedagogic communication is the quintessential factor at the interactional level of pedagogic praxis in the classroom. It is at this level of pedagogy that the essay attempts to interrogate the entailments of the relation constituted when teaching takes place. The praxis of teaching revolves around 'effective' communication in order to transmit the curriculum that is intended to be acquired by the student.

The first chapter of this essay kicks off the discussion by isolating the features of resistance in the pedagogic relation which hinder the smooth functioning of pedagogic communication. In order to get a firmer theoretical grasp on this factor of pedagogy, the argument then turns to Bernstein's theory of pedagogic discourse in Chapter 2. Pedagogic communication occupies a central place in Bernstein, for it is his view "that the inner structure of the pedagogic *is . . . a theory of pedagogic communication*" (Bernstein 1990: 171, italics in original). The concepts found within Bernstein hold out the potential for a theoretically rigorous account of the subtle dynamics of the pedagogic relation in terms of pedagogic communication. Amongst other insights, Bernstein's theory guides our analysis with the principle that in "any theory which attempts to link pedagogic communication with pedagogic consciousness/conscience . . . *The basic question to be asked is always with reference to the privileging pedagogic text*" (Bernstein 1990: 172, italics in original). However, the potential on offer in Bernstein is shown to be underdeveloped within his own writings, particularly with respect to a structured account of the interactive dynamics in the pedagogic relation. It is

shown that Bernstein's texts hint at the potential for alternative theoretical angles to be integrated into his theory, particularly that of Jacques Lacan's notion of desire in relation to the acquisition of the student's identity.

We therefore turn, in Chapter 3, to alternative descriptions of the pedagogic relation which derive from Bourdieu's (1992) notion of the "symbolic mandate" and Lacan's notion of the "phallus" (Aoki 2002). The appeal to these notions opens up a wider field of discursive potential in terms of which to build a description of the pedagogic relation. Chapter 4 is, therefore, devoted to the clarification of conceptual tools to propel the analysis in terms of notions borrowed chiefly from Lacan (Miller 1994; Evans 2006), Laclau & Mouffe (1985), and Greimas' (1989, 1968), but also from Tall & Gray's (1994) notion of "procept".

The relations between Bernstein's initial model of transmission-acquisition are then mapped, via Greimas' semiotic square, onto the Lacanian discourses of the social bond in Chapters 5 and 6. In doing so, we formulate a model that demonstrates the structural, ontological necessity of an objective antagonism which constitutes the pedagogic relation. This mapping is accomplished by drawing on the work of Davis (2005a, 2005b, 2004, 2003, 2002).

The implications of this feature, which functions paradoxically as the identity of the student as well as the point of immanent failure of pedagogic communication, are theorised to their logical end at which we conclude that the dynamics of the pedagogic relation are structured originally through the student's acquisition of identity in the pedagogic discourse of the teacher. The identity, however, is simultaneously the potential for educating as well as its obstacle. At the level of the relation of knowledge transmitted and knowledge reproduced – that is, at the level of the privileged text – there exists an antagonism around which is structured a recursion of the discourses of the Master and the

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Hysteric. It is this recursion which imbues the pedagogic relation with its dynamism.

In this essay I have only scratched the tip of the iceberg by viewing the pedagogic relation from the point of view of the teacher's aim of the reproduction of the privileged text. The theory has much potential for refinement; but it is my hope that, with this initial contribution, I will be contributing to a greater sensitivity of the complexity entailed in the relation between the teacher, the student and knowledge at the interactional level of classroom praxis.

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CHAPTER 1

PEDAGOGIC PRAXIS

1.1 Introduction: the phenomenon of 'methods', 'strategies' and 'theories of teaching'

This essay is an engagement with a personal struggle, which I will attempt to engage with on a purely theoretical basis. The struggle is about the question confronting me each time I prepare a lesson – and it may be encapsulated very generally in the question, “What is the best way to teach this topic?”. A “topic” stands for any segment of a course in a particular subject, or a curriculum segment. In my case, this would be a topic in Mathematics or Natural Sciences, both of which I teach at secondary level. It is the concern about the 'best way' to teach (a topic) that is pervasive in my reflections on my own teaching. Because teaching is not merely the delivery of information to an individual or group of people. It is about how best I could facilitate the acquisition of the knowledge by those whom I address as students.

The question then really becomes a matter of interrogating what is entailed in the notion of the 'best' way. Inevitably, in the preparation of lessons, the kind of learner that I could potentially address comes to mind. I form an hypothesis about the individual as student, and about the group, and this hypothesis includes ideas about the learners' previous knowledge, the type of 'talk' which has everyday meaning for them, their levels of interest in my subject, and perseverance with difficulties in the topic, etc. At the start of a year when all my classes are new, for example, I assume that everything with regards to both behavioural discipline and subject content must be made explicit and that tests for background knowledge must be done. I try to leave nothing to chance and even spell out the way in which I expect the class to interact with me and I with them.

As the year progresses, and the peculiarities of my pedagogic relationship with the class are established as individual characteristics begin to emerge, my assumptions are modified and my planning adapts, but my reflections on pedagogy continue and the aim remains the same. The aim is always to allow for the smoothest possible learning experience by attempting to pre-empt possible barriers or pitfalls to the teaching and learning process.

The barriers and pitfalls may be located both internal and external to the student as well as internal

or external to the teacher. Examples of barriers and pitfalls include the lack of prerequisite knowledge and student self-discipline issues, or the pace of the curriculum, the kind of textbook used, my teaching style, etc. My planning thus attempts to accommodate for all that 'barriers and pitfalls' might entail and is structured to include content, teaching style, regulations on deportment, etc., that will hopefully dissolve the assumed barriers, or fill in and make up for the pitfalls – that which is missing – if these problems arise. Stated concisely, in my experience, there appears to be always some factor, inherent to the pedagogic relationship, which limits its efficacy for transmission-acquisition of knowledge and around which lesson planning is structured.

These concerns are valid across the spectrum of classrooms: from well-functioning schools all the way through to the environment infiltrated with socio-cultural and socio-economic problems. The school at which I teach, for example, is a former model-C school, still enjoying the benefits of its privileged past and attracting students predominantly from the upper-middle class socio-economic strata. It is a school which may fairly be described as being homogeneous in language, social class and what may loosely be called 'culture'. Adopting a perspective of 'culture' is one way in which my question could be approached. It is often associated with the use of 'social class' to analyse the pedagogic relationship. It would be useful then to refer to literature which approach the pedagogic relationship from the perspectives of 'culture' and 'class'.

Pane (2010) writes about classroom management strategies in United States urban contexts. In the US, "urban" educational contexts are described as being "heavily populated with students of colour . . . large number[s] of students from lower socioeconomic status, high attrition of teachers, heavy institutional and systemic barriers, and meagre resources . . . grossly underfunded . . ." (Milner 2006 in Pane 2010: 88). A useful concept found in her article is that of "culturally responsive pedagogy". She describes the problems which inhere in these contexts as resulting from (i) "the American phenomenon of exclusionary discipline"; and (ii) two conventional interpretations of Vygotsky's notion of the zone of proximal development (*loc. cit.*). Her article surveys alternative approaches, such as a "culturally responsive pedagogy", "critical social practice view of learning" and a "communities of practice perspective". There is an emphasis on anthropological research and the social nature of learning (*loc. cit.*: 88; 93ff.). Anthropology is understood as a study of that which constitutes meaning, in everyday practices, to participants in various socio-cultural contexts (*loc. cit.*: 92). And specifically with respect to what teachers should do to facilitate learning, Pane

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states: "Teachers must possess dispositions and knowledge of how to incorporate 'the cultures, experiences, and needs of their students into their teaching' to provide opportunities for success at school (*loc. cit.*: 91). Although the issues addressed by Pane may be more serious than mine when viewed from socio-economic and political perspectives, the pedagogic issues follow the same pattern as the description of my personal engagement with pedagogy: there are barriers and pitfalls to learning which exist at various levels, some of which are specifically related to the teacher's assumptions about the learner. The teachers assumptions interact with various facets of the student. Some of these facets which are of interest to me include: that which has everyday meaning for students in their day to day relations with their peers, their families, their social networks and with themselves; their level of interest and degree of perseverance with difficulties in learning the pedagogic content. All of which addresses the original question, "What is the best way to teach this topic?", in order to get the student to learn. Panes's article, does, however, differ slightly here, in a significant way, in that she seeks to address the more general question, "What is the best way to teach?". Pane's article foregrounds the general nature of the relation between teacher and student, independently of any particular subject discipline.

In both cases, though (both Pane's and mine), we are confronted with the issue of resistance to the smooth functioning of pedagogic practice as transmission-acquisition of knowledge. My solution is the formation of an hypothesis about the student(s) addressed. My lesson planning follows from the hypothesis. My hypothesis is based on my understanding of what the learner is like both personally and as a student of mathematics, for example. I construct an image of the student and my teaching is tailored around that image. However, the student's image of themselves does not – almost certainly does not – correspond to my image of them. My pedagogic communication, therefore, addresses an imaginary student, and as such, is inherently limited in its pedagogic effectiveness. I may even end up completely mis-recognising the actual student in my imaginary identification. The nature of pedagogic interreaction is so complex that I may not get the necessary feedback from the student to let me know that I am miscommunicating with him. Occasionally such feedback does happen in an overt way – and when such feedback does happen it may be verbally articulated or take the form of what is termed 'disruptive behaviour'.

My 'hypothesis of the student' may, therefore, be described as an imaginary identification which actually refers to an inherent gap between the student and myself, which pedagogic communication

then attempts to traverse. The gap exists in the differences between teacher and pupil with respect to what kind of knowledge is regarded as meaningful and worth having. My 'hypothesis of the student' should, therefore, at least be a 'working hypothesis' which is constantly subject to modification. However, I never seem to be able to fully represent the student in my hypotheses – there is always something in the student which escapes representation in my hypotheses.

A similar comment could be made about attempts at inclusive pedagogy, such as that discussed in Pane's article above. Despite the multiple references to theory, Pane's argument falls into a similar trap through its misrecognition of the learner. Pane suggests a somewhat radically-sounding “cultural synchronisation” (Pane 2010: 88 – 89) in order to enact a “culturally responsive pedagogy”. It is a methodology for producing more effective pedagogic communication. This approach advocates the empathic engagement of the teacher with the students (in Pane's case, black American students in urban schools) at the level of the culture of the student. But this necessitates the formation of a normalised description of what it means to be 'black American' – and so Pane quotes research that supplies just that: “[A]nthropological and historical research . . . advances the finding that black Americans have a distinct culture founded on identifiable norms, language, behaviours, and attitudes from Africa. . . . The retention of identifiable and distinct African culture in America, especially in 'lower-class black communities . . .’” results in cultural incongruity which is manifested in the pedagogic problems addressed by the article. Pane goes on to quote research which describes in detail the qualities that distinguish “African culture” from “European culture” (Pane 2010: 88). The argument is that teachers should structure their pedagogic communication around the qualities of “African culture” and its implications for “lower class black communities”.

However, it is precisely the sweeping generalisation about black Americans in lower-class communities which leads to a misrecognition of the individual student who is the presumed beneficiary of such an approach. By positing the existence of a distinct “African culture” the article constructs an imaginary student with which to engage on a more ethnographically 'authentic' level of communication. This is posited as the solution but it actually draws attention away from the more fundamental problem of the internal limits of the pedagogic relationship. And it is the internal limits which actually generates the need for more effective pedagogic communication¹. The foregrounding of cultural sensitivity in pedagogic communication thereby obfuscates the problem of a frustrating

¹ Anthropological / ethnographic researchers in education tend to start with this need for effective communication and refer to an epiphenomenon, thereby missing the more fundamental problem.

feature, which is seemingly inherent to the pedagogic relationship and independent of cultural specificities.

We see the failure of the 'culturally responsive' approach clearly demonstrated in the movie *Freedom Writers* (LaGravenese: 2006). The movie turns on the tension generated when the assumptions of an initiate, 'white', middle-class English language teacher (Erin Gruwell) are confronted by the reality of her ethnically diverse, working-class students, some of whom are 'black', 'asian' or 'hispanic'. Gang warfare, rap music, dysfunctional families, poor academic performance as well as general apathy towards education are some of the commonalities shared by her culturally diverse group of students. In an attempt to arrest their attention in order to teach a lesson on internal rhyme, she employs precisely the strategy of 'culturally responsive pedagogy' suggested by Pane. The lesson starts with an excerpt from a rap song by Tupac Shakur. The teacher then refers to the blackboard where she has written an extracted verse from the song. As soon as she kicks off her appeal to internal rhyme on the grounds of cultural identification, she runs into direct confrontation from the students on the grounds of her lack of knowledge of the reality of their lives. In the place of the 'connection' between teacher and pupil that this act of empathy intended, the teacher is framed as an imposter with no right to speak about Shakur's music as if she understood what was depicted in the lyrics: a representation of the students' harsh reality of violence and economic deprivation, which the teacher had corrupted through her disrespect of the students' actual identifications.

But even in classrooms where there is less cultural separation between teacher and pupils, a variety of methods is used to enable learning. Alexander (2001) provides a broad analysis of the relationship between culture and pedagogy in *Culture and pedagogy: international comparisons in primary education*. His research covers education in five countries (England, France, Russia, India, and Michigan in the USA) at three levels: the official level of national policy, the level of the school and the interactional level of classroom teaching (*op. cit.*: 3 – 5). The breadth of his study is far greater than the concern of this essay. My reference to this work here is simply in terms of my very narrow focus on the pedagogic relationship. Within Alexander's text, it is the level of classroom teaching that is of most pertinence for this essay. In order to facilitate a reasonably valid comparative analysis of the empirical data from the five countries, Alexander "dispensed with school effectiveness and presage-process-product models in favour of one that was more closely

grounded in teaching as it happens, working from the proposition that 'teaching, in any school setting, is the act of using method x to enable pupils to learn y '" (Alexander 2001: 535; ref also p.323). This proposition formed one of two basic propositions which constituted Alexander's attempt to reduce teaching to its barest essentials. The other proposition is: "Teaching has structure and form; it is situated in, and governed by, space, time and patterns of pupil organization; and it is undertaken for a purpose" (*op. cit.*: 323). These propositions formed the basis of Alexander's "action-based framework for the analysis of teaching" in which teaching is *framed* external to the classroom by the curriculum and internally by ways of organizing space, time, and pupils, and the particular micro-culture of the classroom; teaching has its *form* in the lesson; and the teaching *act* comprised task, activity, interaction and judgement (*op. cit.*: 325). As relates to this essay, the propositions allowed a general orientation to answering important basic questions: "What are pupils expected to learn?; [w]hat method does the teacher use to ensure that they do so?; as well as the question of agency in curriculum 'delivery' (*op. cit.*: 323). The first pair of questions refers back to my personal reflection on 'how best to teach' a given topic. But it also refers to the *act* of teaching as defined by Alexander's action-based framework. "A teaching method", suggests Alexander, "combines *tasks, activities, interactions and judgements*" each of which has a specific function (*op. cit.*: 323), with "judgements" being further separated into two phases: "*differentiation*" and "*assessment*". This four-part schema for method was fruitfully applied by Alexander in the analysis of classroom teaching recordings across the five countries in his study. It implies that teaching is not just a simple process of transmission-acquisition, but instead entails a complex set of strategies to enable learning. Pedagogic communication is strategic: a lesson plan is a strategy x employed to enable pupils to learn y . And this phenomenon is international. It reflects something of the nature of the pedagogic relationship which is simply not straightforward.

This sense of the complexity of the pedagogic relationship is confirmed when we consider the question of agency. I would like to extract the following two comments from Alexander's book:

"[...] it is still probably fair to suggest that for most people education still means what teachers and pupils do in classrooms and what pupils learn, rather than what teachers intend and where it all takes place. Moreover, *the relationship [between teacher and pupil] is generally presumed to be an uncomplicated and linear one: pupils learn x because teachers teach in manner y* " (*op. cit.*: 270, emphasis added).

And a related comment:

“we view curriculum as undergoing a sequence of transformations as it progresses from published document to school syllabus and teacher plan, and thence to lesson, task, activity and interaction. *The final and most important act of curriculum transformation takes place inside the pupil's head*” (op. cit.: 324, emphasis added).

Alexander, hits the nail on the head here. Whatever the intention of the national policy makers, the school or the teacher, the pupil is the point at which the intended smooth operation of educational transmission-acquisition is either realised or comes up against forms of resistance to its realisation. This is the reason why the relationship between teacher and pupil is simply not an “uncomplicated and linear one”. The potential for unintentional and alternative meanings to be generated during each lesson exists precisely because the “final and most important act of curriculum transformation takes place in the pupil's head”. Of course, the worst case scenario is that the pupil is absolutely unreceptive to the teacher. In any case, it is with respect to this final stage in curriculum transmission-acquisition that the pupil may be said to offer resistance to the intended curriculum. And, in view of the immanent potential of resistance, this is precisely why the *method* of teaching is necessarily a *matrix of strategies*.

We are given a hint that the matrix of strategies may indeed be associated with social class and culture. In Dowling and Brown (2007) we are presented with analyses of three schools in the Western Cape province, South Africa. The study draws upon data collected in 1996 – 1997 and re-analysed in 2007. The schools located in different geographical areas still reflect the class and cultural norms which emerged during the apartheid regime when the education of different 'races' was administered by segregated departments of education with gross inequalities in both their budgets and levels of political influence. It is a legacy of the fragmentation caused by apartheid that class and cultural norms are still closely associated with the former apartheid groupings in geographical areas; and the teachers themselves form part of these groupings. Dowling and Brown clearly demonstrate the impact of these norms on pedagogy. The schools were, respectively, a former model-C school (serving predominantly 'whites'), a school located in a township (serving 'blacks'), and a school, which is described in the text as exhibiting “. . . a highly complex case of . . . class condensation”, serving 'coloureds' (Dowling & Brown 2007: 3, 5). They present three cases in which we can clearly see evidence of what Pane (2010) referred to as 'cultural synchronisation'. The teachers, almost by default, are practising a 'culturally responsive pedagogy'. Yet the outcomes in these three schools are remarkably different from the point of view of successful curriculum reproduction: the privileged, ex-model-C schools regularly produce the

majority of the matriculation results with access to university programmes; the township schools generally fail to conform to the standards for matriculation exemption; while the 'coloured' schools are somewhere in between². What is strikingly obvious, however, are the differences in pedagogic relationships across the three schools (Dowling & Brown 2007: 9 – 10, 11, 12, 15 – 16, 25 – 26), employing a variety of strategies to effect transmission-acquisition of the curriculum. These strategies include exposition, choral responses, overhead projections, conversation and debate, diagrams on the blackboard or whiteboard, photocopied notes and pictures, posters, textbooks, unpredictability, and even shaming (*op. cit.*: 9, 15 – 16, 17, 18 – 19, 25 – 26). Dowling and Brown's text is a small scale study that indicates that strategies are clearly an immanent component of the pedagogic relationship in the act of teaching. The study also clearly shows that the phenomenon of 'teaching strategies' are independent of class and culture: they appear in various guises in each classroom. 'Teaching strategies' are a phenomenon which, therefore, points to some aspect of the pedagogic relationship which exists at a more fundamental level than culture or class. Something which is associated with the core function of the teacher: transmission-acquisition of the curriculum. I would like to suggest that this more fundamental feature of the pedagogic relationship is the thing which drives pedagogic communication in terms of the strategies employed by the teacher. Dowling and Brown have noted that the purpose of these pedagogic strategies is to "ensure that the curriculum gets into the books, as well as the heads, of the students" (*op. cit.*: 25). This statement is reminiscent of Alexander's assertion regarding the transformation of the curriculum from its policy phase to its phase as something acquired in the pupils's heads. Pedagogic strategies arise out of a need to control, as best as possible, the form of the acquired phase of the curriculum. It is this transformative effect of the pupil on the acquired curriculum which functions as a driving fundamental feature of the pedagogic relation. This feature is a reference to the nature of the teacher-student relation which forms the central theme of my discussion to be developed in the chapters that follow.

1.2 Real, symbolic and imaginary

The references to teaching strategies, cultural sensitivities, etc., which I have made above may be described in more theoretically orientated terms by using the notions of real, symbolic and imaginary developed by Jacques Lacan (see Lacan 1981, 1996; Evans 2006; Bailly 2009). The

2 A possible account for these differences is provided below in my discussion on the work of Basil Bernstein.

various methods and theories described above which are applied in the study of the pedagogic relation are all attempts at theorising under the aspect of the imaginary. These theories are couched in terms of the perceptions of researchers, teachers and learners, with an overriding concern with what is directly observable; for example, when referring to “black Americans” with an “African culture”, the descriptive elements referred to are those which are immediate to sensory perception.

The theoretical approach of structuralist anthropologists offer, however, a more profound analytical description of social relations. Lévi-Strauss identified that societies in general, whether considered to be primitive or modern, were constituted by structural components such as kinship relations and the circuit of exchange (*vis. Evans 2006: 203*)³. Such studies take the theoretical effort one step further, moving beyond the immediate to the mediated order of conceptual structures and their necessary relations. It is the contribution of structuralist anthropology which allows for a principled account of social relations in place of descriptions of specific 'cultures' as encountered at the level of immediacy. This approach permits a deeper form of 'cultural sensitivity' – a form that is founded on a conceptually grounded basis in which the structures of social relations are emphasised rather than the contingent phenomena encountered in social relations⁴. It permits this deeper engagement with culture because it is formulated under the aspect of the symbolic rather than the imaginary. Indeed, it is from this account of the social that “Lacan takes from Lévi-Strauss the idea that the social world is structured by certain laws which regulate kinship relations and the exchange of gifts” (Evans 2006; see also Bailly 2009: 94) . This is supported by a reference to Marcel Mauss: “The structures of society are symbolic; individuals, insofar as they are normal, use them in real behaviors” (Lacan 1999). The symbolic, in Lacan, refers to this aspect of the social as well as to the symbolic logic employed to describe the natural world in physics, for example (Evans 2006: 203 – 204).

The 'real ' in Lacan is that which the symbolic and the imaginary attempts to capture, yet it is that which the symbolic order is incapable of symbolising because it “resists symbolisation absolutely” (Fink 1995). Another important feature of the real is that, in contrast to images which are allocated a place in the individual's maintenance of a coherent 'reality', or to a symbolic order of signifiers in which each signifier has its place in a metonymic chain of meaning, the “real whatever upheaval we

3 Evans refers to Lévi-Strauss (1949) The effectiveness of symbols, in *Structural Anthropology*, pp. 186–205 . trans. Claire Jacobson (1963) and Brooke Grundfest Schoepf. New York: Basic Books.

4 Such as behaviour, language, skin colour, preferences in clothing, preferences in music, etc.

subject it to, is always and in every case in its place; it carries its place stuck to the sole of its shoe, there being nothing that can exile it from it” (Lacan 1999: 17). This is another way of saying that one cannot structure the real. The real is a stubborn, persistent presence which does not yield to anything symbolic or imaginary. As such, its presence emerges most pertinently in the disruption of the smooth operation of the symbolic chain of 'meaningful' events and most poignantly in the disfigurement of the imaginary.

At the level of interactional practice, the structure of the pedagogic discourse may even be said to behave as the syntax of the client's discourse in psycho-analysis. It “proceeds towards the condensation around the nucleus”, which belongs to the order of the real “in so far as the identity of perception is its rule” (Lacan 1981: 68). In pedagogic practice, the order of the real functions as the disruption of the imaginary-symbolic order when pedagogic discourse and our 'model-image of the student' – our assumptions and hypotheses of the target audience of pedagogy – are unexpectedly disrupted in the interactional practice of pedagogy. It is this rupture to pedagogic communication and the disfigurement of our hypothesis of the student which signals a rethink of our pedagogic approach.

We have already commented, in section 1.1, on the enlisting of the imaginary in 'theorising' the pedagogic relation. The purpose of this essay is to respond to the question of a feature of the pedagogic relation which necessitates interventions to ensure its smooth functioning. In contrast to the aforementioned approaches to this immanent pedagogic problem, in which there is an overdetermination of the imaginary in theorising the real of the teacher-student relation, it is my aim in this essay to attempt a statement of this question in terms of the real and the symbolic. To paraphrase Lacan,

“What is a praxis? I doubt whether this term may be inappropriate to [pedagogy]. It is the broadest term to designate a concerted human action, whatever it may be, which places man in a position to treat the real by the symbolic. The fact that in doing so he encounters the imaginary to a greater or lesser degree is only of secondary importance here” (Lacan 1981: 6).

It is the praxis of education to treat the real of the student by the symbolic order of pedagogic discourse. Bernstein's (1990) notion of pedagogic discourse refers to the principle by which discourses from the field of production (mathematics, physics, history, etc.) are selected for recontextualisation to produce the instructional discourse: the school knowledge of subjects taught

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at school; this instructional discourse is embedded within a discourse of regulation. Regulation is effected on the development of the student as well as on the form of the knowledge reproduced. The knowledge selected by pedagogic discourse thus gains the status of privileged knowledge while the discourse of regulation aims to reproduce privileged orientations to meaning with respect to relations within the body of privileged knowledge, the relations of the student to knowledge and the social relations within the classroom. The implications of this are to be observed in the form of (moral) regulation on the student, such as which is cogently argued by Zain Davis (2005a), and in the regulation of the productions/reproductions of classroom activities, evidence for which is presented in meticulous detail by Chitsike (2011).

1.3 The reality of resistance

My concern in this essay is to provide an analytic description of the pedagogic relation as such, which is a condition prior to the 'treatment' of any particular student in any particular academic subject. In terms of the real, symbolic and imaginary, pedagogic discourse is the principle in terms of which the teacher encounters the real of the student as a presence which is stubbornly resistant to the reproduction of pedagogic knowledge and values as forms of consciousness and conscience. It is the pedagogic discourse which then attempts to capture the real of the student in the symbolic order of a specialised consciousness and conscience.

This is a necessary condition of pedagogy for there would be no need for pedagogy if the *status quo* of knowledge were that of a universal consciousness: the very existence of 'education' is an index of the absence of a completely universal and homogeneous consciousness; while the existence of pedagogic theories and teaching strategies is an index of an immanent breakdown of education systems to do the job of reproducing knowledge completely without flaw or omission⁵. This latter point is borne out by the fact that all education systems have a graduated system of measures integrated into the regulation of students: this is nothing but the acknowledgement that education indeed fails, and that a certain degree of failure must necessarily be accommodated⁶. The point that we should extract here is that the student is just that resistant presence which, *qua* real, is "always and in every case in its place; stuck to the sole of its shoe, there being nothing that can exile it from

5 Refer Davis 2004: 46

6 Commonly an assessment score of 50% is used, although presently in South Africa a minimum of 30% is allowed under certain conditions. Accommodation of failure is made in order to ensure that, from a pragmatic point of view, the functioning of the system does not stall so that relations of power and control are not disrupted.

it”.

But this is not to say that the student is a problem, in the sense of referring to 'behavioural problems' or 'learning difficulties'. Despite the failure of education in reproduction, the student's resistant and disruptive presence shows up precisely where it *should* be – as the ignorance which education aims to replace with knowledge, and, consequently, in the necessary failed attempts of interpellation of the student in pedagogic discourse, where the various degrees of failure are the result of the pre-existing ignorance.

1.4 Summary and preview

We have seen thus far that in order to answer my simple question about the best way to teach a lesson, that the discussion has developed towards a consideration of more general concepts implied in the question. We started with a mere personal hypothesis about the nature of the student. We then introduced a consideration of two familiar themes in education theory: culture and social class. In a more general sense, these considerations represent attempts to theorise the nature of the relationship between the teacher and the student. I then introduced Lacan's notions of the real, symbolic and imaginary as an appurtenance which offers a more nuanced analysis of the pedagogic relation. The resultant understanding of this analysis was that pedagogic relations are structured by the resistant presence of the student *qua* real, which teachers engage with in an approach framed by the symbolic order.

It follows that, in order to answer the question of how best to teach any particular subject, a consideration of the pedagogic relationship is a reasonable starting point. It is in the pedagogic relationship that we have a singular concept that entails all the salient features of teaching: the nature of the student in relation to the nature of the teacher, both of which are in relation to knowledge. It is the implications of this relation that are encountered as phenomena in the classroom requiring 'management' in order to ensure that the education system achieves its aim of curriculum transmission and reproduction. These implications may be described as the restless dynamics of the pedagogic relation – that aspect of the teacher-pupil relation which transforms a simple aim into a complex activity.

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Ostensibly, this relationship is about teaching and learning; but we know that the entailed process is not a smooth transmission and acquisition of knowledge: the graduated system of measuring degrees of 'passing' is actually a graduated system of degrees of failure of the pedagogic process. It is the way in which the education system always-already accommodates for its own failure at transmission-acquisition. And as a consequence to this fact, there arises the necessity of teaching methodologies as pedagogic strategies to circumvent the encounter with that which frustrates the transmission and acquisition of the curriculum.

A consideration of the pedagogic relationship therefore not only entails the student, the teacher and knowledge, but also a component offering resistance to their relations and thereby generating the question of what constitutes the *best* teaching methods. Our discussion may therefore be seen to have distilled into four distinct entities: the teacher, the student, knowledge and a resistant component in the relationship between the first three. This resistance may appear to be that of cultural or class differences but it is clear that even within homogeneous populations there is variation of results amongst pupils and the teachers' sense of a necessity to strategise in the act of teaching.

At this stage of the essay, having generalised the discussion to some extent, it would be appropriate to state the more general question which concerns this dissertation: Is there a theory that adequately accounts for the rich and subtle dynamics of the pedagogic relation?

The general problem of this dissertation is to produce, as non-arbitrary and principled, a description of the pedagogic relation with respect to the core activity of teaching – that of transmission-acquisition. The account must be structured by necessity and retain its focus on the interactional level of classroom practice, which we are here subsuming under the notion of the 'pedagogic relation'.

CHAPTER 2

THE PEDAGOGIC RELATION IN BERNSTEIN

2.1 Why Bernstein?

Bernstein's socio-linguistic theory provides a sound base from which to work since it is in his theory that we get closest to a description of the pedagogic relation in terms of necessity, that is, in terms of the causal chain characteristic of a symbolic order rather than the ego-identifications of an imaginary order. This may be illustrated by reference to the afore-mentioned citation of Pane (2010) in which breakdown in pedagogy was attributed to the failure of teachers to identify with "African culture".

Pedagogy would proceed effectively if teachers enacted sufficient sensitivity to this cultural feature. The features of "African culture" were then listed. It is this list of observed features of behaviour that I am here designating as the "ego-identifications of the imaginary order". They are imaginary because the descriptions are drawn from images in the specular field of sensory perception. There is no attempt to theorise the semantic charge of these behaviours. With this approach we are offered merely a description of the social at the level of immediacy. According to Pane, the teacher's awareness and accommodation of the behaviours characteristic of black African Americans will promote a more effective pedagogy. Bernstein offers a completely different way of thinking about the problem. Moving from the immediate in the empirical field into the mediating field of theory, he has explained failure in pedagogy in terms of the primary socialisation of children for the acquisition of coding orientations, and the misfit of the acquired code with that of the coding orientation of the education system (Bernstein 1975).

The choice of a sociological theory rather than a theory from another field is supported if we heed the words of Durkheim's assertion that "every time a social phenomenon is directly explained by a psychological phenomenon, we may rest assured that the explanation is false" (Durkheim 1982: 129). While not aiming to detract from the contributions of psychology, it must be admitted that its focus is the individual and intrapsychic processes. Only in Soviet psychology do we get an appreciation that these intrapsychic processes are formed in social relations. Work in this direction under the general field of Activity Theory has been produced (see, for example, Engeström &

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Miettinen 1999; Kozulin 2003; also Kaptelinin & Nardi 2006; Kaptelinin, Nardi & Macaulay 1999); while Daniels (2001) has sought to integrate activity theory with Bernstein's sociolinguistic theory.

Activity theory, however, does the same thing as the educational system when it takes into account, as *a priori*, its necessary point of failure in the problems of communication and the hurdles to be overcome in a collaboration around an object: it takes the points of failure into account as part of the activity, around which strategies are devised to overcome them. This is all to say that activity theory does not provide an explicit account of the missed-encounters of agents and misrecognitions of the object internal to the sphere of the activity. In Bernstein's sociology we are assured that it foregrounds the relation between the individual and the symbolic order, for it explicitly engages with categorical relations of teacher, student, knowledge, class, age, gender, *etcetera*. And it is the *relation* between the teacher and the student, as interpellated in the symbolic order, which takes centre stage in this dissertation.

This notion may be coupled with another caveat, again from Durkheim, regarding educational theory in particular:

“if educational theory goes beyond its proper limits, if it pretends to supplant experience, to promulgate ready-made formulae that are then applied mechanically, it degenerates into dead matter. If, on the other hand, experience disregards pedagogical thinking, it in turn degenerates into blind routine or else is at the mercy of ill-informed or unsystematic thinking. Educational theory essentially is the most methodical and best-documented thinking available, put at the service of teaching” (Durkheim 1961: 2).

Bernstein's research and prolific writings on education provides a detailed and comprehensive analysis of education in terms of the relations between culture, class, knowledge and educational transmissions. The concepts introduced by Bernstein provide structuralist accounts of educational phenomena according to a demonstrated necessity, while retaining a flexible allowance for change at the points of contradiction highlighted by the theory. We note along with Hassan that:

“Bernstein was a sociologist convinced that no sociological theory could account adequately for the production and reproduction of society without taking into consideration the part played in the process by the social subjects themselves, which naturally implied, on the one hand, attention to forms of consciousness and, on the other, an account of how and why these forms coexist in most modern societies”
(Hassan quoted in Davies 2007: 2)

For example, we note that despite the practice of culturally sensitive pedagogies in the three case

studies described above by Dowling and Brown, there are still gaping differences in performance between these schools. While we may offer reasons such as lack of resources and adequate teacher training for the differences in performance, such reasons fail to account for the underperformance of the so-called 'Dinaledi' schools⁷. We may, however, find a satisfactory explanation in Bernstein's sociolinguistic theory of educational transmissions. The differences in performance could be accounted for in terms of Bernstein's "code theory". The notions of "elaborated codes" and "restricted codes" are associated with middle-class and working-class communities respectively (see Bernstein 1990: 14 – 20 for an example of the discussion of code theory; and Holland 1981, for a seminal empirical study based on coding orientations to meanings). A more detailed discussion of these case studies cannot be provided here, given the constraints of this dissertation. It must be remarked, however, that code theory and its notion of coding orientations will provide valuable insight into the structure of the pedagogic relation, but that it will have an enhanced value if applied in conjunction with Lacan's notions of the real, symbolic and imaginary orders.

In this chapter we will explore Bernstein's ideas for commentary on the pedagogic relationship. The main ideas are drawn from his discussion on the pedagogic device.

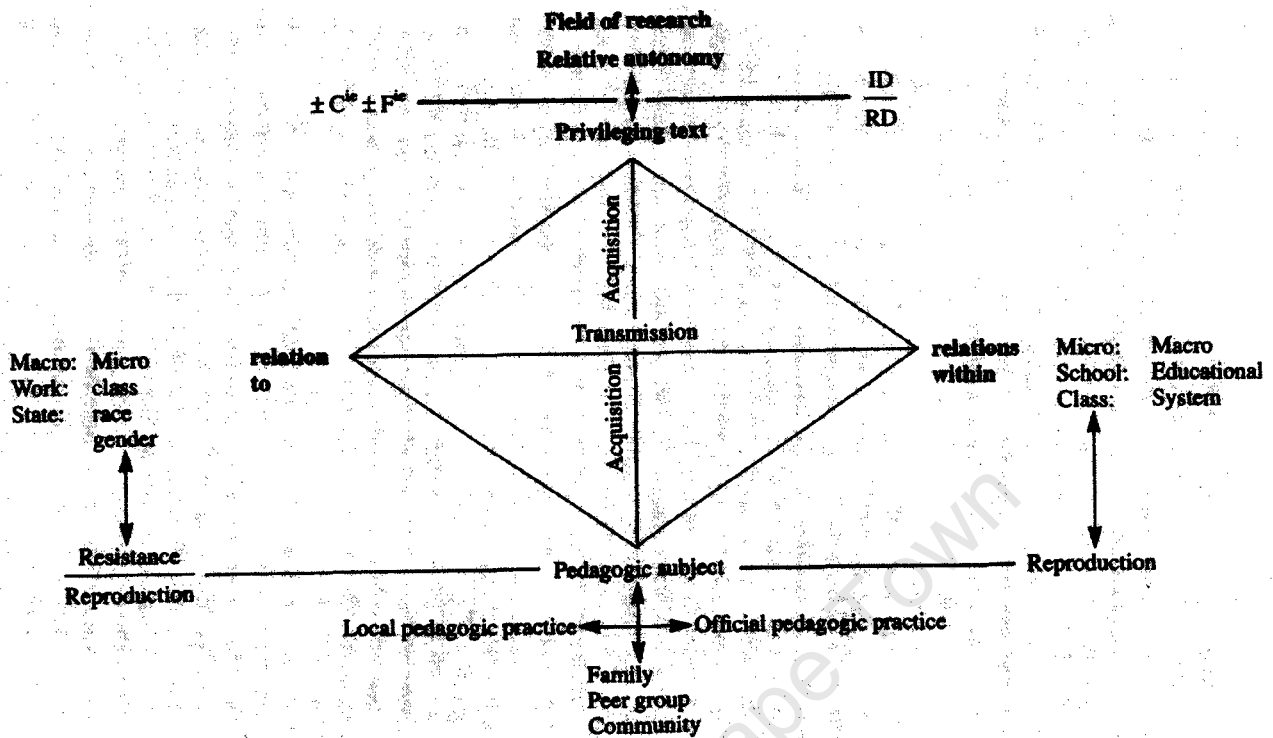
2.2 The pedagogic relationship in Bernstein

We have already seen that it is Bernstein's notion of pedagogic discourse that allows for a link with Lacan's 'treatment of the real by the symbolic' on the question of the dynamics of the pedagogic relationship. Pedagogic discourse has its place in Bernstein's over-arching notion of the pedagogic device. A few words on the pedagogic device is therefore required to provide a more complete understanding of pedagogic discourse.

Bernstein's notion of the pedagogic device represents the matrix of agents and institutions, within a given social division of labour and distribution of power. The pedagogic device is the mechanism which transforms knowledge from the field of production into knowledge for the classroom. Refer, for example, to the diagram Bernstein produces to illustrate his vision of the field of research for "any theory which attempts to link pedagogic communication with pedagogic consciousness/conscience [in which]. . . *The basic question to be asked is always with reference to*

⁷ Not featured in Dowling and Brown's article, these are State-initiated focus schools for mathematics and science, which, in principle, are well-resourced with materials and teaching staff.

the privileging pedagogic text' (Bernstein 1990: 172):



(Illustration 1: Bernstein's Field of Research, 1990: 173)

The knowledge constructed in the pedagogic device and transmitted by the teacher for acquisition by the student is referred to as pedagogic discourse. Bernstein discusses the pedagogic relationship under the broader context of the pedagogic device. It is within the pedagogic device that pedagogic discourse is constructed. The pedagogic device “generates a symbolic ruler of consciousness” and it is “the condition for the production, reproduction, and transformation of culture” (Bernstein 1990: 180). It functions as a mechanism for the reproduction of culture and class, and is hereby implicated in the maintenance of social fracturing. We will explore what his discussion has to say about the nature of the pedagogic relationship in terms of the teacher, the student, knowledge and resistance. The importance of the pedagogic device as a concept in Bernstein is found in the following postulate and definition: “We shall postulate that between power and knowledge, and knowledge and forms of consciousness, is always the *pedagogic device* (PD) [and we] shall define the pedagogic device as the distributive, recontextualizing and evaluative rules for specializing forms of consciousness” (Bernstein 1990: 181, italics in original).

The three rules are hierarchically organised. Distributive rules regulate the rules for recontextualisation, which in turn regulates the rules for evaluation. "The rules of evaluation are constituted in pedagogic practice" (Bernstein 1990: 180). In empirical terms, pedagogic practice defines the pedagogic relationship.

For Bernstein, pedagogic practice constitutes the rules for evaluation. Evaluation concerns the regulation of whatever counts as legitimate production in the classroom. It follows from this assertion that the essential feature of a pedagogic relation is that of regulation on the behaviour, speech and written work of the class. Pedagogic practices mediate the regulation on pupils in addition to the more obvious task of mediating knowledge of the subject. Bernstein accounts for this two-fold function of pedagogic transmission-acquisition in the concept of pedagogic discourse.

Bernstein defines "pedagogic discourse as the rule which embeds a discourse of competence (skills of various kinds) into a discourse of social order in such a way that the latter always dominates the former" (Bernstein 1990: 183). The discourse of specialised competence is termed "instructional discourse" and the discourse of social order is termed "regulative discourse", and the relation between the two is represented by "ID/RD" in which the oblique means 'embedded in' (*loc. cit.*). In accordance with the distribution of power, pedagogic discourse selects knowledge from the field of production for transformation into what is regarded as legitimate knowledge for the classroom. At the level of the classroom, the teacher regulates how knowledge is distributed, understood and reproduced by pupils. Phrased abstractly, "*pedagogic discourse is a principle for appropriating other discourses and bringing them into special relation with each other for the purposes of their selective transmission and acquisition*" (Bernstein 1990: 183 – 184, italics in original).

We may restate the forgoing discussion succinctly by stating that a pedagogic relation is a regulating function constituted in pedagogic practice, which in turn is regulated by pedagogic discourse. The nature of the pedagogic discourse may be understood by referring, ultimately, to the distributive rule which regulates the distribution of power and controls the social division of labour, the effects of which emerge in the recontextualising rules and the rules for evaluation.

2.3 A broad discussion of Bernstein's references to resistance and antagonism in the pedagogic relationship

It was noted above, with reference to Lacan's notions of real, symbolic and imaginary, that the relation between the student and knowledge is structured by the resistance characteristic of the real. From an analytical point of view, the dynamic of resistance is the most substantial we have isolated so far in our consideration of the pedagogic relation. We should, therefore, devote some effort to picking up references to resistance made in Bernstein.

The most general references to resistance in pedagogic contexts found in Bernstein are on discussions on "The social construction of pedagogic discourse" (Bernstein 1990: 165ff.). A discussion of these references to resistance follows.

Bernstein introduces the chapter with a discussion of the theoretical field on culture reproduction, and situates his thesis as a contribution to this field with respect to the role formal education plays in the reproduction of culture. References to resistance are in terms of the way cultural theorists refer to education as a carrier of "messages of patterns of dominance" and in terms of theories that put "agency before structure, that shows the way in which groups themselves resist and actively oppose pedagogic communication rather than being positioned by it" (*ibid.*: p. 171).

During this discussion Bernstein quite frequently uses the terms "cultural resistance/reproduction" or "cultural reproduction/resistance" (*ibid.*: 171, 174, 176). The aim of his discussion is to point to a conceptual gap in the theories of culture reproduction. His criticism of theories of "cultural reproduction, resistance and transformation" are that they describe the positioning of the pedagogic subject with respect to a "privileging text" but "are relatively weak on analyses of 'relations within'", by which Bernstein means the grammar of the carrier of the dominant and dominating cultural message: the structure of the carrier ("voice") which necessarily has an affect on the type of "message" which it delivers (*ibid.*: 23, 28ff.). The 'grammar' is none other than the three rules we have already encountered: the distributive rules, recontextualising rules and rules of evaluation, which together constitute the 'carrier' – the pedagogic device.

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The importance of the above-mentioned analysis is explained by Bernstein himself: “. . . if we do not [understand the 'relations within' a pedagogic text, we can not understand] the relations between the 'privileging text' and the consciousness of the pedagogic subject . . . and if we do not know this how can we talk about reproduction, resistance, transformation?” (*ibid*: 178). From this statement it is clear to see that Bernstein's analysis is founded at some distance to a direct engagement with 'resistance' in general. Within Bernstein the nature of 'resistance' may only be clarified from a perspective of the inner workings of pedagogic communication, namely, the pedagogic device.

Bernstein then begins to map out the concepts important to his discussion, which, according to him, address the 'fundamental relationships which any theory of cultural reproduction has to deal with . . . [indeed] any theory which attempts to link pedagogic communication with pedagogic consciousness/conscience” (p. 172). In the course of his discussion on these concepts we have glimpses of sites which may act as generators of pedagogic resistance. They all arise as possibilities from within the logic of the pedagogic device, that is, the potential causes of resistance are a function of relations between positions in the educational system.

When the acquirer is “unequally positioned with respect to the acquisition of . . . the 'privileging text' . . . [this may be regarded as] having the potential to generate a 'resisting' pedagogic subject”. The “invidious positioning of pedagogic subjects” appears to be at the centre of all such generative sites of resistance to pedagogy (*ibid*: 178). The peer-group relation of the acquirer is also referred to as a “potential threat, from the point of view of 'official pedagogic practice”, or a site of potential independence, alternative, 'resistance' from the perspective of the acquirer” (p. 179).

In an extended comment on the potential for resistance within his framework for culture reproduction, Bernstein describes its generation as a logical consequence of the principles of control imposed upon a pedagogic context – that is, the “framing” of pedagogic practices. I will first briefly discuss this concept, and the related concept of “classification”, and then continue with the quote.

Framing describes the form of control over the principles of communication. It “refers to the principle regulating the communicative practices of the social relations within the reproduction of discursive resources, that is, between transmitters and acquirers” (Bernstein 1990: 36 – 39). Social

relations are regulated in terms of framing. And these relations may be thought of in terms of categories and category relations. The constitution of these categories follows from the principle of the social division of labour. We may describe the categories in terms of the relative strength of insulation between the categories of the social division of labour. The strength of the insulation is referred to in terms of “classification” (*op. cit.*: 24 ff.). Strong classification therefore refers to strong insulation producing very clearly demarcated boundaries establishing the identities in the social division of labour. Strong framing refers to strong transmitter control over pedagogic communicative context. This context is established in terms of two principles: interactional and locational. Regulation of the interactional principle includes factors such as lesson sequencing and pacing, and the posture and dress of the teacher and pupil. Regulation of the locational principle refers to spatial organisation of the pedagogic context, such as the arrangements of desks and other objects in the classroom, their attributes and relations to each other. Varying combinations of classification and framing strengths constitute various pedagogic code modalities.

“ Any framing carries with it the procedures of its disturbance and challenge . . . [through a form of social solidarity, a group of pupils] who have been ***disabled by the code*** [may change] . . . the basic unit of acquisition [to form] non-competitive classroom relations . . . Given this change, the new group can now substitute its own norm of production for the teacher's norms. The group can now impose its own realization rules. These may well include sabotaging the means of the [pedagogic practice], subverting its rules, assuming aggressive postures. These disturbances and challenges are resistances called out by the specific code; they do not *necessarily* index a move even to declassify, let alone to reclassify. Challenge of, or resistance to, the framing of pedagogic practice by transmitters *or* acquirers may be *within* the terms of the classificatory principles”
(Bernstein 1981: 346, italics in original; bold italics mine).

Of importance in this scenario is that the pupils are positioned as “disabled” by the pedagogic code and that the movement in response to this is the institution of a “***new norm of production***”. In other words, while the principles of pedagogic communication have changed as a result of resistance, the discursive products of the class remain, in general, unchanged. There has been no substantial disruption of the pedagogic process with respect to its output because the classificatory principles have not been changed.

Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity (Bernstein 2000) is Bernstein's last volume on pedagogic transmission-acquisition and is the successor to *Class, Codes and Control IV*. It contains work indicating the direction Bernstein had hoped to follow in the development of his theory of pedagogy (Bernstein 2000: *Introduction*, xxvi). In it we find the familiar themes developed more abstractly to

account for broader issues such as the contemporary state, democracy, and the free market. The notion of pedagogy is also broadened to refer to “a fundamental social context through which cultural reproduction-production takes place” (Bernstein 2000: 3).

We find similar thoughts repeated in Bernstein's discussion of education and pedagogy in the context of “democracy and pedagogic rights” (Bernstein 2000: *Introduction*, xx – xxvi). In *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity*, we still find “transmission and acquisition” and the associated orientations to meaning within social class occupying a central part in Bernstein's conceptual space (Bernstein 2000: *Introduction*, xix). Bernstein still locates resistance within the pedagogic product of the specialised, class-based coding of educational transmissions in schools (Bernstein 2000: *Introduction*, xxiv). Education, as a public institution, carries inherent “social biases” and thereby is “central to the production and reproduction of distributive injustices”. This exists in tension with the ideal of 'equality for all' in a democratic state. This ideal forms part of a democratic morality of equality: access to basic social and economic goods (services and capital in: health, education, justice and finance/commerce) must be equally distributed to all citizens for there social and economic advancement. Yet “[t]he school necessarily produces a hierarchy based on success and failure of students”, the causes of which it must mask in order to prevent schism and to maintain social solidarity within the school: a sense of community, fairness, and social integration within the school population. The school masks the inequalities in two ways: i) by appearing neutral and ii) rationalisation of success by the parents of those students who possess the privileged text: their children, some way, deserve success while the others do not (Bernstein 2000: *Introduction*, xxii – xxiii). Social solidarity is maintained within age-groups by a “mythological discourse” which exists to produce “horizontal solidarity” [the sense of belonging to and sharing in the ethic of a particular grade in a school] so as to “contain and ameliorate vertical (hierarchical) cleavages between social groups” (Bernstein 2000: *Introduction*, xxiii).

Bernstein suggests that “education preserves structural relations between social groups but changes structural relations between individuals” (Bernstein 2000: *Introduction*, xxiv). At the level of the school, this means that failure is individualised by referring the cause of failure to innate qualities (cognitive or affective), which render the individual inept to the educational environment. This serves to both mask and legitimise inequalities. With respect to my concern with resistance in the

pedagogic relationship, Bernstein continues: “With such failure and personal damage there is *resistance* and alienation on the one hand and reinforced peer group loyalties and class solidarities on the other. But these solidarities and *resistances* may be contained in the context of the mythological discourses of education. And in this way perhaps orientation is displaced towards national consciousness and struggle rather than class consciousness and conflicts” (Bernstein 2000: *Introduction*, xxiv, italics mine). Resistance is contained within the mythological discourses of education. Bernstein therefore offers an explanation for resistance as the redirection and transmorphing of class conflict away from social class structures to the site and form of the individual within a pedagogic relationship within a class room, via a “mythological discourse” of “horizontal solidarity”. We have here a recontextualising of the site of resistance from the macrocosm of social class to the microcosm of the pedagogic relationship.

In summary, Bernstein locates his theory of the pedagogic device within the general field of the sociology of education (*op. cit.*, p. 165). Within this field, a variety of theories of culture reproduction, theories of cultural resistance, and theories of critical pedagogy exist, none of which have an explicit theory of communication, that is, how the content of pedagogic transmission and acquisition is constituted as a function of the field of education (*op. cit.*, p. 168 – 169). In an attempt to fill the conceptual gap for an explicit theory of communication, his theory therefore explicates the rules for the production, distribution and reproduction of pedagogic discourse in terms of three hierarchically arranged sets of rules, that is, (in descending order of effect): distributive rules, recontextualising rules and rules for evaluation. At the heart of distributive rules are rules of social distribution of forms of conscience (a discourse of moral order / ideology) and consciousness (a discourse of knowledge / practices). The latter is always embedded in the former and this relation of embedded discourses constitutes the pedagogic device (*op. cit.*, p. 183).

Bernstein's model of the pedagogic device may therefore be understood as a theory which explicates the grammar for the reproduction of ideology through the education system, that is, the “complex relations between power, pedagogic discourse of reproduction, and the distribution of forms of consciousness” (*op. cit.*, p. 200). “The pedagogic device is a *symbolic ruler of consciousness* in its selective creation, positioning, and oppositioning of pedagogic subjects. It is the condition for the production, reproduction, and transformation of culture” (*op. cit.*, p.189. Italics in original).

Ideology is constituted by categories and power relations between them which are generated by a particular balance of power in the State. They are essentially *structurally* based. Bernstein's references to resistance within *this* context (that is, of the pedagogic device) were constructed at the level of symbolic control – a resistance to *structural* forms – that is, resistance to a particular ideological form in its cultural guise (*op. cit.*, pp. 134ff.). There is no reference to the antagonism intrinsic to the pedagogic relationship. We should also note that the function of the pedagogic device is the selective distribution of forms of consciousness and conscience. Yet, despite the *selective* distribution, the antagonism appears to be *generic* and independent of the form of consciousness and conscience acquired by the learner. This hints at the possibility that the antagonism is a function of something immutable – not the expression, but the structure of the pedagogic relation set up by the pedagogic communicative context. Within Bernstein's theory of the pedagogic device, therefore, is the unrealised potential to address the kind of resistance that forms the central concept around which this essay is constructed. I would like to suggest that there is a conceptual gap within the theory of the pedagogic device – a point in the theory mute to the general experience of teachers and the extensive literature and lucrative industry which has developed around the idea of classroom management. This represents a blind spot to the immanent pedagogic experience of a kind of 'resistance' different to that referenced by Bernstein: a kind of resistance which appears to be intrinsic to the pedagogic relation as such.

2.4 A Bernsteinian intimation of Lacan

In his summary statements regarding the regulation of the communicative context in education, Bernstein makes a brief reference to “two levels of tacit practices”, which relate to the transmission of any given pedagogic code. The significance of these two levels is that Bernstein begins to theorise with respect to the conscious and preconscious and then moves to make a very brief comment referring to the unconscious. At the level of the conscious, there exist principles of classification and control which are a function of the hegemonic social division of labour and the implicated social relations. At the level of the preconscious, exist the alternatives to the hegemonic social principles, which are a kind of negative expression of the prevailing principles of classification and framing, appearing out of the contradictions inherent to any given social division of labour and its social relations. But beyond this, Bernstein hints at a third form of pedagogic

practice – unconscious practice. “It might be possible to show the relation between the levels of tacit practice and that of unconscious practice through the writings of Lacan (1968)⁸” (Bernstein 1981: 348). In this statement, I would like to assert, Bernstein implies that input from psychoanalytic theory could enhance pedagogic theory. We shall return to this point at a later stage in the dissertation.

We have seen that Bernstein refers to resistance in the context of culture reproduction. He provides an adequate account for how such resistance may come about. His account is an exploration of the derivative forms of resistance which arise as a consequence of the fact that the education system entails a power relation between dominant and dominated ways of being in the world. This power relation may also be stated in terms of the resistance which is stimulated by the transmission of a privileged text to the exclusion of other forms of meaning-making: there is always a dominant discourse in education. The mechanism for the realisation of dominant discourses is “symbolic control”, which is “the means whereby consciousness is given a specialized form and distributed through forms of communication which relay a given distribution of power and dominant cultural categories. Symbolic control translates power relations into discourse and discourse into power relations” (Bernstein 1990: 134). In Bernstein, the entities constituting the juxtaposition in the power relation are grounded on intrinsically different “codes”⁹ which stand in a contrarian relation to each other (Bernstein 1990: 40ff.). “Formal education is essentially predicated on the institutionalizing of elaborated orientations and the contingent forms of their realization irrespective of differences between social groups in their acquisition” (Bernstein 1990: 40). This sets up the condition for resistance: students lacking the elaborated orientation to meaning are “disabled” by the code and consequently interact with pedagogy in modes that offer resistance to educational transmissions.

We could make a brief extension to this analysis of the disabling effect of code by conjecturing that the modes of resistance may be either passive or active: passive resistance results from an acceptance of the disabling effect and compliance with the judgement of academic failure – this is a form of unconscious opposition¹⁰; active resistance results from conscious opposition to the experience of domination by a privileged discourse, which may be realised in various forms of

8 Lacan, J. (1968). *The language of the self: The function of language in psycho-analysis*. Tr. With notes and commentary by A. Wilder. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press.

9 That is, different orientations to meaning-making when comparing middle-class and working-class social groups.

10 Examples of which may include late coming, not doing homework, sleeping in class, forgetfulness about tasks, etc.

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activity, the aim of which is to resist or derail the process of educational transmissions. In either case, the educational transmission fails to result in the reproduction of the privileged text as a consequence of a relative disparity and incompatibility of “code” in the encounter between pedagogic communication and the pupil.

While the concepts discussed above may account for the resistance to pedagogic communication when disparities of code exist, these concepts, however, do not account for the case of when patterns of resistance are still encountered despite there being no disadvantage with respect to code. This is the case when groups of predominantly middle class students still produce deviant, and even completely erroneous reproductions, despite their theoretical predisposition to successful acquisition. And we could justifiably argue that membership of the middle-class is an index for the presence of elaborated code¹¹. The problem with pedagogic transmission-acquisition and reproduction is, therefore, not necessarily related to the “unequal and invidious positioning of pedagogic subjects with respect to the 'privileged text'”, which is Bernstein's summary of what theories of cultural resistance are all about (Bernstein 1990: 178). There are limits to successful acquisition and reproduction across the full spectrum of social class. And these limits refer back to the nature of pedagogy and transmission-acquisition as such. Consequently, our problem of resistance to pedagogic transmissions has thus been reduced to a consideration of a bare minimum of elements: the teacher, the pupil and pedagogic communication. How may we broach the problem in terms of these elements?

Let us remember that our focus is on resistance to pedagogic transmission-acquisition. We have also noted that such resistance occurs even within communicative contexts in which the pupils all have access to the elaborated code. It is in this consideration that we stumble upon a conundrum in Bernstein's theory of educational transmissions. Pupils who have access to the elaborated code should, theoretically, acquire and be able to reproduce the privileged text without misconceptions. However, a moment's reflection on the distribution of academic achievement in any school will convince the reader that this does not happen. There are indeed various levels of faithful acquisition and reproduction of the privileged text. This conundrum can not simply be explained in terms of Bernstein's codes. Code theory in itself does not provide a satisfactory answer. It is necessary to consider an alternative angle of attack on the problem – an angle that accounts for classroom

¹¹ See Holland (1981) Social class and changes in orientations to meanings, *Sociology* 15(1), pp. 1 – 18.

reproductions in terms of the relationships between the teacher, the pupil and pedagogic communication.

Let us begin by considering the obvious: the necessity of pedagogic communication. Why the need for a specialised form of communication in the educational context? We note that pedagogic communication is necessary even when the students are from the middle-class, all socialised into an elaborated code and thereby, ostensibly, predisposed to acquisition of educational transmissions. The question about specialised pedagogic communication is not adequately addressed by reference to “code” and “symbolic control”, because these concepts address the communicative context to account for reproduction, yet overlook the fact that the success of transmission-acquisition is not only dependent on code, but significantly also dependent on the relationship between the transmitter and the acquirer. It is this relationship that drives and necessitates pedagogic communication. The pedagogic relationship has its own dynamics which are quite distinct from the formal content of pedagogic discourse. As such, it places its own limits on the reproductions it aims to achieve, irrespective of social class or cultural group.

We have hereby arrived at a more refined problem. Within Bernstein's code theory of educational transmissions we reach a limit for the description of the dynamics of pedagogic communication. There is an apparent 'internal horizon' which limits a more dynamic view of the pedagogic relation.

2.5 A refined statement of the problem

Previously I had stated my question as follows: Is there a theory that adequately accounts for the rich and subtle dynamics of the pedagogic relation? This may now be refined and restated in the following way:

Starting with Bernstein's theory of educational transmissions, how may we develop his ideas to produce a description of the pedagogic relation which is more revealing of its internal dynamics?
How may we develop Bernstein's theory of pedagogic transmissions to include an adequate model of the pedagogic relation with respect to the entailed pedagogic communication at the interactional level of pedagogic practice?

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It may, therefore, be useful to consider descriptions of the pedagogic relationship which offer possibilities of augmenting our descriptions of pedagogic communication: Bernstein's references to 'transmission-acquisition' has sketched out the basic features of the field, which we now want to enhance with some detail.

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CHAPTER 3

THE SYMBOLIC MANDATE AND THE TEACHER'S VOICE

The primary means of communication is the teacher's voice. It is also the means by which the authority of the teacher is carried; examples of which include the transmission of knowledge, the giving of instructions, and the regulation of behaviour in the classroom. In Bernstein, "practices are the realization of categories" - they are the materialization of the principles of the social division of labour and the associated strength of insulation (Bernstein 1990:23). Phenomenologically, it is what is done with the voice that separates teacher from student; while it is the principle of the social division of labour in schools that unifies them into the category relation of teacher-pupil (Bernstein 1990: 26). Bernstein uses the notion of "voice" to represent the rules both forming and maintaining category relations, which in this case is the category relation 'teacher-pupil'. Yet it is both the "practices" and their "category relation" which are ontologically constitutive of the 'teacher', the 'student' as well as the pedagogic relation which entails them. Or, in more succinct Bernsteinian terms, it is both framing and classification which constitute the category relation teacher-pupil.

There is a basic form of realization of this pedagogic relation of "voice", whether the pedagogy is "visible" or "invisible"¹²: the teacher is expected to speak confidently with knowledge about the subject and to exercise regulation on the pedagogic space, time and work; while it is permissible and even expected of the student to be the bearer of the voice of ignorance and submission.

We may see that this form of relation must exist as the minimal condition for pedagogic transmission-acquisition if we consider the absurd situation of a role reversal. Suppose, in a classroom observation that, unannounced, we walk into a classroom along with the pupils. We move to our work stations and await a greeting from the teacher. Unknown to us all is that the teacher is ill and therefore absent from the class. The class becomes aware of the fact that the teacher must be ill. Unsolicited and unannounced, one of the average-achieving pupils steps out to the front of the class and begins to issue instructions about what the class is supposed to do. We might experience the irony of this situation as a smile shapes our lips, or we might feel that this is not 'right'. Either way, this presumptuous pupil has not the authority to use his voice in this manner in a classroom context.

¹² Refer Bernstein (1990: 53, 70 – 73) for an explanation of these terms. See also Bernstein (1990: 22 – 52) for a discussion on "voice" and "message".

It is the sense of impropriety that produces either of the two reactions – of humour or indignation. Besides the lack of a voice of knowledge, the sub-voice of age would also signify that there is no authority in the person standing at the front – instructions received from an adult, whether teacher or not might be better received, depending on what he or she was saying. The pupil issuing instructions would be seen as an imposter: assuming to have an authority which has not been conferred by the school. Following this incident of imposture, we would not expect much production in the classroom because the rest of the class, with its voice of ignorance, has lost its counterpart in a voice of knowledge and authority.

Another situational sketch will help to illustrate the social dynamics that I am attempting to draw out. Suppose someone arrives with an easel and white board at a busy public square. The white board is erected on the easel and the person proceeds to engage in a pedagogic performance, teaching to passers-by (how to factorise a quadratic trinomial, for example). While the speaker may believe that she or he has the authority to transmit this information, there are no 'acquirers' filling the space with the voice of ignorance and submission. We could easily imagine many a strange look or frown upon the faces of passers-by. No one has summoned this person to teach, and yet there is the spectre of a teaching performance, as if it were a response made to a voice that no one else hears. Under such circumstances we might reasonably wonder if the speaker is psychotic¹³ – but not so if the same person did the same thing in a classroom of students. So what, we may ask, makes the crucial difference for the teacher to be recognised as such?

3.1 An imposter with a *skeptron*

Bourdieu supplies us with an answer: “The power of words is nothing other than the *delegated power* of the spokesperson, and his speech – that is, that substance of his discourse and, inseparably, his way of speaking – is no more than a testimony, and one among others, of the *guarantee of delegation* which is vested in him” (Bourdieu 1992: 107, emphasis in original).

The authority of the teacher as speaker – the authority of the teacher's voice – lies not within the actual language or voice of the teacher, nor even within the knowledge thereby expressed. The authority of the teacher comes from outside of the teacher: in the first instance from the delegation of authority by his/her appointment to a teaching-post; and secondly via the immediacy of the

13 i.e., perceiving an invisible audience signifying his conferred authority to perform as a teacher.

“interpellation” of the pupils, who, through the principle of the division of labour, “hail” the teacher as the one who knows the privileged text, while simultaneously regarding themselves as lacking the privileged text (Althusser quoted in Silverman 1983: 48 – 49). The principle of the social division of labour, the classification rules, thus constitute the category relation teacher-pupil and the entailed gaze: the pupil regards the teacher as one who knows legitimate knowledge; the teacher regards the pupil as one lacking the knowledge which the teacher has to offer. The identities of both teacher and pupil are thus co-constructed.

In seeking a description of pedagogic communication, we should remember Bourdieu's assertion that “authority comes to language from outside, a fact concretely exemplified by the *skeptron* that, in Homer, is passed to the orator who is about to speak” (Bourdieu 1992: 109). In pedagogic communication, the power of the teacher is external to the teacher: vested in the teacher by the State and school; and interpellated as voice of authority by the hailing voice of the student lacking knowledge and demanding its supply by the teacher. It is ironic to note at this point that the teacher becomes 'teacher' completely only when there is a subject willing to speak with the voice of ignorance and submission. Yet, in order to perform the function of 'teacher', it is this same ignorance which begins to function as a nucleus of resistance that must be overcome as an obstacle to the acquisition of the teacher's knowledge.

The language of the teacher in pedagogic communication at most represents the authority invested in the teacher by the State/school and interpellated by the student. In this sense, authority may be understood as located extrinsic to the teacher, or, phrased differently, “the [teacher] is an imposter endowed with a *skeptron*” (*ibid.*). With reference to my earlier situational sketches, this curt phrase concisely illustrates the difference between the presumptuous pupil, the psychotic, and the teacher: of these three subjects, the one deemed to be the teacher is the one who holds the *skeptron*. This is the quality that discriminates between them; and it is a quality with an external source. There is no validity in a *skeptron* being passed on by oneself to oneself: it is of necessity that the symbolic power of the *skeptron* always originates with an Other who confers it (the examples here being the State or school).

The *skeptron*, with respect to teaching, stands for the signifiers of conferred authority in which the teacher has a right to stand in front of the classroom and engage in the performance of teaching. A

curiously immanent effect is produced by the structural necessity of extrinsic authority, exemplified by the holding of a *skeptron*. The student's gaze, induced and sustained by the *skeptron*, is disrupted by the crude corporeality of the teacher. Teachers bear the dual properties of real embodiment while possessing an elevated status of symbolic power. And as the relationship between teacher and pupil develops during the course of the lessons the antagonism of these properties is quickly revealed. The teacher, as stated above, must overcome the lack in the pupil. The teacher employs the conferred power and knowledge to do so. But the engagement with this lack in the pupil is encountered as an obstacle – as a form of resistance to the teacher's function and identity. Consequently, there is a sense in which the teacher's striving to realise the conferred power always fails as a result of the encounter with the lack in the student. Moreover, it is in this disruption of the movement of symbolic power and in the gaze of the student that the teacher's corporeality is shown up in even stronger contrast against the failure of power. The student's gaze is disrupted and distorted: in the place of the image of a steadfast holder of the *skeptron* appears the spectre of one who bumbles along with it.

3.2 The failed phallus and the necessity of fantasy

In psychoanalytic terms the *skeptron*, as a marker of power, is a type of phallus. Aoki has asserted that “insofar as the teacher embodies the Name of the Father (*sic*) as the bearer of symbolic law – the conflation of disciplinary knowledge, in all its senses, with the authority of assessment – the teacher purports to have the phallus” (Aoki 2002: 42). But if the phallus marks an assumed guarantee of delegation of power to speak, it by no means guarantees success in the transmission and acquisition of the disciplinary knowledge. In this respect we are reminded that the performance of teaching is structured around an encounter with the void of knowledge in the student, which shows up the limits of the teacher's power¹⁴.

The “Lacanian lesson is that no one can really have the phallus, that everyone who presumes to possess it is an imposter and a fraud. When the imposture falls apart, when the veil of teaching is stripped away, what is revealed is not the phallus, but the prick, the “ridiculously impotent” poseur is all the more laughable for her/his claim to the phallus” (*ibidem*).

14 The democratization of pedagogic relationships exacerbates this already (structural) antagonism because democratization confers the power of individual rights on the student and limits the teacher's power of regulation

The phallus is always shadowed by its negative form, the prick. The prick is a designation given to a failed phallus. It is the appellation by which a mockery of presumptuous power is invoked. This is what must be repressed in order to maintain the original image of the teacher as source of desired knowledge and to restore the desirous gaze of the student.

References to the phallus, the prick and oblique references to desire indicate a peculiar phenomenon in pedagogic relationships, namely, that it is attended by the dynamics of sexuality, for example, Aoki refers to this as “pedagogical sexualization” (*op. cit.*: 38 – 41). It is a widely accepted fact that sexual or romantic relationships between teachers and students occur within educational institutions. The institutional response is to mobilize policing to prevent such relationships or at least to prevent the potentially negative fallout. The mobilization is done through laws and codes of conduct regulating the relationships between teachers and students. The function of these laws and codes is that of “pedagogic castration” (*ibid.*). Teachers are required to relate to their students asexually. But the “good teacher . . . is never really castrated; s/he only agrees to sustain the professional farce of pricklessness that allows the classroom to operate . . . [Together with the institution they] agree to act as if sexuality has been evicted from the classroom, when both sides know very well that such eviction is impossible” (Aoki 2002: 40).

Institutional repression of the prick has also a more fundamentally psychoanalytic twist to it: it is only through the repression of the prick that the fantasy of the teacher may be sustained. Without fantasy at play, there is only the image of an imposter, or worse still, the image of a charlatan. And the fantasy sustains the gaze of the student. The student's gaze, however, is inevitably fractured because “the teacher is ultimately *always* a prick” (*ibid.*). To have a meaningful pedagogical presence for the student the teacher is structurally bound to be a prick.

We may see how this is structurally determined by an analysis of the social relationships in the classroom. In chapter 2 we have already seen that modalities of framing can draw out resistances from pupils. Such resistances show up within the pedagogic practices of pupils. Let us be reminded that framing is the regulation on the communicative context: it is about legitimate forms of communication. It thus, necessarily, entails the display of delegated authority, primarily but not exhaustively, via the teacher's voice. Bernstein, read through a Lacanian lense, is therefore telling us that it is the nature of pedagogic communicative contexts that the teacher is bound to display some

form of authority but that this concomitantly induces the response of resistances to this display of authority. The resistances, in turn, frustrate the fulfilment of the teacher's mandate of authority, reducing the phallus to a mere prick.

We may see this in another way, with respect to the social division of labour. I have already stated that the classificatory principle entailed in the social division of labour sets up the category relationship 'teacher-pupil'. This is the dominant principle which organises social relations in the classroom. This in turn entails the endowment of the mandate to teach. I described this mandate via the illustration of the '*skeptron*' and I have identified the *skeptron* as an image corresponding to the concept of the "phallus" in Lacan. Yet we know that no one ever possess the phallus. The status as holder of the phallus thus slides to the position of a failed phallus: the well-endowed teacher thus shows up as the prick. This slippage of status from phallus to prick is structurally determined by the principle of the social division of labour.

3.3 Avoiding the failure, sustaining the fantasy?

I have been describing hitherto the typical relation between teacher and pupil in which the teacher is the master of the subject. Bensusan and Shalem have produced an illuminating discussion on the mastery conception of pedagogy as well as its opposite in *The Crooked Path of Pedagogy* (Bensusan & Shalem 1994).

They begin with a critique of a form of pedagogy referred to as "critical theory". This pedagogical form assumes the pedagogical master, but not in the traditional sense of the term. In the traditional sense of the master, the pedagogic mode is explicit. In the pedagogy which they critique the master engages in an implicit mode of pedagogy: guiding the student toward "enlightenment", "conversion", "liberation" and "Truth" (*op cit.*: 176). This theory proposes that students must first be allowed to express their desires, pleasures and frustrations for their lives in an uninhibited manner. The teacher then exploits this moment of trust to reflect the students' utterances back to them in a manner which reveals the inconsistencies or falsehoods in their beliefs which prevent the realisation of happiness hoped for in the original utterances. The authors' critique is two-fold: i) that the apologists for this pedagogy refuses "an explicit conception of truth, in the form of teachers' authority over knowledge" yet implicitly hold on to "an absolutist notion of Happiness" and ii) the

unresolved “pedagogical problematic of getting the students to voluntarily relinquish volitions and wants and the likelihood of successfully achieving this” (*op cit.*: 177).

The question which the authors seem to set themselves to answer is how these deadlocks in critical pedagogy might be overcome. The first of these is a logical contradiction and so the resolution is simple: identify which one of the statements of critical theory should be saved and modify the other. This approach seems to have been adopted and is borne out by the assertion which they make later (*op cit.*: 180).

They proceed to expound their answer to these questions by critiquing the negative form of the critical theorists notion of the master.

In the alternative pedagogy, critiqued by the authors, the aim is to “undermine the reader's confidence in 'knowledge' as something about which there ought to be a 'theory' and which has 'foundations'”. Primary socialisation, according to this alternative, is about induction into the narratives of the community in which the child is reared. In later years in formal schooling, it is the “role of teacher . . . to help the student position herself (*sic*) in relation to these traditions” (*op cit.*: 179). In this theory there is absolutely no master, for there is no truth to be mastered. The question posed to apologists of this theory is whether they can accommodate the “necessary constitutive agency of loss in the pedagogical situation” (*op cit.*: 180). If all that is accomplished is a positioning of the student with respect to the plethora of traditions in the social, then can this be sufficient to make the judgement that 'education' has indeed taken place? The aspect of critical theory which Bensusan and Shalem aim to hold on to is that which sees pedagogy as entailing a sacrifice on the part of the student in order to possess something more valuable. And it is this exchange that results in the 'education' of the subject.

Bensusan and Shalem draw out an answer to the problems encountered in both critiques by drawing out the amiable features of each. In terms of the conception of a master, the authors assert that there is a truth which the teacher must hold out for the student to grasp; but in doing so, unlike the notion of a resolutory state of 'arriving at truth', the authors suggest the continuous deferral of its attainment.

In doing so, the authors have preserved the best of both theories in a manner which avoids the inconsistencies in each. Moreover, two important pedagogical dynamics are highlighted: i) the factor of loss as constitutive of genuine pedagogic processes, and ii) that a continuous deferral of the valued pedagogical object is constitutive of the students desire to change.

This second point is the solution to the second impasse encountered in critical theory. “Staging desiring as such entails a process which maintains the desire alive by constructing a chain of gratification which is continuously elusive so that ‘the subject cannot come alongside it’. For this to happen the object of desire . . . has to be refused” (*op cit.*: 181). In short, “pedagogy . . . functions by means of withholding rather than by means of transmission” (*ibid*).

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CHAPTER 4

CONCEPTUAL TOOLS TO SUPPORT THE ANALYSIS

I will now discuss some important conceptual tools for my analysis of the pedagogic relation. We have already seen that the pedagogic relation may be fruitfully described in terms of Bernstein's concepts of classification and framing, and pedagogic code. In addition, the structural necessities of the pedagogic relation entail the factor of resistance offered by the student to the pedagogic communicative context. We have seen how Lacan's notions of real, symbolic and imaginary orders may be employed to produce a more precise description of the nature of the pedagogic relation. I will begin with a discussion of the notion of 'desire', mentioned in the previous chapter, in terms of the way it is understood in Lacanian thought. We will then refine our initial ideas of the pedagogic relation in terms of the notion of 'antagonism'. We will recruit the concepts of 'extimacy' and 'procept' and the relational device of the semiotic square of opposition. A discussion of additional Lacanian terms will complete this chapter and enable us to take the analysis further.

4.1 Desire, drive, the object, the Other and *jouissance*

'Desire' is a concept we will encounter many times in this essay. Of all the Lacanian concepts, desire is probably the most central (Evans 2006: 36 – 39). It carries the idea of a perpetual force, motivating the trajectory of the subject's activity. Desire, unlike need, can never be satisfied; it is, in a sense, self-propagating. Need ceases at the point of its satisfaction; desire is the excess of demand over need, which, as Kojève puts it, is “perfectly useless from the biological point of view” (*ibid.*: 38).

Two further points must briefly be mentioned here. The first is that Lacanian desire is always the Other's desire. This is the peculiarly social nature of desire. It is associated with a desire for recognition, and is always a desire from the point of view of the Other (the gaze) – desired objects are always those which have been learned to be the object of desire by an other. This is a reference to the foundational importance of the intervention of language on the subject, for it is through language that representations are made of desire and in terms of language that the subject becomes desirous of objects within the social-symbolic order. The object of desire is usually termed *objet petit a* and represented simply as 'a'.

The second point is that desire is not the same as drive. Although they both carry the notion of motive force, the drives are the “particular (partial) manifestations of a single force called desire” (*Ibid.*: 38). I will be using the concept of pedagogic desire and pedagogic drive in the sense that the pedagogic relation requires a pedagogic desire to maintain it, and that this pedagogic desire is manifested in the particular pedagogic drive which circulates around the production of the privileged text for a particular subject discipline or topic.

In relation to *object petit a*, the object through which desire is maintained, the subject's relentless pursuit of that which seems desirable in the object is term *jouissance*. *Jouissance* is the pursuit of the desire beyond the pleasure principle. Evans observes that “*jouissance* is suffering” (2006: 93) or, to draw out its paradoxical nature, it is the “suffering that [the subject] derives from his own satisfaction” (*ibidem*). This term is thus apt for use to describe the teacher's persistent 'struggle' with the student in pedagogic communication to 'get him to understand'. It also implicates a structure of repetition, about which we will have more to say in chapter 6.

The term may also be used of the *jouissance* of the student. It is representative of both the resistance to knowledge as well as the struggle to reproduce the privileged text. It is because of its relation to the object of desire, that *jouissance* may also be represented by the *object petit a*.

4.2 Antagonism – Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe

Let me begin this short section by eliminating misconceptions. Antagonism is not the opposition of physical objects, nor is it the contradiction of concepts. In both cases it is the positivity of the objects or concepts that results in the particular relation of opposition or contradiction. Two examples will illustrate what I mean.

In the first case, that of real opposition, we may think of a cricket ball and a cricket bat. It is the positive nature of both that permits, for example, a batsman to smash the ball over the boundary for a 'six'. The batsman would not be able to do so if, for example, the bowler used an object with very different physical properties, such as a table tennis ball, for example. The relation of the physical properties of a table tennis ball and cricket bat would not allow for the production of good cricket¹⁵.

¹⁵ I beg the indulgence of the reader in imagining that, assuming that an excellent bowler could deliver a table tennis ball up to the batsmen, the dynamics of spin and bounce off the bat would be reduced to a point of negligible effect.

We would not, in the case of the relation between a cricket bat striking a cricket ball, speak of an antagonistic relation existing between them. This is a case of real opposition: the nature of two physical objects give rise to a determinable outcome when they are brought into relation with each other.

Let us continue with our illustrations from cricket when considering the second case, that of conceptual contradiction. Suppose one of the batsmen is involved in a 'run out' situation: the ball is struck; the batsmen run; the ball is returned to a fielding member who knocks the bails of the wickets as a batsman crosses the crease. The fielding team appeals to the umpires for a run out. The affected batsman believes that the crease was crossed in time to have negated the conditions for 'run out', or phrased positively, to have fulfilled the conditions for 'not-being-run-out'. The conditions 'run out' and 'not-being-run-out' are mutually exclusive and are defined by the Laws of Cricket. In making their decision, the umpires must refer to the Laws in order to decide whether or not a 'run out' should be given. The concept of a run out is well defined in the Laws so that the states of being run out and 'not-being-run-out' can not logically exist simultaneously, that is, 'run out' and 'not-being-run-out' stand in conceptual contradiction to each other. It would be ridiculous to assert that if the conditions for 'run out' are met, and the umpire declares that the batsman is run out, that this represents an antagonism in the relation between player and umpire, or an antagonism in the relation between the two teams.

But it is a completely different case if a selector overlooks a good cricket player for selection to play in a team. Here, we may justifiably assert that there is an element of antagonism in the relation between selector and player. For the feature that marks this relation is that a subject (the cricket player) is prevented from actually being a cricket player by being overlooked for selection into a team. For a subject to be fully constituted as a cricket player, the subject must play cricket in a recognised game of cricket. In my example, this state of actualisation of the potential cricket player is disrupted by the influence of an Other (the selector). We have the relation of antagonism when the entelechy of the subject is frustrated by an Other. In one sense, an antagonism is a negation of the fulfilment of 'being' by the relational presence of another being (refer, for example, Laclau and Mouffe 1985: 122 – 127).

Antagonism is that feature of the pedagogic relation that I wish to single out as the disruption of

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pedagogic discourse through the disruption of pedagogic communication. A more precise definition of antagonism may not be offered because “every language and every society are constituted as a repression of the consciousness of the impossibility that penetrates them. Antagonism escapes the possibility of being apprehended through language, since language only exists as an attempt to fix that which antagonism subverts (Laclau & Mouffe 1985: 125). In the light of the illustration provided above, we may regard the category relation 'teacher-pupil' as entailing an antagonism just as much as it is entailed in an antagonism. It is a structural necessity of the pedagogic relation that the category 'teacher' entails the very presence which frustrates the entelechy of the 'teacher'.

The teacher is always a prick precisely because the mandate of power and knowledge is never completely actualised in the practice of teaching. There is always something of the student which escapes transmission-acquisition under the teacher's mandate; always something which prevents the teacher from being a 'complete' teacher in terms of the symbolic mandate. Teaching is a sequence of pedagogic practices enacted by the teacher in order to regulate the student to know and to do what the teacher wants. The designation 'teacher' is both a category and a function. It is a category in the social division of labour of the classroom which entails the function of pedagogic communication. This understanding has similarities to the notion of a “procept” in Gray & Tall (1994). The teacher's job is to confront the informally socialised nature of the student – the student-as-ignorant, the student-as-void of legitimate knowledge – and to persuade the student to reproduce the selected formal knowledge, instead of the other knowledge, in appropriate ways. But this function of the teacher meets with resistance from the student, a state of affairs which we here label as antagonism. Antagonisms exist at the limit of attempts at complete transmission-acquisition: it exists as a feature which seems as much an intrinsic property of pedagogic communication as it is an extrinsic witness to the failed attempts at its complete efficacy.

4.3 Extimacy (*Extimité*) – Jacques-Allain Miller

This curious location of antagonism – at the limit of discourse, seemingly both internal and external to the discourse – is most aptly represented by the Lacanian notion of extimacy.

Lacan coined the term *extimité* (translated as 'extimacy') to name a peculiar feature of the subject. In attempting to describe the most intimate region of the subject, it was observed that this “central

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place” had the quality of an “intimate exteriority”, a quality for which Lacan coined the term “extimacy” (Lacan 1986: 139). Jacques-Allain Miller, as a student of Lacan, a participant in his Seminars, and a practising psychoanalyst, has set himself the task to “transform this term into an articulation, a structure” by which he intends to clarify its meanings (Miller 1994: 74). It is a polyvalent term. Miller shows the various contexts for its application, and my discussion of the term is drawn from those applications.

We begin by noting with Miller that “extimacy is not the contrary of intimacy. Extimacy says that the intimate is Other – like a foreign body, a parasite” (*ibid.*: 76). The foremost image we may present here, is that of the analyst in psychoanalysis. The analyst relates to the analysand at the most intimate level. As such, the position of the analyst is at the centre of the subject under psychoanalysis. Yet the analyst, to be an effective analyst, must always affect this position of intimacy from the outside – precisely as an intruder who has no personal interest in the analysand. The relation of analyst to analysand is extimate to the intimacy which the relation entails (*ibid.*: 77). There is an equivalent relation of subject to the unconscious - “the unconscious is the Other's discourse” (Lacan 1999: 10).

The structure of the pedagogic relation has this quality of extimacy. This is reflected in a curious statement by Bernstein: “If the culture of the teacher is to become the consciousness of the child, then the culture of the child must first be in the consciousness of the teacher” (Bernstein 1971: 65). Whatever else this may mean, it certainly signifies a structural prerequisite of the pedagogic relation necessary for effective transmission-acquisition. The concept of extimacy names this observation by Bernstein. However, it is precisely because of this structural necessity that things turn out to be not that simple. What Bernstein names as “culture” is the particular articulation of specialised knowledge and everyday knowledge¹⁶ which informs the pedagogic transmissions of the teacher. It is the teacher's relay of pedagogic discourse. Now pedagogic discourse is brought into relation with the pedagogic subject (the 'child'), which entails local and official pedagogic practices according to the figure shown in §2.2, page 17. And the local and pedagogic practices are precisely the substance of what Bernstein names as 'culture'.

Now the nature of the interaction of these two 'cultures' is such that the presence of one forecloses

¹⁶ In the colloquialisms of education, these two forms of knowledge are usually referred to as 'knowledge, skills, and values'.

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the possibility of the other's complete constitution. This is the structure of 'antagonism' and it is precisely this impasse that 'teaching strategies', and "cultural-responsive pedagogies", *etc.*, aim to address. Thus we have in Bernstein the reference to an extimate relation of teacher and pupil which also signifies a necessary relation of antagonism.

I would like to round off this discussion on extimacy by including an analogical reference often associated with it. The nature of the pedagogic relationship is not a simple linear relation of transmission-acquisition. If there were a topological analogue of the pedagogic relation, it would be more like the Möbius band, which at first glance may appear to have two separate sides, but which actually has only one. In a similar way, the position of antagonism may appear at first glance to exist within the pedagogic relation until we see that antagonism exists as the limit to its complete constitution – as that which remains, as a negative presence, after the positivity of pedagogic communication is rendered incomplete by the resistant presence of the student. Antagonism therefore stands in an extimate relation to the intimacy of the pedagogic relation.

4.4 Antagonism, extimacy and procept

I have mentioned that the category 'teacher' has similarities to the notion of a "procept" (Gray & Tall 1994). The term is employed to describe the nature of some mathematical symbols which signify a concept as well as a particular mathematical procedure. 'Teacher' is an identity – a concept – that only finds complete constitution in the practices and procedures of teaching. The notion of 'teacher' may thus be understood to have a proceptual nature. It is due to the proceptual nature of 'teacher' that it is impossible to think of what is entailed in the notion of a 'teacher' without simultaneously having a concept of 'student' in mind. 'Teacher' as categorical identity is primordially attached to the notion of 'student', bearer of the voice of ignorance and submission. And if we consider the teacher's 'function' to be an enabler of transmission-acquisition, it is the student's 'function' to resist it.

We therefore arrive at the conclusion that 'student' is entailed in the identity of 'teacher', and hence, via an alternate route, at the corollary that the category 'student', as the agent of antagonism, stands in extimate relation to the category 'teacher'.

4.5.1 Semiotic square of opposition – Algirdas Greimas

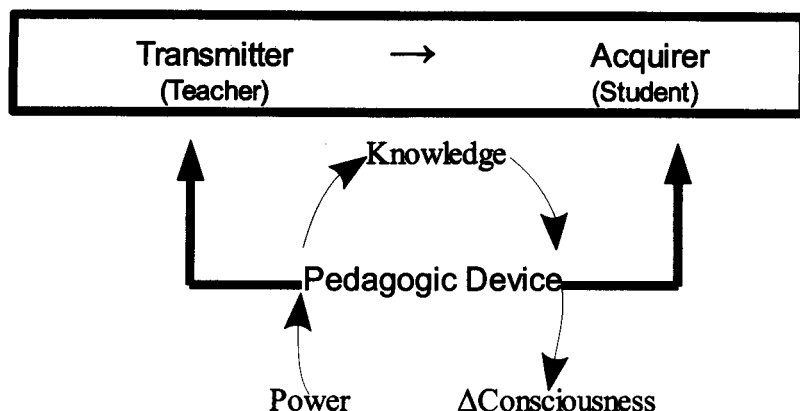
I would now like to engage specifically with the aspect of 'process' in transmission-acquisition as found in Bernstein. Bernstein's basic assumption is that of a linear process of transmission-acquisition, which entails aspects I would like to discuss below.

Transmitter → Acquirer

(Illustration 2: The Basic Model of Pedagogic Communication)

Education, and in particular the pedagogic relationship, entails communication of a specialised kind (Bernstein 2000: 26 – 27). Bernstein's focus was on the search for “general principles underlying the transformation of knowledge into pedagogic communication” (Bernstein 1996: 39). The pedagogic device explains how the “interactional and structural relations” of these educational transmissions are formed, at various levels of the social, in terms of the Distributive Rule, the Recontextualising Rule, and the Evaluative Rule (Bernstein 2000: 91; Bernstein 1990: 190). This is the mechanism for the coding of the distribution of power and social regulation into educational transmissions (Bernstein 1975: 178). At the interactional level of classroom practice, the Recontextualising Rule is the principle according to which pedagogic discourse embeds the instructional discourse in the regulative discourse. Bernstein's theory also emphasises that it is the nature of educational transmissions to undergo transformations at various levels of the education system, from the macro-level of the social – political and economic – to the micro-level of the classroom – transmission from teachers to students (Bernstein 1990: 173, refer to diagram on page 17, §2.2).

This summary of Bernstein on pedagogic communication, taken together with Bernstein's “postulate” that “between power and knowledge, and knowledge and forms of consciousness, is always the *pedagogic device* (PD)” (Bernstein 1990: 181, italics in original), leads to the following underlying process, which may be represented as:



(Illustration 3: Pedagogic Communication Structured by the Pedagogic Device)

The diagram is explained below.

The pedagogic device is the cornerstone, holding the structure together. Yet the relation 'Transmitter → Acquirer' is framed to show that, at the level of the immediate, what we experience is simply the pedagogic communication as an index to the dynamics of the pedagogic relationship. In the 'background', so to speak, is the function of the pedagogic device operating between 'Power' and 'Knowledge', and 'Knowledge' and various forms of consciousness (' Δ Consciousness'). I would like to assert that this model represents Bernstein's basic conceptualisation with respect to pedagogic communication; and that, at the interactional level between teacher and student in the classroom, it is in this model that the traditional schema of communication is posited as operative.

This model, however, suggests that the message is transmitted and received clearly and without interference or resistance by the acquirer. It implies the notion of 'full' communication, which has the status of a "moral ought-to-be" (Davis 2004: 47). Of course the message (the transmission) may be distorted in favour of privileged and privileging orientations to meaning, etc. We take cognisance of the fact that Bernstein's emphasis is on the message and the means of its transformation, through the 'carrier' of the pedagogic device, and its consequential shaping of the acquirer's conscience and consciousness for the reproduction of social structure. But this is precisely what I wish to highlight in Bernstein's model: that the emphasis is on the production and transformation of the message as such, while the transmitter and acquirer exist merely by implication of the existence of the message – as mere place-holders as original and terminal points for the message.

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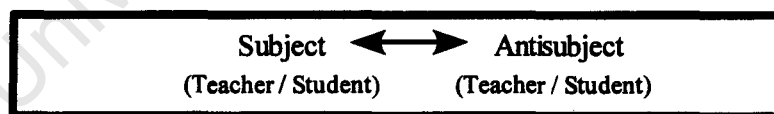
Greimas provides an alternative model for communication theory in terms of his discourse on semiotics. He refers to the shift away from this traditional model, to an alternate modelling of communication, as:

“the modalization of communication theory [. . . in which we posit the replacement of] the traditional schema with a sender, a receiver, and a message, [with an alternative:] two interacting, modally competent subjects facing each other [. . .]. Each of these subjects, whether engaged in conversation or arguing [. . .] has its own proper trajectory [. . .] its own historicity [. . .] its own modal history [. . .]. Their meeting brings about a sort of polemic, a struggle between two competences, and the structure of struggle can take the form of what we have called the polemical-contractual. In other words, we are dealing with continuous tension between primitive confrontation or contractuality [. . .]. Yet it should be added that there is never a definitive struggle [. . .] for in the narrative schema there exist a subject and an antisubject in a permanent conflictual situation.
(Greimas, Perron & Collins 1989: 549, emphases added)

Here we find descriptions of communication in which the definitive feature is that of an antagonism: “Each . . . subject[] . . . has its own proper trajectory . . . the structure of struggle . . . [in which] there exist a subject and an antisubject in [a] permanent conflictual situation”.

This description adequately represents, at a fundamental level, the nature of the interaction in the pedagogic relationship. Laclau and Mouffe (1985) have elaborated on the “continuous tension”, in which there is “never a definitive struggle” between “a subject and an antisubject in a permanent conflictual situation”, in their treatment of the notion “antagonism”, discussed earlier in this essay.

Using Greima's terms, we may then transform the initial representation of pedagogic communication as a uni-directional transmission-acquisition into a bi-directional, recursive relation of antagonism.



(Illustration 4: Pedagogic Communication Structured by Recursion and Antagonism)

Greimas therefore provides the theoretical context within which to embellish Bernstein's model of pedagogic communication, with a view to focus on the antagonistic potential inherent in the pedagogic relationship. I will briefly elaborate on the features of value in this model before moving on to develop the argument.

We will start by noting that the bi-directional arrow represents Greimas' assertion that in the modalization of communication, each subject has their "own proper trajectory", their own proper aims in the pedagogic relation. Therefore, when viewed from either position, the Other always appears as the antisubject, thwarting the aims of the subject through the presence of the Other's aims.

Consider, for example, the aim of a mathematics teacher in any particular lesson. The main aim is to communicate concepts about relations between, and operations on, mathematically defined objects (numbers, algebra, measures of space and time, etc.). In the traditional model the teacher's aim is the communication of mathematical knowledge. But Bernstein reminds us that the discourse of instruction is embedded in a discourse of regulation. And what is this regulation all about? The regulation functions in two ways: i) to transmit recognition and realisation criteria; and ii) to regulate the students' behaviour – that is, the social order of the classroom. In other words, there is regulation related to the (acceptable) reproduction of mathematical knowledge and there is regulation related to social relations. Here we should pause to consider the question: 'Why should the regulation of something of no immediate importance to mathematics – that is, the regulation of social order – be an indispensable factor in the pedagogic discourse of a mathematics teacher – in fact, for the teacher of *any* subject'? The answer can not be found in Bernstein's model of pedagogic communication, in which transmission-acquisition is the focus of the model. We do, however, have access to an answer to this question if we refer to Greimas' modalization theory of communication in which each of the subjects "has its own proper trajectory [. . .] . [A] **struggle** between two competences, and the **structure of struggle** can take the form of what we have called the **polemical-contractual**. In other words, we are dealing with **continuous tension . . .**" (Greimas: *loc. cit.* Bold added). In addition to the teacher's pedagogic aims and intended trajectory for the lesson, the student has an independent set of aims and a personal trajectory during the lesson. This sets up the antagonism – the simultaneous presence of alternative aims of both teacher and taught. And this is why we can not think of pedagogic communication simply as a transmission-acquisition from teacher to student. Both are inextricably caught up in the "polemical-contractual".

4.5.2 Greimas' modalization theory of communication

Greimas was a contemporary of many of the original leaders in the field of semiotics. His work

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grew out of the field of inquiry into semiotics and were based on the pervading ideas of the time about the nature of the sign. These ideas are generally grouped as belonging to the field of structuralism. By reference to concepts developed by Jakobson apropos of the phonological signifier, Greimas developed the notions of the syntagm and the paradigm. The syntagm is the elemental semantic unit, and the paradigm is the structured network of syntagms which constitute a meaningful production of the next level of syntagms (Katilius-Boydston 1990: *loc. cit.*). The general trajectory of semantic production is “from the simple to the complex, from the general to the particular, . . . through a number of determinisms . . . from immanence to manifestation” (Greimas & Rastier 1968: 86 – 87); a recursive process in which each succeeding semantic product depends on its antecedent. The structuralist notions of synchrony, difference, and levels form the basis of these concepts (Katilius-Boydston 1990). In these terms, we may then think about communication as an exchange of semantic units between a minimum of two sentient, responsive, beings. Greimas' 'modalization theory' introduces the additional degree of subtlety required to conceptualise the effect of communication on the participants.

In modalization theory, Greimas' considers communication as “the language act, or *enunciation*, attempting to outline the means by which semiotic possibilities are transformed into real words with real consequences”(Katilius-Boydston 1990). The process of semantic production entails the origination of semantic possibilities in a (hidden) simple paradigmatic structure which culminates in manifested form via a series of transformations. The semantic potential of the paradigm is, so to speak, 'materialised' via the transformations. These transformations occur recursively at various levels of semantic production. Greimas explains:

Take a trivial example—you have just seen a movie and you are asked to describe it. In answer to such a question some very simple ideas, which serve as a scheme, will come into your mind, organizing your memorized knowledge; only then will you articulate your memories in sequences and utterances. That is exactly the way I see the generation of discourse.

(*Discussing Language*, ed. Herman Parrett, The Hague: Mouton, 1974: 56. quoted in Katilius-Boydston 1990: *loc. cit.*)

Greimas provides a method of formerly organising the relationship between first-level semantic units (syntagms) and the paradigm therewith constituted, which consequently facilitates the production of higher level syntagms: the “semiotic square organizes the possibilities of conceptualizing signifiers, which govern the possibilities of understanding signifiers as they appear

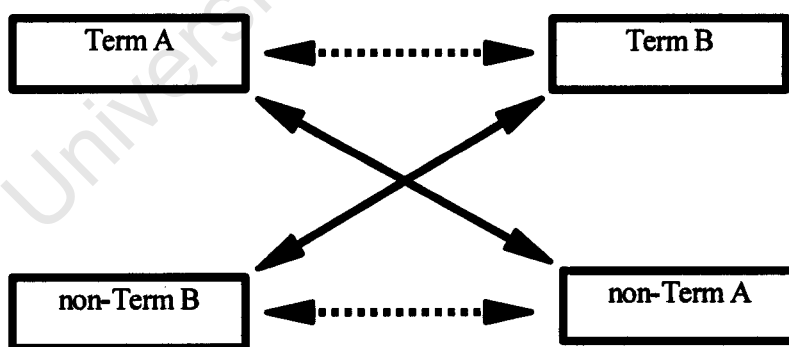
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in actual communication” (Katilius-Boydston 1990: *loc. cit.*).

Greimas developed the semiotic square as the “elementary structure of signification” (Greimas 1968: 87; Greimas 1989: 539; see also Davis 2005a: 154ff. & 233ff.)¹⁷. The “possibilities” exist in the semiotic square as pure potentialities of meaning – ‘place-holders’, so to speak, for signifiers “as they appear in actual communication”. Moreover, this elementary structure of signification may be thought of as being structured, at least initially, in terms of the sign as a binary signifier: consisting of a positive semantic element and a contrary, against which it is contrasted. The difference between the two is the essential feature which imbues both with meaning. This relationship may be represented as:



This is the initial binary structure, representing a a relationship of contrariety. From this initial binary contrarian relationship, we may derive two additional contradictory terms, each being the logical negation of the contrarian terms. In Greimas' formulation, each of the contradictories form a relation of “simple implication” with one of the initial contrarian terms, giving the following structural relation:



Following Greimas (1968: 88) the dotted lines represent the relations of contrariety and the continuous lines represent the relations of contradiction. The relations of simple implication are such that non-Term B implies Term A, but not the inverse; and similarly, non-Term A implies Term

¹⁷ A similar form, however, may be traced back to Aristotle's *De Interpretatione*.

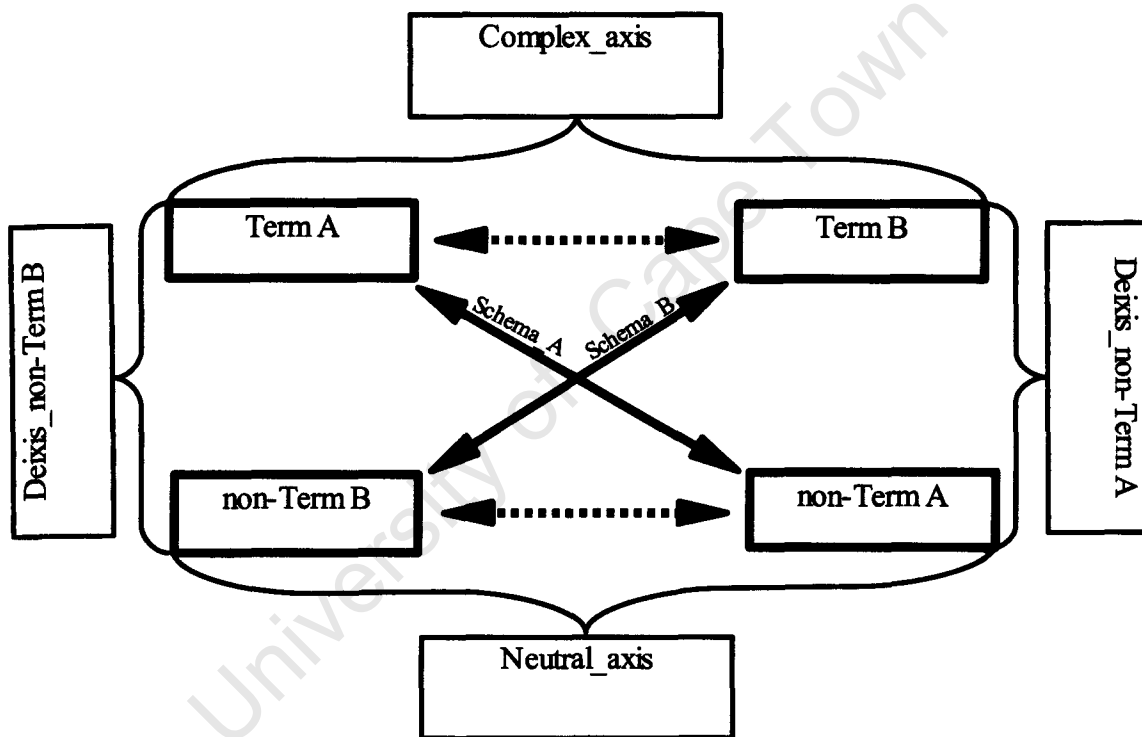
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B, but not the inverse.

Structurally, we may derive the following binary signifiers:

- Term A | Term B = 'Complex_axis' (contrariety)
- not-Term A | not-Term B = 'Neutral_axis' (contrariety)
- Term A | not-Term A = 'Schema_A' (contradiction)
- Term B | not-Term B = 'Schema_B' (contradiction)
- not-Term B | Term A = 'Deixis_not-Term B' (simple implication)
- not-Term A | Term B = 'Deixis_not-Term A' (simple implication)

We may thus complete the semiotic square by filling in its structural components, each of which is a binary signifier:



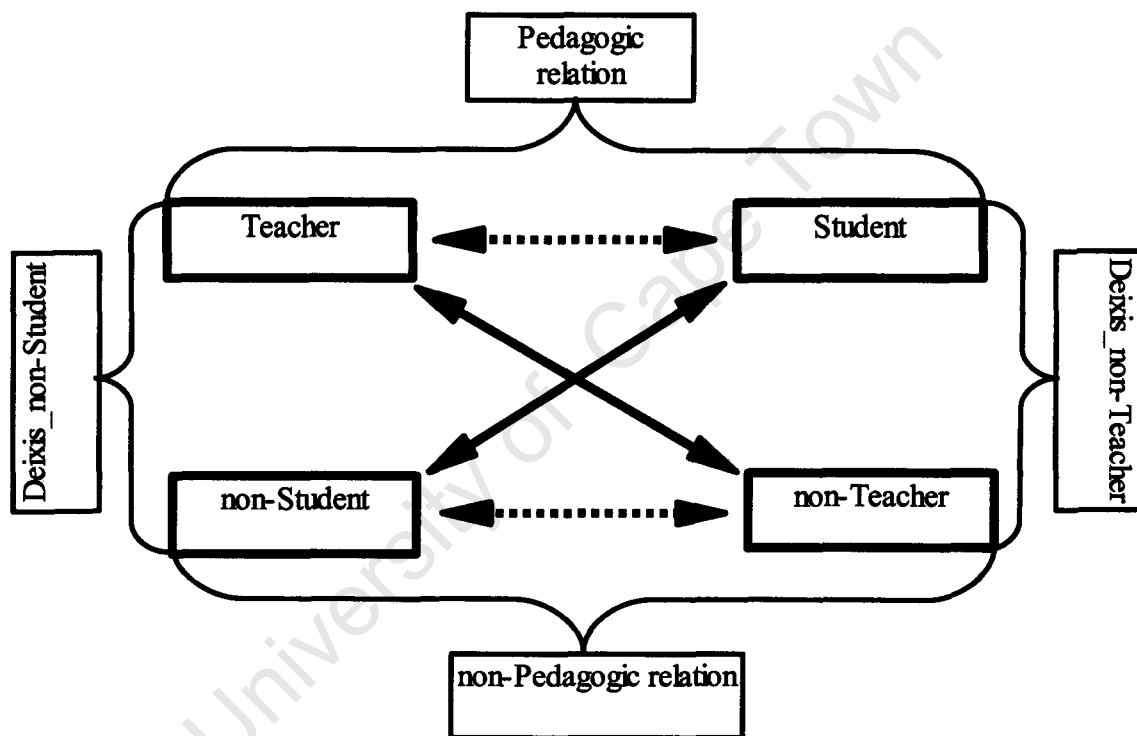
(Illustration 5: A Greimasian Semiotic Square)

Let us now apply these to the argument. In the pedagogic relation, the primary actants stand in relation to each other in a manner analogous to the initial binary signifier. We may therefore propose that the pedagogic relation has the nature of a binary signifier comprised of the semantic elements 'Teacher' and 'Student'. By reference to Greimas' elementary structure of signification, we may then propose the following sets of relations which constitute and are entailed in the pedagogic

relation, which in turn forms the pedagogic text:

Categories / Actants	= Category Relation / Signifier	Relation type
Teacher Student	= 'Pedagogic_relation'	(contrariety)
non-Teacher non-Student	= 'non-Pedagogic_relation'	(contrariety)
Teacher non-Teacher	= 'Schema_Teacher'	(contradiction)
Student non-Student	= 'Schema_Student'	(contradiction)
non-Student Teacher	= 'Deixis_non-Student'	(simple implication)
non-Teacher Student	= 'Deixis_non-Teacher'	(simple implication)

The above-mentioned relations fill out the semiotic square in the following manner:



(Illustration 6: A Mapping of the Pedagogic Relation onto the Semiotic Square – 1)

In pedagogic communication we find all the features of signification as described by Greimas. The actants are themselves also signifying units (syntagms) which form the initial binary signifier of the semiotic square. The pedagogic relationship is the paradigm structuring the syntagms as a contrarian pair of binary signifiers: the subject and the antisubject of a modalized communication theory. The pure potentialities of meaning of the initial binary signifier are thus realised in pedagogic communication as 'Teacher' and 'Student'.

We now need to develop these potentialities of meaning into more useful concepts amenable to theoretical and empirical investigation. The theoretical resources that I will use to develop the meaning of the Greimasian semiotic square for pedagogy are those of Lacan (1991) with additional assistance from Davis (2005a: 61 – 80 & 233 – 236) and Davis (2003). We take our queue, however, again from Bernstein.

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CHAPTER 5

THE DISCOURSES OF THE PEDAGOGIC RELATION: BERNSTEIN *avec* LACAN

5.1 Evaluation and the acquisition of the Other's voice

The basic Bernsteinian structure of the pedagogic relation is that of a transmitter, an acquirer, and the message between them. The goal of this interaction is to transmit the recognition and realisation rules of the privileged text. This implicates the evaluation rule as the regulation over textual transmissions and reproductions. The “key to pedagogic practice is *continuous evaluation*” because the “*fundamental message of a pedagogic practice is the rule for legitimate communication* and hence it is evaluation which condenses the meaning of the pedagogic device (Bernstein 1990: 186, 34,187, italics in original; Davis 2004: 51). The constant regulation on the production of the legitimate text in turn results in the transmission-acquisition of the principles of classification and framing and the reproduction of categories in terms of the distribution of power.

Bernstein states the connection between this fundamental function of the pedagogic device, that is, acquiring the classification, and the Lacanian notion of desire, in a seminary address in 1994:

Now so far we've just looked at relationships between, which give us category relationships and from that we go to classification. If you like, the secret of the classification is invisible, because it's the insulation – that takes us to power, and the policing, of the principle, if you break it. As you acquire the classification you acquire the voice of the other and therefore there's always the potential for dis. . . dis- disorder. It's at this level that the thesis connects with psychoanalysis. If you want to take it that way. At one time I was going to connect it with Lacan, but then I decided no because then he wrote poetry. [. . .Lacanian psychoanalysis is not built on clinical practice – an empirical basis] Okay, so, where are we? Oh yes, so that's how it connects. And that's how you get desire in the theory. So when people say there's no desire in the theory its simply because they don't understand it – or they don't want to understand it – or it doesn't look as though you can do it because . . . these are all very formal . . . ah . . .what . . . these are all very formal derivations. But they're empirical. And when I say the voice of the other is there, that is a matter for empirical investigation. (Bernstein 1994: Session of Tuesday, 1 November; transcribed and quoted in Davis (2005a))

In this excerpt we see that the acquisition of the classification entails the acquisition of the Other's voice and that this results in the potential for disorder¹⁸. This instance of Bernstein's theory indexes “that point of indeterminacy [in the pedagogic relation] which is the ignorance *qua* illicit enjoyment (*jouissance*) of the student. Lacan would say that pedagogy stumbles against the student” (Davis

18 An example of this may be found in his earlier work (Bernstein 1981: 346).

2004: 54 – 55). Bernstein has asserted that “it's at this level that the thesis connects with psychoanalysis . . . [and] that's how you get desire in the theory” (Bernstein 1994). He has also asserted that the “ 'voice' is constituted by the pedagogic device” (Bernstein 1990: 190). It is the pedagogic device which acts as a relay for the distribution of power and its principles of classification, and hence also as a relay of the 'voice' of the Other (refer figure 4.1). We thus have a relation between 'voice', the pedagogic device, pedagogic discourse, knowledge and desire.

5.2 The Other's voice & the hysteric's discourse

If these entities are related in pedagogic communication, what is it, then, that activates the relation at the interactional level of pedagogic communication in the classroom for the reproduction to take place? What sets the communication in motion and provides its impetus and momentum?

While it may be gratifying to think that the impetus lies in desire for knowledge¹⁹, Lacan supplies us with a different answer: it is not desire that leads to knowledge – that which leads to knowledge is the hysteric's discourse (Lacan 1991: 23). Reproductions of the privileged text occurs when the discourse of the hysteric regulates the pedagogic relation. We may read this as a direct consequence of the acquisition of the Other's voice. Acquiring the 'voice' means also to identify with the desire of the Other. This is another sense in which “...man's desire is the Other's desire”, a “formula that originated in the experience of the hysteric” (Lacan 1981: 38; see also Lacan 1999: 525; see also Žižek 1991: 108; Bailly 2009: 110 – 111). It is the Other's desire that constitutes the distributive rule, which in turn structures pedagogic communication because of its hierarchical relation to the rules of evaluation. This is expounded by Davis (2004):

... when considering pedagogic relations and the operation of the evaluative rule of the pedagogic device we should bear in mind that the activity of the student is dominated by a concern with recognition and realization rules: ‘What must I do? How can I achieve what has been demanded of me?’ This insistent questioning by the student, whether verbalized or not, is nothing if not an index of a necessary point of ignorance in the pedagogic relation and, in that sense, it is also an index of a point of resistance to the reproduction of knowledge – even when the subjective orientation of the student is one of not wanting to resist. In other words, the student desperately and continuously strives to overcome the dehiscence central to his or her relation to knowledge and is forced to address the teacher or field of knowledge in that regard. Structurally, the position of the student may therefore be described as one that continuously confronts the teacher and the field of knowledge with the question ‘Why . . .?’ (Why am I what you say I am? Why are things the way they are?). (Davis 2004: 52)

19 Gratification would be derived here from the narcissism of the teacher: the knowledge desired is the teacher's knowledge, in which the teacher sees him/herself reflected. This is a symbolic-imaginary function.

The quote above is a description of the hysteric's discourse: the insistent questioning of the student, which circulates around the (ontological) question of the student's identity in relation to the teacher and the educational system. The Hysteric's discourse emerges when the student is confronted with the irresistible desire of the teacher as Other. We see this in the questions quoted by Davis, which are concerned with the 'what' and the 'how' of the student's classroom reproductions and social relation to the teacher. When regulated by the Hysteric's discourse, the object around which the student's pedagogic drive circulates is that of acquiring an identity which reflects the teacher's desire.

We may integrate these assertions in the following way. Acquisition of the classification is the Bernsteinian correlative to the Lacanian concept of alienation. In alienation we have the institution of the symbolic order in the subject through a forced choice. In Lacanian terms the choice is between acceptance or rejection of the symbolic order, that is, the symbolic order as the social-symbolic with its entailed identities. This may be rephrased in Bernsteinian terms as a choice between the acceptance or rejection of the classification. And Lacan's point is that it is a forced choice: in acquiring the 'voice' of the Other, the subject must choose classification (alienation) as a necessary condition for his coming-to-be in the social-symbolic space of the pedagogic relation²⁰.

But there is a price to pay in this exchange entailed in the pedagogic relation – and it is analogous to the price paid by all of us as partakers in the social-symbolic (Zupančič 2003 : 174). For, to be a member of 'society', is to identify with the meanings immanently and irresistibly available in language – that is, the language learnt, not innate. The primordial importance of language is asserted by Lacan in statements such as the “signifier is the first mark of the subject” (Lacan 1981: 62). To be human is to imbibe the language²¹ of the Other, and this entails being confronted with pre-existing meanings – meanings which relay the desire of the Other. Yet we have no choice but to accept these meanings for it is the means by which our identities are constituted in the social. We are thereby interpellated in the Other's desire. It is a forced choice between the constitution of positive, predicative being and the absence thereof, the presence of an unformed entity which may be referred to as a 'not-nothingness' (Lacan 1981: 63 – 64). The student who fails to choose the acquisition of the Other's voice 'shows up in the system' as deviant and steps are taken either to induce obeisance or to eject the student from the system. To acquire the Other's voice means

20 As well as in the other social-symbolic spaces of 'society'.

21 'Language' is used in its broadest sense as referring to dominant orientations to meaning found in social discourses.

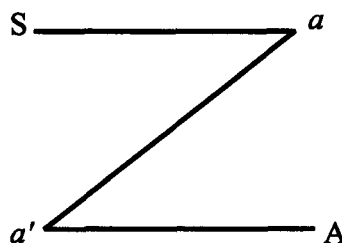
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constitution as a being within the social-symbolic economy of pedagogy; to reject such acquisition means a failure at the attempt to constitute an identity in the social-symbolic order. There is a sense of sacrifice to be made on the part of the student in order to be registered positively in the social-symbolic space of pedagogy. It involves the displacement of the student's *jouissance* with that of the teacher's *objet petit a*. In this sense, it is the teacher's 'enjoyment' – the teacher's knowledge – which is the extimite kernel of the student. And there is a sense of an 'ought-to-be' in this: it is this exchange which constitutes the regulative discourse of pedagogy.

Davis (2005a) has provided a detailed description of this exchange. The student must give up his/her object of desire in exchange for the one offered in the pedagogic relation. In accepting this exchange, the student is interpellated as subject of ignorance while simultaneously acquiring the classification. The reader is reminded here that Bernstein has stated that this entails the acquisition of the Other's desire, because the symbolic order is the order of the Other. In the pedagogic context acquisition of the Other's desire is acquisition of the principles of classification and classificatory relations. In Bernstein it is the strength of the classification which determines pedagogic identities. In other words, the acquirer's social-symbolic representations are configured to recognise, realise and accept specific, legitimate identities.

5.3 Identification

Lacan states explicitly that identification is always that of a subject seeing its reflection in an object. This is most lucidly exemplified in Lacan's Schema L:



(Illustration 7: A reproduction of "L Schema", Lacan 1999: 458)

This schema is presented in a lecture "On A Question Prior to Any Possible Treatment of

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Psychosis” (Lacan 1999: 445 – 488). Again, we should recall that Lacan's concepts were developed originally for psychoanalytic treatment in the clinic. But his concepts also have a broad philosophical underpinning as well as borrowing heavily from the field of linguistics (Lacan 1981: 21; Evans 2006: 104, 146 – 147). Lacan's concepts, therefore, have an inherent potential of being developed in the broad directions of its supporting paradigms: Hegelian philosophy and structural linguistics. It is in reading Lacan with a linguistic and philosophical slant that the concepts in these fields become amenable to their application in the analysis of pedagogy. It is with these thoughts in mind that I would like to suggest that the relations between subject, object and Other contained in the schema could serve as an appurtenance for the description of the pedagogic relation with respect to the student, knowledge and the teacher.

The schema is given as a topology of relations between the subject (S), the object (a), the subject's identification in the object (a') and the Other (A). The topology “signifies that the condition of the subject, S . . . depends on what unfolds in the Other, A” and that what “unfolds there is articulated like a discourse (the unconscious is the Other's discourse)” (*op. cit.*: 458 – 459). The presence of the Other in the subject is another case of an extimate relation, the structure of which is captured in the Lacanian aphorism, “the unconscious is the Other's discourse” (*op. cit.*: 459). Lacan proceeds to define the four corners of L Schema in the following words, in terms of which we may see the relation of the subject's desire to his or her objects: “. . . S, his ineffable and stupid existence; a his objects; a' , his ego, that is, his form as reflected in his objects; and A, the locus from which the question of his existence may arise for him” (*ibidem*).

The notion that identification and identity formation occurs as a function of the subject being caught up in the discourse of the Other may be found in Bernstein's earliest work, for example, the following statements: “The problem [of the relation between social structure, forms of speech, and the subsequent regulation of behaviour] requires specification of the sociological processes which control the way the developing child relates himself to his environment” (Bernstein 1964: 55)

"I shall argue that different speech systems or codes create for their speakers different orders of relevance and relation . . . As the child learns his speech . . . [that is] codes which regulate his verbal acts, he learns the requirements of his social structure . . . the social structure becomes . . . the sub-stratum of the child's experience essentially through *the manifold consequence (sic) of the linguistic process*. From this point of view every time the child speaks or listens, the social structure is reinforced in him and his social identity shaped. *The social structure becomes the child's psychological reality through the shaping of his acts of speech.*"
(Bernstein 1971: 144, emphases added)

When I stated in §5.1, following Bernstein, that it is the acquisition of the classification that entails the acquisition of the Other's voice and that, in elaborating on the potential of this statement, we have a relation between 'voice', the pedagogic device, pedagogic discourse, knowledge and desire, I am referring to a dynamic in the pedagogic relation that is aptly captured by the L Schema. This dynamic is that of the interpellation of the student. In terms of the L Schema, we may define interpellation as that instance when there is identification in the discourse of the Other. In pedagogy, this occurs when the student recognises himself in pedagogic discourse and responds by becoming that subject of a lack of knowledge as required by the discourse, in order to learn what the teacher has to offer. It is this status of the student at the point of identification which produces the question, "What do you want me to do?" and "How do you want me to do it?". These questions are, respectively, the conjugates of identification with the instructional and regulative discourses.

In the pedagogic relation, the teacher is the Other of the student and that which unfolds in the Other is pedagogic discourse as the voice of the Other. The objects made available for identification are the knowledge objects of the instructional and regulative discourses.

I have said that L Schema allows us to see the subject's relation to the objects and desire: and in particular, the relation of the student, knowledge and the teacher. This assertion may be supported with reference to Bernstein's assertion that it is the acquisition of the Other's voice through which the student acquires the classification. In terms L Schema, the student (S) is confronted with a calling into question of his existence through the particularity of the teacher. It touches the student at the fundamental level of the meaning of existence, "not of the subject's place in the world, but of his existence as a subject, a calling into question which, . . . will extend to his within-the-world relation to objects, and to the existence of the world, insofar as its existence, too, can be called into question beyond its order" (Lacan 1999: 460). The subject, at this point, is caught up in a hysteric's

discourse which is prior to the question of pedagogic relation, seeking an answer to the question, "What am I there?" (*op. cit.*: 459).

Acquiring the classification, therefore, features as an answer to this relentless question. For it means the acquisition of an identity in the discourse of the Other. In pedagogy, the teacher relays knowledge (*a*) as well as orientations to knowledge (*a'*) in terms of which the student is (seductively) offered the possibility of acquiring an identity which will fill out the "What" in "What am I here?". The "What" consists of predicates concerning the student's basic identity, such as, sex, age, academic ability and deportment. The student's self-image is the aggregated fusion of these disparate predicates reflected back to the student in his or her social relations with peers, family, teacher, etc., by which they are seen as a whole and form the ego. The "What" holds out these predicates to the student as potentialities of meaning. This is partially what is entailed in the acquisition of the Other's voice.

But this acquired identity, in the pedagogic relation, has a built in trap. For, in addition to the basic predicates of "What", the identity also includes the notion of the student as a point of absence of knowledge; knowledge being the very object essential to the fulfilment of the potential meanings held out by the acquisition of the classification. Pedagogic knowledge is about the specificity of the "What" which regulates the relation of the student to the categories of the classification²². We will see later that the discourse of the hysteric crops up again in this regard, but this time in relation to the acquisition of knowledge.

5.4 Identification and the hysteric's discourse

The identity to be acquired by the student in pedagogy is that of 'subject of ignorance' – the subject who holds the place of a lack of knowledge. Now this identity is structured around a lack, a lack of a legitimate object, and consequently an impasse of identification. This state of the pedagogic subject may be represented in two questions: "What ought I to possess as a legitimate object?" and its entailed subaltern "Who am I?". Zizek, reading Lacan, states that this is the question of the hysteric (Zizek 1991: 156). This allows us to form a relation between the acquisition of the Other's voice in Bernstein with the four discourses of the social bond in Lacan. The hysteric's discourse is one of the

²² According to Lacan, psychoanalysis "posits itself as modulating in a more radical way this relation of man to the world that has always been regarded as knowledge" (Lacan 1981: 63).

four, and is represented by the following Lacanian formula:

$$\frac{\$}{a} \rightarrow \frac{S_1}{S_2}$$

(Illustration 8: The Discourse of the Hysteric)

Lacan makes the following observation with regard to knowledge and the hysteric' discourse:

“If there is one thing that psychoanalysis should force us to maintain obstinately, it's that the desire for knowledge bears no relation to knowledge unless, of course, we wheel out the lubricious word "transgression." A radical distinction, which has far-reaching consequences from the point of view of pedagogy – the desire to know is not what leads to knowledge. What leads to knowledge is – allow me to justify this in the more or less long term – the hysteric's discourse.” (Lacan 1991: 23)

5.5 Lacan's discourses of the social bond

We have noted that it is the student and ignorance which stands in extimite relation to the teacher; and we have also noted that it is the teacher and knowledge which stands in extimite relation to the student. This brings four categories in relation to each other: 'teacher', 'student', 'knowledge' and 'ignorance'. We have also noted that the acquisition of the classification inaugurates the hysteric's discourse in the student. The hysteric's discourse is one of the four Lacanian discourses which we shall now integrate into this argument. My ideas in this regard are based on Lacan's discussion of the 'Production of the four discourses' (Lacan 1991: 11 – 26).

Lacan's four discourses may be understood as four dimensions to the social bond in the pedagogic relation, which will be shown to be identifiable with the four elements ('actors') of pedagogic discourse: 'teacher', 'student', 'knowledge' and 'ignorance'. In formulating the social bonds, Lacan states that the hysteric's discourse in some way gives us the starting point to consider the other three (Lacan 1991: 14). However, in the order of his discussion of the discourses in his 17th seminar he takes as his starting point the discourse of the master (D_M)²³, because of the valency of the master to

23 This notation is obtained from Davis (2004). It is not a literal Lacanian formulation, but see Lacan (1991: 29, 43).

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knowledge, which is shown below (Lacan 1991: 13):

$$D_M: \frac{S_1}{\$} \rightarrow \frac{S_2}{a}$$

Three alternative arrangements of this relation are obtained simply by rotating the *matheme*²⁴, by a quarter clockwise turn, thrice. The resulting arrangements, in sequence, are given below:

- the discourse of the hysteric, $D_H: \frac{\$}{a} \rightarrow \frac{S_1}{S_2}$

- the discourse of the analyst, $D_A: \frac{a}{S_2} \rightarrow \frac{\$}{S_1}$

- the discourse of the university, $D_U: \frac{S_2}{S_1} \rightarrow \frac{a}{\$}$

5.6 The production of knowledge

Lacan's statement relating knowledge, desire and the hysteric's discourse may be interpreted in the following way. Lacan seems to allow us to speculate that there are two contexts for the acquisition of knowledge, each of which entailing its own configuration of the social bond. The first, when we “wheel out the lubricious word “transgression””, occurs at the level of the university where new knowledge is forged out of hypotheses, theories and research. This is the level of the *production* of knowledge. This context of knowledge acquisition entails the performance of the discourse of the university. But, at its most authentic, it is not merely a performance within the realm of the possible, but an act which engages the impossible. It is an act which always has as its arena the limit of extant knowledge – the limit of the Law. It is a striving after knowledge purely for the sake of knowledge and as such, *apropos* Kant's categorical imperative, has the form of an ethical act (Zupančič 2000: 85; Lacan 1981: 242; Davis 2005b: 2). It is because of the structure of the (ethical) academic act that it necessarily entails activity beyond the Law – a 'transgression' with respect to the boundaries of extant knowledge and beliefs. Žižek says of the act:

²⁴ The four structures composed of S_1 , S_2 , a , and $\$$ are *mathemes*, which is an example of Lacanian algebra. For a summary of Lacanian algebra see Evans (2006: 7 – 9).

“ . . . its performativity is “retroactive”: it redefines the network of its own presuppositions. The “excess” of the act's retroactive performativity can also be formulated in terms of the Hegelian dialectics of Law and its transgression, Crime: from the perspective of the existing, positive Laws of a symbolic community, an act appears by definition as Crime, since it violates its symbolic limits and introduces an unheard-of element which turns everything topsy-turvy – there is neither rhyme nor reason in an act; an act is by its very nature scandalous . . . ” (Žižek 1991: 192).

This is the feel of the creation of new knowledge – a sense of trespassing onto forbidden territory because of the “retroactive performativity” which “redefines the network of its own presuppositions”. New knowledge always has the effect of reorganising the field of knowledge.

This also evinces the *jouissance* entailed in academic activity: a seemingly self-sustaining impetus toward the goal of acquiring new knowledge, yet finding the repetition of the activity itself to be the source of actual satisfaction. At this level, desire for knowledge inheres in the *jouissance* of academic practice. For it is precisely the path of *jouissance*, as an excess in desire, which leads beyond the pleasure principle (Lacan 1981: 31 ; Lacan 1986: 177).

5.7 The reproduction of knowledge

The second context occurs at the level of the *reproduction* of knowledge, which may be seen at primary, secondary and undergraduate levels of education. This is the context familiar to all of us because it also occurs in the home as the primary socialisation of the subject. The motivation in *this* context is the approving gaze of the master, embodying and transmitting the desire of the master. It is summed up in Lacan's well-known axiom: “ . . . man's desire is the Other's desire” (Lacan 1981: 38; Lacan 1999: 525). For it is under the master's gaze that the Subject acquires knowledge *of what pleases the master*. This discourse is none other than that between the Hegelian master and slave (Hegel 2008: §§189 – 190); Lacan 1991: 32). It is also Lacan's discourse of the hysteric, which “would exist whatever the circumstances, whether there was psychoanalysis or not” (Lacan 1991: 33).

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Starting with Bernstein, we have seen how the acquisition of the principles of classification produces the hysteric's discourse from within the pedagogic relation. Having seen the relation between Bernstein's theory and Lacan's discourses of the social bond, I would now like to produce the relations within these discourses which are descriptive of the pedagogic relation.

5.8 Summary with a view to an answer to the question

I began this essay with a question about how best to teach a particular subject. We saw that this question entailed a consideration of the nature of the relation between the teacher and the student. We have referred to this relation as the pedagogic relation. The phenomenon of 'methods', 'strategies', and 'theories of teaching' was invoked in this regard. Examples of approaches aimed at fleshing out the intricacies of the pedagogic relation were provided. These examples generally referenced the fields of sociology and anthropology. We raised two features with reference to these examples.

First, that the imparting of knowledge implicates much more than a mere transmission of knowledge. Teachers employ 'strategies' in their attempt to get knowledge transmitted from the teacher and into the heads of students. The curriculum undergoes multiple transformations along its path from the teacher to the student, the last and arguably the most crucial, being the transformation in the student's mind. The practice of teaching is always caught up in a necessity to get around an *a priori* condition of incomplete transmission-acquisition, which teachers seem to take into account in their engagement with students. The reader is reminded of the work of Alexander (2001) especially in this regard.

The second feature raised in relation to the examples is that of the nature of the description of the pedagogic relation. In terms of Lacan's notions of the real, symbolic and imaginary orders, it was highlighted that we would want to avoid descriptions framed by the imaginary order in preference of descriptions framed by the symbolic order. A description framed by the symbolic order would allow for a structured conception of the pedagogic relation and hence permit us to draw out the principles which impart dynamism to the pedagogic relation. It was in terms of the real and the symbolic orders that we were able to produce an initial formulation of the pedagogic relation as structured by the resistant presence of the student *qua* real, which teachers engage with in an

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approach framed by the symbolic order.

We therefore appealed to Bernstein's socio-linguistic theory of education because of its principled and highly structured approach to theorising educational transmissions. Bernstein's theory is explicitly framed by the symbolic order because of the author's structuralist approach to developing concepts and the network of their relations. In particular, we drew heavily upon his concept of pedagogic discourse, which is a conceptual component of the broader notion of the pedagogic device. References to resistance were also sought within Bernstein, and it is with respect to the feature of resistance in the pedagogic relation that we encountered the need to seek alternative descriptions to enable the development of our analysis.

Concepts referring to investiture of symbolic power were shown to enhance our description of the pedagogic relation as structured around the affect of power on the emergence of resistance. It also, crucially, provided an alternative means of confirming the structural necessity of the resistance: the student *qua* bearer of ignorance reveals the limit of the teacher's power in pedagogic communication. We noted also that the notion of communication is itself a reference to its immanent failure. The limit to the teacher's power means that the aim of teaching, the reproduction of the privileged text, is arrested along the pathway to achieving its goal, binding the teacher to circulate the student's void of knowledge in a repetitive pedagogic drive. Herein lies the image of the teacher's impotence: that the delegated power to transmit knowledge is revealed, in a first instance, to be insufficient to ensure its acquisition and thereby sending off the teacher on a circuitous route to cover up the failures of pedagogic communication. Repetition is a necessary feature of education.

This leads us into the description of the pedagogic relation in terms of the dynamics of the Lacanian discourses and antagonism. We need to map the relations of the original binary relation found in Bernstein – that of a transmitter and an acquirer – to the Lacanian discourses of the social bond. The work of mapping the structure of transmitter and acquirer onto the Lacanian discourses has already been accomplished and applied to analyses of the pedagogic relation (Davis 2005a; Davis 2004; Davis 2003; Davis 2002; and Samuels 2002). I will depend heavily upon these references for the ensuing discussion. It has also been noted with a detailed argument that “the different discursive structures produce four intrasubjective factors – knowledge, values, alienation and *jouissance* (*sic*)

– in a manner that produces four intersubjective effects: educating, governing, desiring and analysing” (Davis 2003: 7).

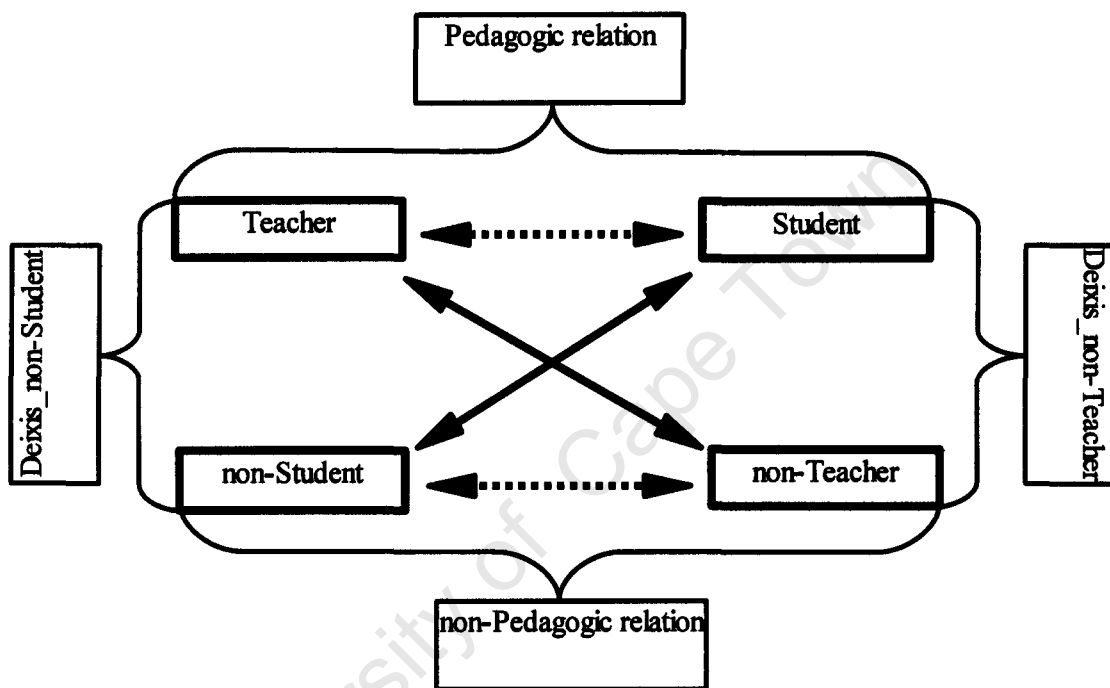
As we move into greater dependence on Lacanian notions it is worth bearing in mind his own positioning of psycho-analysis as a an intellectual field. His statement provides both a caution against 'reading too much into' his ideas as well as support for why the borrowing of his ideas is suitable for a discussion about the pedagogic relation, at the centre of which is the transference of knowledge, values and meanings: “Psycho-analysis is neither a *Weltanschauung*, nor a philosophy that claims to provide the key to the universe. It is governed by a particular aim, which is historically defined by the elaboration of the notion of the subject. It poses this notion in a new way, by **leading the subject back to his signifying dependence**” (Lacan 1981: 77 bold added, italics in original).

CHAPTER 6

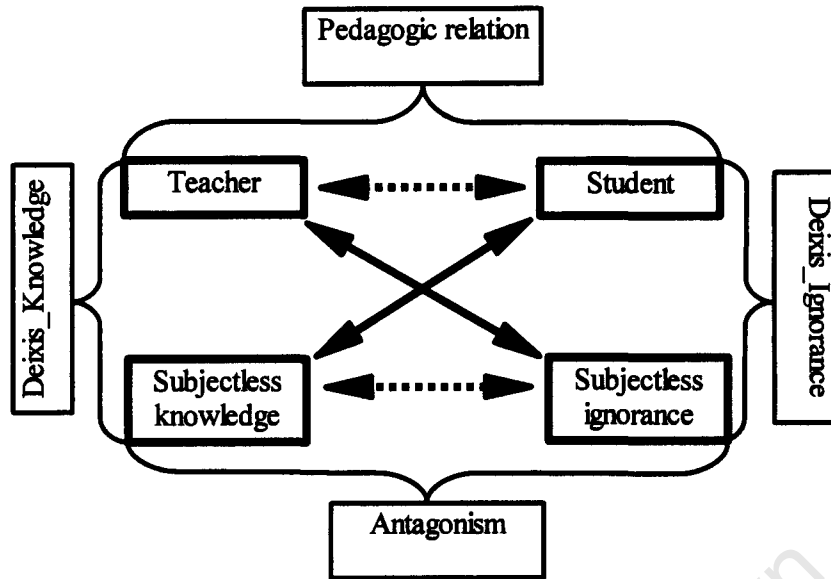
DYNAMICS OF THE PEDAGOGIC RELATION: AN ATTEMPTED DESCRIPTION

6.1 Mapping Bernstein onto Lacan

Let us begin by recalling the four categories and the category relations of our semiotic square for pedagogy:



Lacan's discourses of the social bond forms a morphologically similar structure which may be mapped onto our semiotic square for pedagogy that emerged out of Bernstein's initial unidirectional model of transmission-acquisition. The reader is reminded that the pedagogic relation entails the relations of the teacher, the student, knowledge and resistance. Resistance functions as the absence of knowledge and so it may be represented as ignorance. The categories of the pedagogic relation may therefore be mapped onto the semiotic square to produce the following set of relations:



(Illustration 10: A Mapping of the Pedagogic Relation – 2: Showing the Position of Objective Antagonism)

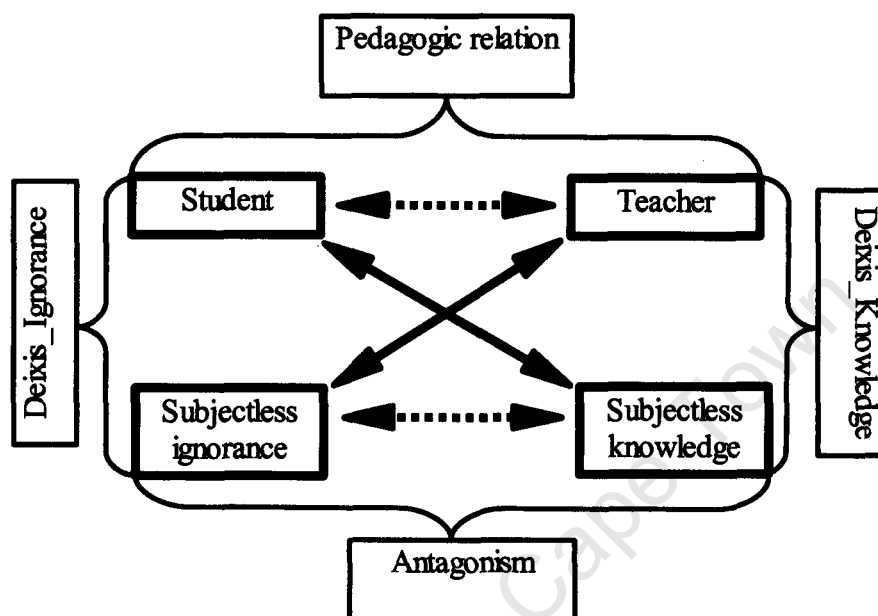
Here we can see clearly that, in terms of the structure of the semiotic square, the antagonism is located in the encounter of knowledge and its absence (ignorance), the latter functioning as the real of the student which is resistant to the reproduction of the privileged text. Recalling that the bottom pair of categories are entailed in the upper pair of categories, we may also understand this schema as representing the extreme relation of antagonism to the pedagogic relation.

The structure of Bernstein's transmission-acquisition model of pedagogic communication determines the position of the category 'teacher' in the top left-hand corner of the semiotic square. However, from our discussion on the acquisition of the Other's voice, the acquired classification leads to the student's interpellation and identification as a subject who does not know, or, a subject of ignorance. It is the quality of ignorance around which pedagogic praxis circulates: on one level as a quality of the student which must be displaced with knowledge; and on another level, as a quality of the teacher, as a reference, *via negativa*, to the potentiality of the reproduction of the privileged text. Schematically, this may be represented as the student addressing the teacher in search of the privileged text:

Student → Teacher

(Illustration 11: The Affect of Interpellation on the Structure of the Pedagogic Relation)

It may, therefore, be argued that, if we are to represent the initial uni-directional relation of transmission-acquisition under the affect of identification, that we should swap the position of the student and teacher. We note that this exchange of positions in the schematic is necessitated by the dynamic of interpellation. This swap, carried into the semiotic square, produces the following set of relations:



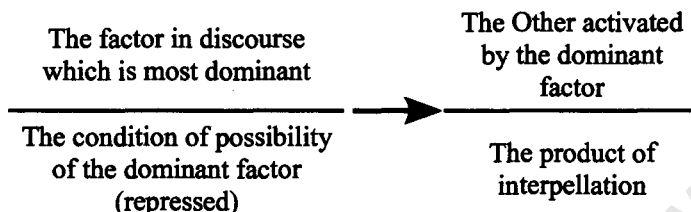
(Illustration 12: Pedagogic Relation Structured by Recursion, Antagonism, and Identification)

This transformation gives us a schema precisely equivalent in categories to the Lacanian discourse of the hysteric (D_H), the argument for which I will provide below, following a brief comment on the nature of the student *qua* subject of ignorance.

The status of the subject of ignorance has a curious quality: the lack constituting the subject of ignorance is precisely the locus of the object that will fill it. The student *qua* subject of ignorance sees himself as lacking the knowledge that the teacher wishes him to reproduce. It is *this* knowledge rather than any other knowledge which is the object that holds out the potential of a dual fulfilment: the displacement of ignorance in the subject of ignorance; as well as the offering of this same object to the teacher as that which will fulfil the desire of the teacher: the reproduction of the privileged text.

6.2 The structure of the pedagogic relation: (D_M (D_H(D_{M...})...)...)

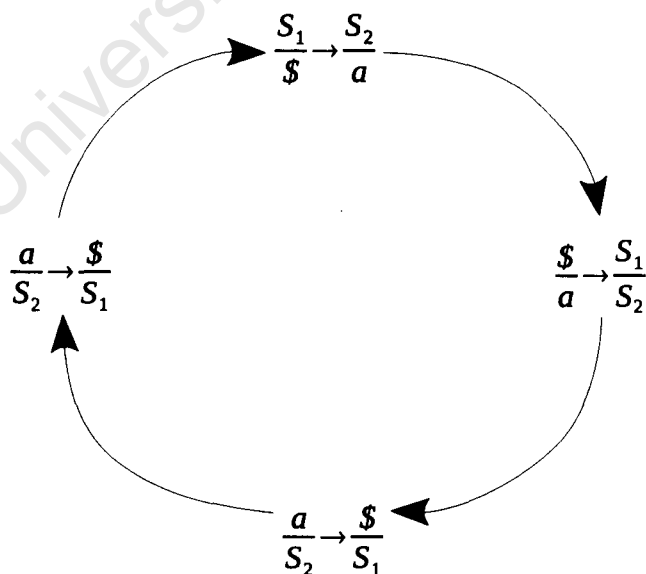
The mapping from Bernstein to Lacan, via the semiotic square, has now been accomplished. We now head towards the conclusion of this essay by picking up from the quaternary structures representing the discourses of the social bond (D_M, D_H, D_A, D_U), which I introduced in chapter 5. Davis (2003) argues that the mathemes for the discourses of the social bond have a basic structure, which he calls a “fundamental matrix” and which may be explicated in the following way:



(Illustration 13: The Fundamental Matrix of the Lacanian Social Bond, based on Davis 2003: 7)

Davis's argument here is that the positions within each of the four discourses hold fixed meanings and that these meanings are to be read in relation to each other. The “fundamental matrix” provides a description of these meanings.

As we have already seen, the mathemes of the social bond are obtained by a quarter-turn of the structure, so that we have a maximum of four logical instances of the social bond:



(Illustration 14: The Four Logical Instances of the Social Bond, based on Lacan 1991: 14)

Davis' interpretation of the fundamental matrix gives us a way of reading the meaning of each instance of the social bond. I will elaborate on two of these instances, which I see as being the most pertinent for the current essay.

6.2.1 The Master's discourse (D_M)

In the Master's discourse (D_M), the master signifier (S_1) is dominant. Lacan states that “the very instant at which S_1 intervenes in the already constituted field of the other signifiers [S_2], . . . this \$. . . the subject as divided, emerges” (Lacan 1991: 15). In other words, the master signifier reorganises the chain of existing signifiers as its general equivalent. This function of the master signifier is paralleled to the “articulation of the value-form” by Žižek (1991: 23 – 27, see also pp 7 – 22). The Master's discourse is, therefore, a discourse which produces “values” and the effect of “governing” (Davis 2003: 7). In the Master's discourse we have the foregrounding of the law. We see in this a resonance with Bernstein's statement that the instructional discourse is *embedded* in a discourse of regulation, such that the latter discourse is dominant. In the first instance of pedagogy, it is regulation which establishes the pedagogic relation. And it is through regulation that the voice of the Other is transmitted. We note also that the product of the interpellation of the student is the production of *object petit a*, which here stands for that which escapes the law, that is, that which escapes pedagogic discourse, which is the resistant feature of ignorance entailed in the interpellation of the student.

6.2.2 The Hysteric's discourse (D_H)

But the interpellation is never complete owing to the constitutive resistant feature of the pedagogic relation we have been referring to throughout this essay. We should take note of the assertion that the Lacanian subject is nothing but the failure of the Althusserian subject – its failure to be interpellated by the symbolic order (Zupančič 2000: 41n – 42n). This gets us onto the ground of the next logical instance of the social bond, because “hysteria is failed interpellation” (Žižek 1991: 101). A quarter-turn of the Master's discourse produces the Hysteric's discourse (D_H). In this discourse, the dominant factor is that of “the subject as divided” (\$), the salient factor is that of “alienation” and the effect is that of “desiring” (Davis 2003: 7). The alienation derives from the effect of the subject's encounter with the symbolic order. It is in this encounter that the subject *qua* real, “in his

ineffable and stupid existence” (S), becomes the subject of identification (\$). In order to be assimilated into the symbolic order, the subject must become represented by a signifying chain in the symbolic order. In pedagogy, at the level of interactional practice, this signifying chain is the pedagogic discourse. This is accomplished by the subject forming an identification of himself in the symbolic when he responds to the hailing of pedagogic discourse. This is another way of expressing interpellation. But the result of being represented in the symbolic order in this way forces a split in which something of the original real subject is held on to as the response is made to the alienating call of the Other in pedagogic discourse. This fragment retained in identification is that part of the real subject which has effectively resisted interpellation. It represents the failure of pedagogic discourse and it may be represented by *object petit a* (or simply just 'a'). The process of alienation may thus be represented as:

$$S \longrightarrow \$ + a$$

(Illustration 15: The Process of Alienation in Identification)

The subject is divided in its encounter with the pedagogic discourse, the bar in the Lacanian algebra representing this split that follows the encounter with the pedagogic discourse. The Master's discourse (D_M) produced *object petit a*, which I said stands for the Other's *jouissance*. But this object, *a*, also stands for the that which remains of the subject in the split – a remainder of the failed interpellation. And this remainder is the subject's ignorance. One could think of it as the remainder of the pre-pedagogised, real subject, that part of the subject which escapes the governing effect of the pedagogic discourse. It is this part of the student *qua* Lacanian subject that we may designate as representing the nucleic resistance in the subject to knowledge, the 'subjectless knowledge' in the semiotic square.

A discussion of the other two instances, those when $/a/$ and $/S_2/$ are in the dominant positions, will not be undertaken here, owing to the constraints of the essay as well as to the fact that we have reached a satisfactory level of interpreting Lacan's discourses for the purposes of answering my original question regarding the pedagogic relation. It would suffice to refer the reader back to chapter 5 where a brief discussion of these instances of the discourse are provided.

Through the rule of evaluation, conscious substance is given to the immaterial (unconscious) form of this lack. In the praxis of teaching the teacher holds out the reproduction of the privileged text as the object (a) lacking in the student. The student identifies the object as *object petit a* (a'), constituting the lack in the teacher which the student then seeks to fill up through his productions/reproductions. We recall the L Schema in this regard, in which the subject (S) identifies his image/ego (a') in his objects (a), the objects being constituted in the desire of the Other (A), that is, as the Other's discourse, the Other's voice. We note also, while recalling the discussion on extimacy, that the evaluative rule may be perceived in Lacan's assertion that "the condition of the subject, S . . . depends on what unfolds in the Other, A" (Lacan 1999: 458).

6.2.3 The recursive dynamic in the pedagogic relation

Implicated in the reproduction of the privileged text is the prior condition of its transmission and acquisition: the constitutive lack of the student. It is these two elements of "text" and "lack" which is represented as the object a' seen from two different perspectives: from the teacher's perspective the Other's gaze, and from the student's perspective as the subject's gaze. It is when they are gathered around this object (a') that the teacher and student forms the pedagogic relation. It is this presence of a lack which necessitates pedagogic communication, as well as its failure when pedagogy runs up against the internal limits of communication. Pedagogic communication never really attains its goal of complete transmission-acquisition. The object (a') is therefore ever elusive as the student repetitively attempts to reproduce it and as the teacher repetitively attempts to refine the pedagogic communication. Davis goes on to state that "it is therefore a structural necessity that the hysteric *always fails* to complete the Other and in that way keep[s] desire unsatisfied, refusing to be an object of the Other's *jouissance*" (Davis 2003: 10, italics in original).

It was noted that the failure of interpellation produces the object a which crops up as resistance to the pedagogic discourse. The resistance disrupts the intended smooth flow of transmission-acquisition. In other words, the constellation of the symbolic order of pedagogic discourse (S_2) originally quilted by the intervention of the master signifier (S_1), is ruptured and threatened with an impending breakdown by the emergence of the resistant real of the student (object a). In order to suture the point of rupture in the symbolic order we require the function, yet again, of the master signifier, to restore the operation of the symbolic order of pedagogic discourse. This references the

necessity of a return to the Master's discourse as a direct consequence of its original intervention, illustrating the fact that resistance and antagonism are inherent in the constitution of the pedagogic relation, and structurally situated in the extimite relation of the teacher and the student. The alternating repetition of these instances of the Lacanian social bond, which I would like to designate with the signifier $(D_M (D_H(D_M \dots) \dots) \dots)$, is what animates pedagogic communication and what imbues it with its dynamism.

Coda

Bensusan and Shalem's (1994) discussion provides an alternative modality of the hysteric's discourse. In this modality, the teacher suspends the rules of evaluation. This is the Lacanian equivalent of suspending the effect of the master signifier – of governing – and purposefully inducing a destabilising effect on the symbolic chain of pedagogic discourse. In this scenario the student is addressed by the *jouissance* of the teacher since it is the *teacher's* refusal to be interpellated that disrupts the symbolic order. This is the discourse of the analyst (D_A), the salient factor being “*jouissance*” and the effect being that of “analysing” (Davis 2003: 7). This makes the pedagogic experience even more demanding on the student, since there is no privileged text to reproduce – the privileged text is that of authenticity: a re-valuation of the student's knowledge assumptions so that a shift in paradigm may be accomplished by the intervention a alternative master signifiers which emerge in the process of analysis. However, if the student fails to recognise that the process is one of analysis and not of governing, what results is the same response of the student as if the student assumes an expectation from the teacher to reproduce some privileged text. This response is the hysteric's discourse. It appears that whether the privileged text is made explicit or not, the student's initial response to pedagogy is always that of the hysteric's discourse. This is so because it is the classification which interpellates the student as the subject of ignorance as a condition prior to any delivery of pedagogic content knowledge. The withholding of the knowledge object draws out the same query, “What do you want from me?”, from the student. The principle at work here is clarified by the authors in their statement that “pedagogy . . . functions by means of withholding rather than by means of transmission”; and that this is accomplished by “staging

desiring as such”, which “entails a process which maintains the desire alive by constructing a chain of gratification which is continuously elusive so that the subject cannot come alongside it” (Bensusan and Shalem 1994: 181). A marker of this modality of the hysteric's discourse is that it does not lead to the supplementary question, “Why am I what you say I am?”. The absolute withholding of the object precludes this response.

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